11.9.12

TESTIMONY TO THE *EXXON VALDEZ* OIL SPILL TRUSTEE COUNCIL

by Gary P. Kompkoff, Chief and President
Tatitlek IRA Council

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony to you today. The substance of my comments will focus on the Restoration Reserve, and specifically, the $20 Million Community Fund.

In the early years after the oil spill, the communities stood by and watched as state, federal, and private scientists and researchers conducted studies in the oil spill affected area, who oftentimes did not let the communities know what they were studying or why. In recent years, we have taken a greater role in the restoration process through various projects such as the Community Involvement and TEK projects, the Clam Restoration Project, and several salmon enhancement projects. Although I feel there is much room for improvement in facilitating the involvement in the research, we have come a long way since 1989.

The support of the Trustee Council in establishing the $20 Million Community Fund would mean much to the people of Tatitlek. I realize you cannot address the human element of the oil spill, which has long been on the agenda of the communities. Establishing the Community Fund would facilitate the involvement of the people directly affected by the oil spill through scientific research determined and conducted BY the local residents, natural resource stewardship and management conducted BY the local residents, and would foster a cooperative working relationship between federal and state management agencies so that other projects could be conducted jointly by the tribes, state, and federal agencies. This type of direct involvement in the restoration process, would in effect, address the human element of the spill. It would bring a sense of dignity to the community members by contributing to the restoration effort, thus reducing the sense of helplessness that currently exists. For this reason, I urge you to seriously consider supporting the $20 Million Community Fund concept proposed by the Chugach Regional Resources Commission and supported by the local residents throughout the oil spill affected area.

I would also like to express my support for the Clam Restoration Project, the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Project, and the Port Graham Hatchery Reconstruction Project, which are all on deferred status. Your careful consideration of these proposals is also much appreciated.

In closing, I would like to include in my testimony the speech written by Walter R. Meganack, Sr., just a few months after the oil spill. What he says in this speech should bring home to all of us the devastation brought upon the local people by the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill and that we must not forget that the Native people of Prince William Sound, Lower Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and the Alaska Peninsula, who depend upon the natural resources for their livelihood, will be here long after the money is gone and the researchers have gone home.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary P. Kompkoff, Chief
Tatitlek IRA Council

The Time When the Water Died
by Walter R. Meganack, Sr. - Port Graham

The Native story is different from the white man's story of oil devastation. It is different because our lives are different, what we value is different; how e see the water and the land, the plants and the animals, is different. What white men do for sport and recreation and money, we do for life; for the life of our ancient culture. Our lives are rooted in the seasons of God's creation. Since time immemorial, the lives of the Native people harmonize with the rhythm and the cycles of nature. We are a part of nature. We don't need a calendar or a clock to tell us what time it is. When the days get longer, we get ready. Boots and boats and nets and gear are prepared for the fishing time, the winter beaches are not lonely anymore, because our children and our grownups visit the shellfish, the snails, the chitons. When the first salmon is caught, our whole villages are excited. It is an annual ritual of mouth watering and delight. When our bellies are filled with the fresh new life, then we put up the food for the winter. We dry and smoke and can. Hundreds of fish to feed a family.

Much has happened to our people in recent centuries. We have toilets now, and schools. We have clocks and calendars in our homes. Some of us go to an office in the morning. The children go to school in the morning. But sometimes the office is empty and locked. Sometimes the child is absent from school, because there are more important things to do. Like walking the beaches. Collecting the chitons. Watching for the fish.

The land and the water are our sources of life. The water is sacred. The water is like a baptismal font, and its abundance is the Holy Communion of our lives. Of all the things that we have lost since non-Natives came to our land, we have never lost our connection with the water. The water is our source so life. So long as the water is alive, Chugach Natives are alive.

It was early in the springtime. No fish yet. No snails yet. But he signs were with us. The green was starting. Some birds were flying and slinging, the excitement of the season has just begun, and then we heard the news. Oil in the water. Lots of oil. Killing lots of water. It is too shocking to understand. Never in the

millennium of our tradition have we thought it possible for the water to die. But it is true.

We walk our beaches, but the snails and the barnacles and the chitons are falling off the rocks. Dead. Dead water. We caught our first fish, the tradition delight of all -- but it got sent to the state to be tested for oil. No first fish this year. We walk our beaches, but instead of gathering life, we gather death. Dead birds. Dead otters. Dead seaweed.

Before we have a chance to hold each other and share our tears, our sorrow, our loss, we suffer yet another devastation. We are invaded by the oil company. Offering jobs, high pay. Lots of money. We are in shock. We need to clean the oil, get it out of our water, bring death back to life. We are intoxicated with desperation. We don't have a choice but to take the jobs, we take the orders, we take the disruption. We start fighting. We lost trust for each other. We lost control of our daily life. Everybody is pushing everyone. We Native people aren't used o being bossed around. We don't like it. But now our own people are pointing fingers at us. Everyone wants to be boss; we are not working like a team. We lose control of our village.

Our people get sick. Elders and children in the village. Everybody is touchy. Everybody is ready to jump you and blame you. People are angry. And afraid.. Afraid and confused. Our elders feel helpless. They cannot work on cleanup. They cannot do all the activities of gathering food and preparing for winter. And most of all, they cannot teach the young ones the Native way. How will the children learn the values and the ways if the water is dead?

The oil companies lied about preventing a spill. Now they lie about the cleanup. Our people know what happens on the beaches. Spend all day cleaning one huge rock, and the tide comes in and covers it with oil again. Spend a week wiping and spraying the surface, but pick up a rock and there's four inches of oil underneath. Our people know the water and the beaches. But they get told what to do by ignorant people who should be asking, not telling.
We fight a rich and powerful giant, the oil industry, while at the same time, we take orders and paycheck from it. We are torn in half. Will it end? After five years, maybe we will see some springtime water life again. But will the water and the beaches see us? What will happen to our lives in the next five years? What will happen this fall, when the cleanup stops and the money stops? We have lived through much devastation. Our villages were almost destroyed by chicken pox and tuberculosis. We fight the battles of alcohol and drugs and abuse. And we survive.

But what we see now is death. Death -- no of each other, but of the source of life, the water. We will need much help, much listening in order to live through the long barren season of dead water, a longer winter than before.

I am an elder. I am Chief. I will not lose hope. And I will help my people. We have never lived through this kind of death. But we have lived through lots of other kinds of death. We will learn from the past, we will learn from each other, and we will live. The water is dead. But we are alive. And where there is life, there is hope. Thank you for listening to the Native story. God bless you.

-- Walter Meganack, Sr.

October 16. 1998

Benjamin B. Enticknap
PO Box 1086
Haines. AK 99827

Craig Tillery. Chairman
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
1031 West 4th Avenue. Suite 200
Anchorage. AK 99502

Dear Mr. Tillery.

It has been brought to my attention that you as chairman of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council are receiving considerable funds for a "Restoration Reserve." I am writing this letter to urge you to use at least 75% of the reserve funds for habitat protection by purchasing large and small tracts of land. I strongly feel that in order to provide maximum protection for wildlife and their habitat is to set aside land for that purpose.

I work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on fisheries studies in the watersheds surrounding Haines. As a biologist. I understand that scientific research can offer significant information beneficial to the entire community. Certainly many scientists desire the opportunity to study the area affected by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. Information from future research may show what species or areas of Prince William Sound are struggling from the effect of the oil spill. Unfortunately. no matter how paramount the findings. it will not benefit wildlife and their habitat if that habitat is not securely protected. Volumes of scientific research become purely academic if left to sit on a library shelf. I suggest that the primary goal of the Trustees is to purchase land to be designated as a habitat preserve. Scientific research of habitat affected by the oil spill should be a secondary objective.

Lastly. I would like to commend you and your staff on the work being done to ensure that Exxon's restoration money is appropriated wisely. Please continue to use this money in a way that will bring the greatest and most lasting protection to the biologically unique area damaged by our countries most awful oil spill.

Sincerely.

Benjamin B. Enticknap

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

PLEASE REPLY TO:

☐ 1031 WEST 4TH AVENUE, SUITE 200
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-1994
PHONE (907) 269-5100
FAX: (907) 276-3697

☐ KEY BANK BUILDING
100 CUSHMAN ST., SUITE 400
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-4679
PHONE (907) 451-2811
FAX: (907) 451-2846

☐ P.O. BOX 110300-DIMOND COURT HOU
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0300
PHONE: (907) 465-3600
FAX (907) 465-6735

DEPARTMENT OF LAW

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

October 21, 1998

Benjamin B. Enticknap
P.O. Box 1086
Haines, Alaska 99827

Dear Mr. Enticknap,

Thank you for providing your views on potential uses for the restoration reserve fund. The Trustee Council is continuing to evaluate the potential uses and comments such as yours are very helpful in that process. I will pass your comment along to Molly McCammon, the Executive Director of the Trustee Council, so that it may be provided to other Council members. Please be aware that the Council will again be discussing uses of the reserve at its October 27, 1998 meeting in Juneau and a public comment period is planned at 11:00 a.m.. If you would like to participate telephonically please contact the Restoration office at (907) 278-8012.

Very truly yours,

BRUCE M. BOTELHO
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: Craig J. Tillery
Craig J. Tillery
Assistant Attorney General

cc: Molly McCammon w/enclosure

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03-C5LH

PEGASUS ENTERPRISES

John S. French, Ph.D., President

P.O. Box 1470, Seward, AK 99664, Telephone: 907-529-1391, E-mail: frenchpe@concentric.net

EVOS-Restoration Office
645 G Street, #401
Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: Comments on the Restoration Reserve

The following comments were submitted previously and are being resubmitted at the request of others. As you know I was the Science/Academic representative on the EVOS-Public Advisory Group for the first four years of its existence. I think the formation of the Restoration Reserve is probably the most important initiative from the PAG.

In the year since I originally wrote this many of the ecosystem changes have become apparent which have been expressed by low salmon returns and changes in other commercial species in Alaska. The continuing research on the effects of very low levels of weathered oil on eggs and fry also serves to emphasize the weakness of the traditional dogma we have used to elucidate environmental insults. We seriously need to learn more before we can effectively evaluate and manage the habitat already in public hands before we should consider "protecting" more.

To get wisdom is better than gold; to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver. (Proverbs 16:16)

Nature is a fickle master. One thing we did learn from EVOS and from recent years of trying to manage our marine resources is how much more we still have to know about them. By most estimates we have only identified a small percentage of the species in the world. How they interact, along with non-biotic forces, and maintain some semblance of local and global steady states is not even close to being understood.

Much of nature works in long term cycles as the steady state gets pushed out of balance and change occurs to toward restoring a balance. Many of these cycles in the Gulf of Alaska are decades long. Many of the species population cycles appear to be related to a surface temperature cycle 17 years long. This means that the EVOS "ecosystem studies" looked at less than half a cycle. What goes up, or down, could be related to recovery from the oil spill, or simply responding to changing conditions in the environment.

Many of us who supported the restoration reserve from the beginning did so because we realized that important questions about how the changing conditions in the Gulf of Alaska control the health and relative abundance of species, and how broader species interactions affect the well health of the species recovering from the oil spill, could not be answered in ten years of research; no matter how intensive. We asked that a reserve be set aside to assure that the long term funding would be available for the long term studies necessary to

unlock the web of interactions over which we must monitor recovery of species from EVOS and establish the background from which to build our greater understanding for the future.

As long as the rivers run, as long as the birds shall fly. Our forefathers made that promise to Native Americans in treaties to protect their rights and lands. By 2002 we will have spent over $400 million buying land in the name of habitat protection. Here in Alaska where the government already owns the vast majority of the land. The management of parks and other wild lands is being cut due to lack of funds. Do we trust the government of effectively manage these new lands. If we do, where are they going to get the knowledge, the wisdom, or the information necessary to manage without repeating the mistakes of the past.

Where have the salmon gone? Why are the populations of Stellar sealions and harbor seals healthy in southeast Alaska but endangered in western Alaska? Did exposure to oil cause outbreaks of VHS and icthyofonous in Prince William Sound herring? Twelve years ago pollock and cod dominated the Gulf of Alaska, today the flatfish complex is abundant and growing.

To facilitate the answering of as many critical questions as possible an endowment should be set up from the entire restoration reserve fund. The following conditions should prevail.

- ★ The endowment should be managed by a new board including designated representatives of the Trustees as required by the consent decree.
- ★ The fund should be managed to provide stable, not inflation adjusted, funding over at least 20 years.
- ★ The fund should be used only to support research and monitoring projects, with emphasis given to integrated multi-disciplinary projects.
- ★ The fund should be restricted to projects in the broader oil spill area, including all the Gulf of Alaska.
- ★ No habitat should be acquired with the fund.

A more streamlined structure should be developed to administer the fund following these general principles:

- ▸ The fund should be run by an Executive Director who is an ex officio on the Board.
- ▸ The Board should include one member from each trustee agency.
- ▸ The Board should include a representative of the University of Alaska.
- ▸ The Board should include a approximately four public members at-large, two appointed by the Governor, two appointed by some federal mechanism.
- ▸ Proposals should be solicited by an open process.
- ▸ Proposals should be reviewed by an open peer review process, not by a Chief Scientist with a limited review panel.
- ▸ Grant management should be the responsibility of the recipient, and where necessary should be included as a separate item within the proposal.

Justification

Knowledge is the key to effective restoration. The justification for habitat acquisition as

restoration is lined with good intentions. To truly understand the optimal balance of both marine and terrestrial habitats with other factors requires an understanding we do not currently possess. The restoration reserve provides an opportunity to make important incremental additions to our understanding of the biological and physical factors governing the stable populations in the Gulf of Alaska.

Ideally it takes the integrated knowledge of generations to elucidate the whole picture. Realistically, if carefully targeted, multidisciplinary studies were supported over two ocean cycles, the incremental growth in our understanding of natural and anthropogenic forces in the Gulf of Alaska.

By not inflation proofing the fund, and by restricting funding to projects investigating processes in the Gulf of Alaska, including Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet, there is a reasonable prospect that a meaningful amount of progress can be make in 20 years starting with a fund of $150 million.

Although the management of the EVOS-Restoration process has become more cost effective over time, there is still room for cost savings, especially as the diversity of activities decreases. A streamlined board could still act on behalf of the Trustees. With appointments from each Trustee agency it would represent a significant part of the scientific and resources talent pool in Alaska. Appointment of a board member from the University of Alaska would represent most of the rest. Appointment of public representative would assure a broader perspective is represented.

An open project solicitation process and peer review process would insure breadth and open mindedness in the search for optimal effectiveness of the projects funded.

Requiring grant recipients to be responsible for the management, including external financial review, would reduce the overhead costs associated with most projects. This is an approach being used successfully by the Alaska Science & Technology Foundation.

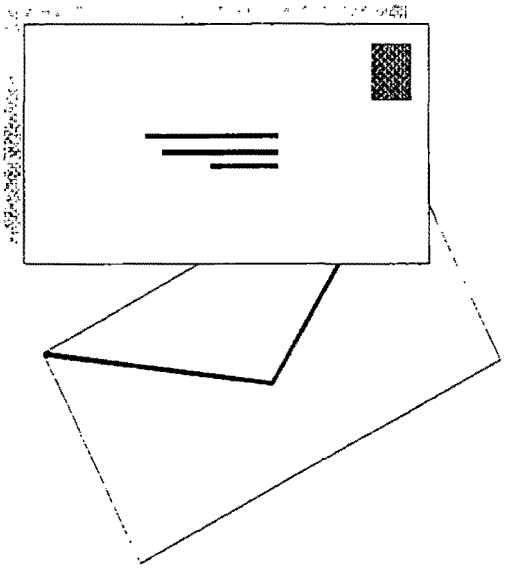
Humans do not do nothing, therefore it is important, if not essential, to understand the consequences of what we do. The EVOS-Restoration Reserve Fund can provide us with the opportunity to do so.

Sincerely,

John S. French, Ph.D.

PEGASUS ENTERPRISES

To: EVOS-Restoration
Company: EVOS-Trustee Council
At: +1 (907) 276-7178



From: John S. French
Company: PEGASUS ENTERPRISES
Voice: 907-529-1391

Date: 10/20/1998
Time: 10:54PM
Pages Including Cover: 4

FAX Mail

Notes:

Created using Procomm Plus for Windows 95

October 27, 1998

Rebecca Williams
EXXON Valdez Trustee Council

Via FAX 276-7178

Rebecca,
Here is the gist of my approach to the "minor spill" problem that's been bothering me in Prince William Sound. I know it would be expensive but think it would be an appropriate investment for some of the EXXON funds.
Please let me know if you think it is something which the Trustees might consider in some form.
Gil Kruschwitz
276-2190
gil@micronet.net

Increasing use of PWS and particularly, the increasing intensity of use of those portions of the sound proximate to developments such as Whittier, Valdez, Chenega, and Falls Bay cause the accumulation of even "minor spills" to become significant upon the commercial, recreational and ecological elements of the Sound.

I am proposing that a system be developed or an existing system be enhanced to: 1. encourage proper disposal of pollutants and 2. permit prompt discovery, notification, remediation and discouragement of "minor spills" in PWS.

The system would consist of:

1. PROPER DISPOSAL: Installation and maintenance of pollutant disposal facilities at major activity areas such as in the communities of Whittier, Chenega, Valdez, and Cordova, if they don't already have them, and conveniently located in harbor oriented facilities in those places as well as in activity centers such as fish hatcheries and Falls Bay.

   This objective would be achieved by installing pollutant collection equipment at each location and providing and trained person to administer the facility. This function may entail as little as calling central collection and maintenance personnel when the facility is full or malfunctioning or as much as full responsibility for overseeing its use to ensure that each type of pollutant is properly disposed of and providing needed maintenance.

2. EDUCATION: To inform and encourage people to use these facilities and to avoid even "minor" dumps and spills.

   This objective would be achieved by installation of signs at entrance points to the Sound, at the docks and other publicity programs such as inserts in bills, notices, and licenses associated with activities in the Sound.

3. SURVEILLANCE: People throughout PWS who are watchful for spills, who know that such spills are destructive and improper, who know that resources are available to remediate minor spills, who know that persons responsible for spills should be reported, and who know what information and materials are necessary to properly report and document a minor spill.

   These objectives would be achieved by:
   Publicity, including signage at entry points to the sound, that spills are dangerous, that

they should be reported. that there is an effective system to report them, and what information should be provided in a report.

4. NOTIFICATION: A method for these people to alert appropriate officials and / or organizations to evaluate the spill, remediate the spill if appropriate, and document or investigate the cause of the spill. The method of communication should be readily available to as many people as possible from as much of the area within PWS as possible. It should also be reliable and on-duty 24 hours per day, every day. And it should be secure to the extent that people reporting a spill will be protected from identification and retaliation by anyone trying to prevent reporting of a spill.

These objectives would be achieved by:

Phone numbers, staffed 24 hours per day by persons able to contact the appropriate authorities or agencies (DEC has its 24 hour number forwarded to Troopers when DEC offices are closed).

Increased cell phone access from throughout PWS to enable contact from currently blocked areas, such as the area west of Knight Island.

5. INTERVENTION: Response individuals or teams capable of: a. evaluating the size and nature of the reported spill, its location, and conditions to determine the type of remediation response necessary and the means to implement it; and b. Documenting or investigating the cause of the spill by recording necessary information from the person reporting the spill or by examining the site and potential responsible parties.

These objectives would be achieved by:

Spill response agreements between DEC and local communities and organizations.

Designated and trained (hazardous materials, etc.) individuals who are either located at points throughout the Sound (such as the people responsible for overseeing the pollutant disposal facilities) or who are frequently traveling though portions of the sound (Tour boat crews, charter operators, fishermen, hatchery personnel, Coast Guard Auxiliary, etc.)

Ouzinkie Tribal Council
Resolution 98-17

WHEREAS: the Ouzinkie Tribal Council is the federally recognized tribe and as such, is the Tribal governing body of the Native Village of Ouzinkie; and

WHEREAS: the Ouzinkie Tribal Council desires an increased role in the protection and preservation of our natural resources that ere damaged by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill of 1989; and

WHEREAS: the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has established a reserve fund that is projected to total $ 140 million by 2002; and

WHEREAS: the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has the opportunity to provide a perpetual endowment for communities in the oil spill region to implement restoration projects as they see fit; and

WHEREAS: the Ouzinkie Tribal Council believes that we are entitled to develop our capabilities and capacity based on the damage from the oil spill to our traditional areas and lifestyles; now therefor, be it

RESOLVED: that the Ouzinkie Tribal Council hereby requests the Exxon Oil Spill Trustee Council to set aside a $20 Million Community Fund as an Endowment in the Restoration Reserve Plan; and be it further

RESOLVED: that we believe that this $20 million endowment needs to be established to provide into perpetuity the opportunity to establish long- term natural resource programs to protect and preserve our natural resources, to provide opportunities for community members to pursue meaningful careers and employment opportunities in natural resources, and to protect our cultural and traditional diversity; and be it further

RESOLVED: that this endowment be administrated by a new non-profit foundation made up of Tribal , State, and Federal Representation throughout the oil spill region.

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as the President of the Ouzinkie Council, hereby certify that the Council is composed of - members, of whom - were present at a meeting held on October 28, 1998, that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the affirmative vote of ___ against, ___abstaining, and that the foregoing resolution has not been rescinded or amended in anyway.

Carl Romanoff
President

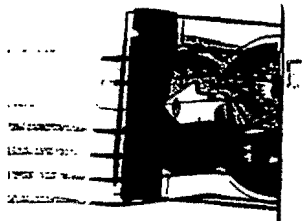
10/28/98
Date

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to urge you to include the entire Bering River Region into the EVOSTC restoration zone and help preserve this intact wild place forever. I have never been to this area before, but that does not mean that it is not dear to my heart. I know the value of preservation of wild places, as it secures clean air and water, provides habitat for plant and animal life, and gives a sence of peace for so many of us just to know it's there. I hope you agree with me and contribute to this cause, for it would be money spent wisely. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Susan M. Friedman

4508 Brittany
Toledo, OH 43615



RECEIVED
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
Attn: Molly McCammon
645 G. St. suite 401
Anchorage, AK 99501

As a resident of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill zone, I support the EVOS Trustee Council's habitat protection program. Since the 1989 spill, the Trustee Council has wisely used settlement funds to permanently protect fragile habitat within the spill zone. Areas the Trustees have protected from clearcutting and other damaging activities include Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Afognak Island, Shuyak Island, and many sites in Prince William Sound.

I urge the Trustee Council to continue these efforts by allocating 75% of the restoration reserve to protect habitat. The habitat money should be invested flexibly, so the Council may buy title or conservation easements on both small and large parcels of land.

Protecting habitat is the single best way to ensure the long-term health of the fish and wildlife resources which spill area communities depend upon for our economy, subsistence needs, recreation and cultural heritage.

Signature Marlo Shedlock

Please PRINT Clearly:

First Name Marlo Last Name Shedlock

E-mail marlo@akvoice.org

Street Address 3901 Carolina Dr #3

City Anch State AK Zip 99517

Home Phone 907 245 5573

☐ Check here if you are forwarding additional written comments

As a resident Exxon Valdez oil spill zone, I support the EVOS trustee council's habitat program. Protecting habitat is the single best way to ensure the long-term health of the fish wild life resources which spill area communities depend upon for our economy, subsistence needs, recreation and cultural heritage. Please help Kodiak island protect our land.

My name is Stuart L. McFarland and I am ten years old.

Thank you!

Po box 2342 Kodiak island

PETITION TO THE
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL TRUSTEE COUNCIL

RECEIVED

SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
$20 MILLION COMMUNITY FUND

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

We, the undersigned members of the **Tradition Native Village of Port Graham**, affected by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill of 1989, desiring meaningful involvement in the restoration of the natural resources upon which we depend, feel that a $20 million Community Fund should be established as part of the plans for the Restoration Reserve. This Community Fund, set up as an endowment, would provide into perpetuity the opportunity for oil spill affected communities to protect and preserve our natural resources, working directly with state and federal agencies, through a spill area wide tribal natural resource management program. This endowment would also provide the opportunity to protect our based scientific programs that are ineligible for funding under the current EVOS funding guidelines. Further, we the undersigned, understand that we are entitled to develop our capabilities and capacity to manage our resources and conduct culturally based projects based upon the damage that was done to our traditional use areas and traditional lifestyles. Therefore, we petition the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee council to set aside a $20 Million Community Fund as an Endowment in the Restoration Reserve Plan. Restoration Reserve Planning should be done within the oil impacted area as opposed to Juneau. It should be done where Native communities have better access to the planning meetings.

NO	NAME	TRIBE/COMMUNITY	ADDRESS	PHONE NO:
1.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5509	284-2203
2.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5541	284-2264
3.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5538	284-2214
4.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5572	284-2326
5.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5549	284-2249
6.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5538	284-2214
7.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5538	284-2214
8.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5529	284-2862
9.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2284
10.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5555	284-2258
11.	[signature]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5509	284-2203

12.	Anne M. Meganack	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 34	284-2274
13.	Adrienne Moonin	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 41	284-2264
14.	Phillip G. Anahonak	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 64	284-2267
15.	[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 65	284-2216
16.	[illegible] Moonin	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
17.	Laura McMullen	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 36	284-2205
18.	Bobbi Sue McMullen	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 12	284-2282
19.	Stephen W. [illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 34	284-2333
20.	Brandon Moonin	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 08	284-2260
21.	BBolton	Trapper Creek ~~PORT GRAHAM~~	PO BOX 55 99683	284-
22.	Greg M[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 36	284-2205
23.	Jim [illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 02	284-2229
24.	Deborah E. Meganack	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 33	284-2234
25.	Alice Anahonak	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 96	284-2348
26.	Billy Meganack	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 24	284-
27.	Melanie Kvasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 67	284-2263
28.	Harrietta McGahan	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 53	284-2235
29.	Sandi Meganack	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 33	284-2234
30.	Cheryl Moonin	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 08	284-2260
31.	Edgar Otis	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 62	284-
32.	Mary Malchoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 48	284-2230
33.	[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 12	284-
34.	Dennis Anahonak Sr.	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 35	284-2286
35.	[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 23	284-2291
36.	Linda Norman	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 44	284-2224

37.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5545	284-2223
38.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5501	284-2329
39.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5577	284-2246
40.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2245
41.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5552	284-
42.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5574	284-
43.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
44.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5514	284-
45.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5516	284-2239
46.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
47.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5567	284-2263
48.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5522	284-2261
49.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5522	284-2261
50.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5525	284-2290
51.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
52.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
53.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5558	284-2253
54.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5505	284-2237
55.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5561	284-
56.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5561	284-
57.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
58.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
59.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
60.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5568	284-2242
61.		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-

62.	Nicholas Moore	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 13	284-
63.	Lena Sander	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
64.	Rita Meganack	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5557	284-2265
65.	Wallace Moore	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 25	284-
66.	Ralph N Moore	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 45	284-2223
67.	Gerald Robert	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2236
68.	Dorothy Moore	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5505	284-2237
69.	Luba Moore	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
70.	Mickey Arakawa	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 76	284-2248
71.	Luba Meganack	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5507	284-2231
72.	Alicia Mackey	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5546	284-2224
73.	Matthew Ivy	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5533	284-2234
74.	Forest Krasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2326
75.	Myrial Krasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 19	284-2289
76.	Jarell Eastman	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2291
77.	Simeon Krasnikoff II	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
78.	Jennifer G.A. Jordan	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5578	284-2284
79.	Mannin, Norman	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5546	284-2224
80.	Sasha Krasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5514	284-
81.	Elizabeth Krasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
82.	Allen Marshall	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5558	2842253
83.	Ronald Young	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5528	284-2217
84.	Frank Tague	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 5518	284-2227
85.	Teresa Metcalf	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2221
86.	[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-2225 2225

87.	Victor Carlough	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 71	284-
88.	Jennie Carlough	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 71	284-
89.	Augusta E. Kvasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 47	284-2247
90.	Violet Yeaton	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 68	284-2242
91.	Clifford McMullen	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
92.	[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
93.	Martin Norman	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 74	284-2244
94.	Jimmy L. Magnuson	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 07	284-2231
95.	Simeon Kvasnikoff	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 87	284-2289
96.	Ephrim Anahonak Sr	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 44	284-
97.	M D McCormick	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 15	284-2324
98.	Patricia M Brauer!	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 15	284-2324
99.	Peter Anahonak Jr	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 11	284-
100	Susan Seville	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 32	284-
101	Wayne Norman	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 46	284-2224
102	Sally Carlough	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55 21	284-
103	[illegible]	PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
104		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
105		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
106		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
107		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
108		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
109		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
110		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-
111		PORT GRAHAM	PO BOX 55	284-

RECEIVED

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

PETITION TO THE *EXXON VALDEZ* OIL SPILL TRUSTEE COUNCIL

SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A $20 MILLION COMMUNITY FUND

We, the undersigned members of the Native communities affected by the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill of 1989, desiring meaningful involvement in the restoration of the natural resources upon which we depend, feel that a $20 Million Community Fund should be established as part of the plans for the Restoration Reserve. This Community Fund, set up as an endowment, would provide into perpetuity the opportunity for oil spill affected communities to protect and preserve our natural resources, working directly with state and federal agencies, through a spill area wide tribal natural resource management program. This endowment would also provide the opportunity to protect our cultural and traditional diversity through the funding of culturally- and tribally-based scientific programs that are ineligible for funding under the current EVOS funding guidelines. Further, we the undersigned, understand that we are entitled to develop our capabilities and capacity to manage our resources and conduct culturally based projects based upon the damage that was done to our traditional use areas and traditional lifestyles. Therefore, we petition the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to set aside a $20 Million Community Fund as an Endowment in the Restoration Reserve Plan.

	Name	Tribe/Community - Address/Phone
1.	Joseph Kalmakoff Sr.	Box KIB, Ivanof Bay, AK 99695
2.	[illegible] Kalmakoff	P.O. Box KIB, Ivanof Bay AK 99695-0050
3.	Henry Kalmakoff	Chignik Lake, AK. 99548
4.	Nana Kalmakoff	Chignik Lake, AK 99548
5.	[illegible]	[illegible] AK 99580 [illegible]3232
6.	Robert [illegible]	Ekwok AK. 99580
7.	[illegible] Kalmakoff	Ivanof Bay AK 99695 # 349-3571
8.	Alfred Kalmakoff	Ivanof Bay AK 99695
9.	[illegible] Kalmakoff	Ivanof Bay AK 99695 ph 669 2218

10.	Cecilia D. Yagle	Native Village of Perryville, IRA Tribe
11.	[illegible]	Perryville AK 99648
12.	[illegible]	Perryville, AK 99648
13.	[illegible]	Perryville, AK 99648
14.	[illegible]	Chignik Bay, AK 99564
15.	Mimi Skoberg	Chignik Bay, AK. 99564
16.	[illegible]	Chignik Bay AK 99564
17.	[illegible]	Chignik Bay 99564
18.	Lana T. Anderson	Chignik Bay 99564
19.	James C. Anderson	Chignik Bay 99564
20.	Daniel L. Anderson	Chignik Bay 99564
21.	Vera Christensen	Perryville AK 99648
22.	Diane Shangin	Perryville, AK 99648
23.	Timothy E. Pestrak	Perryville AK 99648
24.	Dwayne Lam	Perryville 99648
25.	Cliff R. Lind	Chignik Lake, AK 99548
26.	Cathie A. Kalmakoff	Ivanof Bay AK 99695
27.	Elizabeth Kalmakoff	Ivanof Bay Ak. 99695
28.	[illegible]	Ivanof Bay Ak 99695
29.	Joshua Kalmakoff	Ivanof Bay 99695
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	Name	Tribe/Community - Address/Phone
1.	Lavonda Berkeley	Kodiak 524 Thorsheim 486-4242
2.	Walter Meganack Jr	Port Graham AK 99603
3.	Noreen Vlasoff	TATITLEK AK, 99677
4.	Josie T. Tiedeman	TATITLEK AK 99677 - Box 165
5.	Henry Makarka	Wasilla AK 99687 POB 873489
6.	John Totemoff	CHENEGA BAY BOX 8076
7.	Debbie Daughtry	Chignik Bay Box 50 99564
8.	[signature]	Kodiak ak Box 214 99615
9.	Nancy E. Anderson	Box 1454 Kodiak AK 99615

10. John Borodkin — HC32 Box 6673-B Wasilla AK 99654
11. Vivian A. Reuben — 524 Thorsheim Kodiak AK 99615
12. Harold L Aga by Jim M. Guard, Dtte — PO Box 61 Larsen Bay 99624
13. Robert B. Anderson — P O Box 1103 Cordova AK 99574
14. David N. Anderson — PO S Chignik Lagoon
15. James Odomin — Gen Del Chignik Lake, AK 995
16. Andy J. Shangin — Box 116 Perryville AK 99648
17. Johnny Lind — Box Y Chignik Lake AK 995
18. Marilyn R Wagner — Box 69 Port Lions, AK 99550
19. Elizabeth Kewan — Box 69 Port Lions, AK. 99550
20. Denise May — Bay 32 Port Lions, AK 99550
21. Teresa Schneider — Kodiak PO Box 311 486-2455
22. Riley Meganack — P.O. Box 5526 Port Graham, AK 99603-5526
23. Raymond E Nutt — PO Box 122 Sand Point AK 996
24. Eugene Carls — Box 46 Chignik AK 99564
25. John G Squartsoff — Box 41 Larsen Bay AK. 99624
26. Leonard P Heitman — Leonard P. Heitman — Box 2303 Kodiak, AK
27. [illegible] — Box 3208 Kodiak, AK. 99615
28. [illegible] Peterson — P.O. Box 8868 Kodiak, AK 99615
29. [illegible] — Box 8868 Kodiak, AK 996
30. Lydia M. Abbott — Box 1378 Kodiak, AK. 99615
31. Mark E. Olsen — 212 Maple St Kodiak 9961
32. Rita Stevens — Box 201 Kodiak, Alaska 99615
33. Margie Bryan — Box 4315 Kodiak, AK 99615
34. Denis Boggs — 202 Center St. Ste 315-1961 Kodiak AK 996
35. Martha Delgado — PO Box 84 Old Harbor AK 9964

36. Helen [illegible] Harris	Box 22 Port Lions, AK 99550
37. Paul W. [illegible] Sr	P.O. Box 214 Kodiak, AK 99615
38. George Inga, Sr	P.O. Box 106, Old Harbor ak 9964[illegible]
39. Brenda Schwantes	361 Curlew Way Kodiak, AK 996[illegible]
40. KENNETH PARKER [illegible]	BOX 3335 KODIAK, AK 99615
41. David Eluska Sr	Box 5034 Akhiok, Ak 99615
42. Phyllis Amodo	Box 5069 AKhiok, AK 99615
43. Rolin Amodo	" " " " "
44. Luba Eluska	Box 5034 Akhiok, AK 99615
45. Carolyn Kelly	Box 8518 Kodiak Ak 99615
46. Virginia [illegible]	Box 224 "
47. Gertrude Tveit	Box 2115 " " "
48. Andrea J Dercan	Box 8325 Kodiak 99615
49.	
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Name	Tribe/Community - Address/Phone
1. [signature] Gary P. Kompkoff	Tatitlek PO Box 171 (907)325-2311
2. [signature] Loretta Stelkins	Tatitlek BOX 108 907 325-2309
3. [signature] Ray Totemoff	Tatitlek Box 106
4. [signature] Steve Totemoff	TATITLEK BOX 127
5. [signature] Roy S. Totemoff	TATITLEK P.O. BOX 114 907 325 2341
6. [signature] Anna Gregorieff	Tatitlek P.O Box 123 325 2201
7. [signature] Thelma Gefke	Tatitlek, P.O. Bx 138 - 325-2301
8. [signature] Louis Vlasoff	Tatitlek AK Po Box 124 325-2307
9. [signature] Fred G. Vlasoff Jr.	Tatitlek, AK 99677 / P.O. Box 140 (907)-325-2346
10. [signature] Dennis Moore	Tatitlek / P.O. Box 167 325-2214
11. Charles [illegible]	Tatitlek P.O. Box 125 325-2[illegible]7
- [signature] Totemoff	Tatitlek, P.O Box 103 - 325-2236

10. Edward Paul Vlasoff Tatitlek PoBox 153
11. Exenia Gregorieff Exenia Gregorieff Box 105 Tatitlek, AK 99677
12. Peggy Totemoff Peggy Totemoff P.O. 134 Tatitlek, AK. 99677 # 325-2304
13. Debbie Morton Box 148 Tatitlek, AK 99677 325-2316
14. Herman Gottfried Box 138 Tatitlek AK 677 325-2301
15. Laurinda Vlasoff LAURINDA VLASOFF Box 1?? TATITLEK, AK 99677 325-2313
16. Victoria Lee Vlasoff Victoria Lee Vlasoff Box 140 Tatitlek, AK 99677 907-325-2346
17. Evelyn K. Totemoff Evelyn K Totemoff Box 114 Tatitlek, AK 99677 (907) 325 - 2341
18. Penny A. Moore Penny Moore Box 167 Tatitlek, AK 99677 907 325-2214
19. Betty J. Totemoff Betty Totemoff Box 127 Tatitlek, AK
20. Jessie L. Tiedeman Box 165 TATITLEK (907) 325-2300
21. Jerry M. Totemoff BOX 105 TATITLEK, AK
22. Anne Jackson Box 121 Tatitlek, AK. 99677
23. Deseree Sterg Deseree Stellwag Box-108 Tatitlek 325-2309
24. Melissa Totemoff Melissa Totemoff Box 128 Tatitlek 325-2347
25. Brandon Totemoff Box 106 Tatitlek
26. Nanci Kompkoff Box 170 tatitlek 325-2343
27. Angela Totemoff Box 117 Tatitlek 325-2341
28. Kevin Blake Box-164 Tatitlek 325-2001
29. Caroline Kompkoff Box 170 Tatitlek 325-2343
30. Margie Allen Box 140 Tatitlek 325-2346
31. Adrian G. Gregorieff Box-105 Tatitlek 325-2201
32. Matthew Kompkoff Box 120 Tatitlek 325-2344
33. Angelique Gregorieff Box 106 Tatitlek
34. Teresa J. Totemoff Box 134 Tatitlek #325-2306
35. Jonathan Goffe Box 163 Tatitlek # 325-2304

36. John tremomore PO BOX 134 TATITLEK AK 99677
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	Name	Tribe/Community - Address/Phone
1.	Paul Panamarioff	Box 12 Ouzinkie AK 99644
2.	Chris Quick	Box 110, Ouzinkie AK 99644
3.	Martin Ralph	Box 84 Ouzinkie AK 99644
4.	Sonja Delgado	Box 169 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
5.	Vicki L. Panamarioff	Box 43 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
6.	Gary Christensen	Box 8 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
7.	Katherine Panamarioff	Box 74 Ouz. AK. 99644
8.	Debra S. Garner	Box 68 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
9.	James R Quick	Box 110 Ouzinkie, AK. 99644

10.	[illegible]	Box 56 Ouzinkie AK 99644
11.	[illegible]	Box 28 Ouzinkie 99644
12.	Elena Kelila	Box 104 " " "
13.	Jon Morrison	Box 107 Ouzinkie
14.	Harold Miller	Box 83 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
15.	Lee Panamaroff	Box 15 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
16.	Melodie Chichenoff	Box 108 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
17.	Rasmus Anderson	Box 25 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
18.	[illegible]	Box 44 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
19.	Danny M. Clarion	Box 115 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
20.	[illegible]	Box 1 Ouzinkie AK 99644
21.	[illegible]	Box 66 " "
22.	[illegible]	Box 108 Ouzinkie AK.
23.	Joan Chichenoff	Box 8 " "
24.	Sophia Clarion	Box 29 Ouzinkie, AK. 99644
25.	[illegible]	Box 73 Ouzinkie AK 99644
26.	Verna Panamaroff	Box 88 " " 99644
27.	Irene R. Anderson	Box 116 Ouzinkie 99644
28.	Crystal Baptiste	Box 27 Ouzinkie AK 99644
29.	Linda Kelly	Box 72 Ouzinkie AK 99644
30.	Dana Delgado	Box 53, Ouzinkie, AK 99644
31.	Kenneth Anderson	Box 81, Ouzinkie, AK 99644
32.	Tim Panamaroff Jr.	Box 38 Ouzinkie AK-99644
33.	Stormy Panamaroff	Box 38 Ouzinkie AK-99644
34.	Karen Anderson	Box 25 Ouzinkie AK 99644
35.	[illegible]	Box 117 Ouzinkie AK. 99644

99644

36.	Katherine Ellanak	Box 96 Ouzinkie, AK
37.	Wanda L. Morrison	PO Box 107 Ouzinkie, AK. 99644
38.	[illegible] Muller	Box 85 Ouzinkie " "
39.	[illegible]	Box 26 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
40.	[illegible]	Box 85 Ouzinkie AK 99644
41.	[illegible]	Box 77 Ouzinkie AK 99644
42.	Sandra Muller	Box 83 " "
43.	Mary [illegible]	
44.	Carl Smith	Box 69, Ouzinkie AK. 99644
45.	[illegible]	Box 2, Ouzinkie AK 99644
46.	Andy L Boskofsky	Box-65 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
47.	[illegible]	Box 88 Ouzinkie AK 99644
48.	[illegible] L Donato	Box 22 Ouzinkie, Ak 99644
49.	Walter A [illegible] Jr.	Box-22 Ouzinkie, Ak 99644
50.	Christine Bennett	Box 113 Ouzinkie AK. 99644
51.	[illegible]	Box 36 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
52.	Patricia [illegible]	Box 36 Ouzinkie, AK 99644
53.	[illegible] Griggs	Box 95 " "
54.	[illegible]	Box 170
55.	Pete [illegible] Muller	Box 113
56.	Juanita Kelly	Old Harbor/Ouzinkie AK
57.	Barbara Boskofsky	PO Box 5 Ouzinkie
58.	Greg B Muller	Box 23, Ouzinkie
59.	Pattie [illegible]	Box 36 Ouzinkie
60.	Louie Chernoff	" 75 "
61.		

14 November 1998

To the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Council,

I would strongly urge you to please continue using the fund primarily for land acquisition as opposed to basic research. The best way it would seem to keep the Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska from undergoing greater changes would be to protect as much land as possible from further development. It would be especially important to bring the Kodiak Island land acquisitions to immediate fruition.

Thanks
Yours truly
Thomas H. Solenberger MD

Thomas H. Solenberger MD
1520 Baranof Street
Kodiak, Alaska
99615

2915 ✓

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

2291 W. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802
P.O. Box 8249
Missoula, MT 59807-8249
(406) 523-4500
Field Office Fax (406) 523-4550
General Office Fax (406) 523-4581
E-mail - rmef@rmef.org

October 7, 1998

Ms. Molly McCammon, Executive Director
EVOS Restoration Trustee Council
645 "G" Street
Anchorage AK 99501

Dear Ms. McCammon:

In April I contacted you via letter and expressed the interest of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) in Afognak Island and the conservation efforts of the Trustee Council. This past June I visited Afognak and spent a couple of days. Specifically, I visited the Afognak Lake area and discussed the resource values of that area with officers of the Afognak Native Corporation (ANC). The area is an important segment of the elk habitat on Afognak but also contains habitat for other species; notably sockeye salmon and brown bear. We are in the early stages of discussing a cooperative effort with ANC to provide long-term protection of the Afognak Lake watershed for wildlife, fisheries, and cultural values. I am hopeful that we may be able to facilitate a conservation easement with ANC that will provide for long-term fish and wildlife resource protection yet allow traditional uses and protection of important cultural values. The support and involvement of the Trustee Council will be a critical ingredient if the RMEF is to be successful in this effort. We are some time away from a specific proposal, but I wanted to make you and the Council aware of our interest and actions.

The RMEF is a habitat-based organization and since our beginning in 1984, we have cooperatively funded nearly 2,000 habitat projects in Canada and the United States, including Alaska. Our lands department deals with acquisitions, easements and exchanges on a regular basis and has helped facilitate long-term conservation of fish and wildlife values on nearly one million acres.

We, therefore, strongly urge the Council to continue your excellent record of habitat protection through the use of the Restoration Reserve spending plan. Habitat acquisition is the best value for the general public, now and for future generations. I am optimistic that the RMEF can join forces with the Council and work together to protect nationally significant fish and wildlife habitat on Afognak Island.

Sincerely,

Alan G. Christensen
Vice President – Conservation Programs

AGC/dar

3501 v

Catherine Toner

16 Lenox Place

Middletown, NY

10940

Molly McCammon, Executive Director

Exxon Valdez Oil Company Spill Trustee Council

Restoration Office, 645G St. Suite 401

Anchorage, AK, 99501-3451

Dear Ms. McCammon:

I am writing this letter out of concern for the Exxon-Valdez Restoration Project. Through research, it has come to my attention that the Exxon-Valdez Company is obligated to continue this project until the year 2002. This important project, which includes research on the recovery of resources, species, and the Alaskan ecosystem, has proven to be unfinished. Some examples of this unfinished work is resource and species recovery objectives, out of the 30 studied only the bald eagle has achieved it's recovery objective. Similarly, research is inconclusive as to why certain species such as the sea otters haven't fully recovered. Furthermore, other species have such minimal information known about them that recovery goals haven't even been set. This research has proved to be important by the vast amounts of new information attained about the Alaskan ecosystem, and promises to potentially benefit the universal environment through discovery of new techniques for restoration. Therefore I believe it would be non-beneficial to put time restraints on a project of this type not only for the Alaskan

environment but for the world as well. Thank you for your time and consideration. I would greatly appreciate a response with your thoughts on a permanent restoration project.

Sincerely,

Catherine M. Toner

Catherine M. Toner

3362

"The Unknown First Family" by Malcolm Alexander

FESTIVAL FAIRBANKS

A Non-Profit Community Service Organization

September 16, 1998

EVOS Trustee Council
Restoration Office
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, AK 99501

Having spent a good many years working with, listening to, and learning from scientists and long-time residents of Alaska and other polar regions, I share their concern about the future of the North. Now past ninety-one, my own interest in the work of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Commission is more than casual.

Your assignment is of critical importance to the future of the North, its people, and the proper direction of the region's potential special contribution to the rest of the world. You represent the major opportunity to assure that something genuinely meaningful and long-lasting is undertaken.

What to try and why? There is no simplistic, one-shot solution that will make much difference, if any. Many "nice to have" proposals will be advanced; few are apt to be fundamental and long-term. Obviously, however, there is a continuing need to know, to learn all that is possible about the many facets of the macro- and micro-environments of the North and their interrelationships.

Such an educational undertaking to succeed must reach out to future generations. The process should be one to stimulate the intellect rather than centered only on emotion. It should provide endless occasions to observe, to analyze, to weigh and consider, to cope with problems practically, to make reason-based decisions to do or not to do. The exercise is long-term and vital.

I strongly endorse, therefore, suggestions that the EVOS Restoration Plan include adequate provision for establishing a sound future-oriented program of research and top-level instruction of a few who would be in key positions to accumulate and spread knowledge of the North to the many.

This might best be done through "endowed chairs" at a major university located in the region to be understood, protected, and utilized wisely.

Dr. William R. Wood
Executive Director

Office:
102 Lathrop Building
514 2nd Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 74086
Fairbanks, AK 99707

Telephone:
(907) 456-1984
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The endowed chairs could be in various disciplines, mostly scientific, but not all. The creative arts that focus on natural forms add an essential dimension to full understanding and appreciation.

Of course, botany, chemistry, zoology, geology, physics, mathematics, and all of the geophysical, marine and oceanography disciplines, so important in Alaska.

But more. Work in anthropology, art, architecture, music, drama, dance, creative writing all have a contribution to make. The opportunity should provide for a multi-dimensional thrust. A cluster of six or seven such endowed chairs for associated programs would build a concentration of talent, an essential critical mass, each unit strong enough to compliment the others and together make a major difference in perception and understanding toward accomplishing the basic goals of the Commission.

For this assemblage of the "top of the best for the top of the world," I suggest the University of Alaska, a land-grant, sea-grant, space-grant institution, with some very special tools in place: a world scale library, a state-of-the-art supercomputer, a rocket launching range, a synthetic aperture radar facility, a research vessel, coastal laboratories, and research stations with considerable remote monitoring capability.

There is no other institution quite like the University of Alaska. It is becoming a well-recognized international research center and a source of information specializing in knowledge of the arctic and sub-arctic. It is the right place at the right time for the endowed chairs suggested to carry on the mission of the Commission.

Respectfully,

Wm R. Wood

Wm. R. Wood
President (Emeritus)
University of Alaska

3363

Rebecca Williams

From: "Mary K. Janis"
Sent: Monday, September 21, 1998 4:48 PM
To: Rebecca Williams
Subject: EVOS Restoraton Reserve Funds

September 21, 1998

To The EVOS Trustee Council:

As a faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Alaska Anchorage, I was enraged when one year after the oil spill disaster Exxon Oil Company extended an invitation to the entire biology faculty to take an all expenses paid train and boat trip into Prince William Sound to observe firsthand that the spill had been cleaned up adequately. We were advised that the news media was to accompany us on this little junket.

Although several biology faculty saw this as a great opportunity to take a trip which they otherwise could not afford, I saw it as a public relations stunt by Exxon. I expected headlines the next day along the following lines: University Biologists Declare Prince William Sound Once Again Pristine! I would have no part in such a trip.

The EVOS Trustee Council now has the opportunity to use Exxon money to right some of the wrongs created by the spill, to do not simply what is expedient, but to do what is right.

To best serve the future of the State of Alaska the EVOS Restoration Reserve Funds should be used for a permanent endowment for teaching and research in areas relating to environmental damage created by oil spills. I would strongly support a University of Alaska endowment, perhaps for one or more endowed chairs at UAA and UAF, or for endowed research at the recently opened Alaska Sealife Center in Seward. What could be more appropriate than to promote ongoing teaching and research in order to reach generations of children and young adults who will hold the keys to the future of the wondrous and awe-inspiring marine environment of Prince William Sound?

I implore you to think about the future when deciding how to use the EVOS Reserve Funds. Please support the mission of the university by creating a permanent endowment designed to enable and enhance the pursuit of knowledge, whether that knowledge be new knowledge resulting from basic and applied research or new knowledge created in the minds of our students as a result of our teaching.

Mary K. Janis, Ph.D.
Professor, Biological Sciences/Biomedical Program
University of Alaska Anchorage

3364-3382
3384-3492

A RESOLUTION
OF THE UNION OF STUDENTS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE (USUAA)

ASSEMBLY URGING THE EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL TRUSTEE COUNCIL TO WORK WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA TO CREATE A GENERAL ENDOWMENT TO THE UNIVERSITY FROM THE EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL RESOTRATION RESERVE FUND

WHEREAS, the northern Gulf of Alaska was impacted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill, which damaged the biological resources in the Prince William Sound area, and disrupted the economic and social life of many of the local residents; and

WHEREAS, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council is in charge of restoring, rehabilitating, replacing, enhancing or acquiring equivalent resources and services in the oil spill region, and the accumulation of scientific knowledge to manage any future oil spill must be placed in a high priority within the Council's program; and

WHEREAS, one idea that promises many benefits for Alaskans is to use these funds to establish endowed research centers and chairs within the University of Alaska, especially since these funds represent the last chance to create a university endowment with the oil spill settlement money, and

WHEREAS, such endowments would allow research for restoring and protecting spill affected areas, and for developing and marketing education courses and patent for oil spill cleanup technology; and

WHEREAS, use of the EVOS Reserve Fund would go a long way in creating a self-perpetuating environment of teaching and learning.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Union of Students at the University of Alaska Anchorage Assembly resolves:

Section 1: That the Assembly urges the Exxon Valdez Oil spill Trustee Council to work with the University of Alaska to create a general endowment to the University from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Fund.

Section 2: That the Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage petitions the general body of students of UAA to sign in support of this resolution, and on September 22, 1998, will present all signatures gathered to the EVOS Trustee Council and the EVOS Public Advisory Group.

	No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
3364 ✓	1	Josh Biegel	Josh Biegel	3/24/80
3365 ✓	2	Jacque R. Jekelaita	[illegible]	5-15-42
3366 ✓	3	[illegible]	[illegible]	06-04-79
3367 ✓	4	[illegible] R Sanborn	[illegible] R Sanborn	06-26-78
3368 ✓	5	Kimberly Isley	Kimberly Isley	01-26-80
3369 ✓	6	David C. Armstrong	[illegible]	7-18-75
3370 ✓	7	Sean D. Thompson	Sean Thompson	8-6-73
3371 ✓	8	Susan [illegible]	Susan [illegible]	2-17-65
	9			
	10			

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	No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
3372	1	Jerry D Glasscock	Jerry D Glasscock	9-1-98
3373	2	Mikal McGlashan	Mikal McGlashan	06/18/80
3374	3	Sarah E Bearden	Sarah E Bearden	10/18/78
3375	4	Mike Cooper	Mike Cooper	11/05/79
3376	5	Kokayi Nosakhere	Kokayi Nosakhere	04/06/74
3377	6	ERIK Joseph	Erik Joseph	1/5/77
3378	7	Douglas Doggett	Douglas Doggett	4/20/74
3379	8	Kanik Peacock	Kanik Peacock	7-18-77
33	9	Michael Noblin	Michael Noblin	7-21-74
	10			

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No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
3381 ✓1	Jennifer Rogers	Jennifer Rogers	10/27/80
3382 ✓2	Crystal Sherrer	Crystal Sherrer	3-14-79
3			
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	No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
3384	✓1	Deanna Baisden	Deanna Baisden	7-19-79
3385	✓2	LARAE GROVES	LaRae Groves	12-19-39
3386	✓3	Megan Chartier	Megan Chartier	7-30-80
3387	✓4	Natalia Basargin	Natalia Basargin	8-1-98
3388	✓5	Michael Samaduroff	Michael Samaduroff	~~8-10-22~~ 10-22-79
3389	✓6	Gabriel Harbaugh	Gabriel Harbaugh	06-16-80
3390	✓7	Eric B. Lee	Eric B. Lee	11-25-75
3391	✓8	Charlotte Town	Charlotte Town	3-26-51
3	9	Toni Williams	Toni Williams	3-16-62
33.	10	Meredith L. Cantor	Meredith L. Cantor	12-06-75

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	No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
3394	1	Julian Gediel		4/7~~0~~/76
3395	2	Allenya Zalewski		05/17/76
3396	3	Haven McClure		10-12-79
3397	4	Amy J. CARVER		9/28/61
3398	5	David Springer		9-15-56
3399	6	C. Sean Tyree		3-19-71
3400	7	Helen Ulak		10-16-80
3401	8	Michael Steele		6/10/62
34-	9	Teresa Hunt		~~9-1-~~11/21/75
34-	10	Gary Howell		3-29-76

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No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
✓1	Mark Filisenko		02/03/75
✓2	Joshua Paxton		03/13/78
✓3	Nick Epler		10/09/78
✓4	Joslyn Boldt		12-31-79
✓5	Andy Freutel		6-8-76
✓6	Joel Hedstrom		9-14-62
✓7	David G. Paul		9-26-79
✓8	John Tagrey		3-31-56
9	Maria Vasilieva		06/12/78
10	Richt Hanfins		3-2-77

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1	KRISTIN HORTSCH		4/29/72
2	Roman Sinitsky		4/14/78
3	Theresa Ohman		9-30-68
4	Erica Cline		9/16/1978
5	Heather Kelley		2/3/75
6	Patrick Conté		12/29/61
7	Amy Matthews		10/20/80
8	Carl Gieringer		7/19/81
9	Joshua Hunter		09/17/77
10	TRAVIS JANSEN		~~12-29-76~~ 12-29-76

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No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
1	Jaroslav Louneu	Jaroslav Louneu	6/13/78
2	[illegible]	[illegible]	
3	Mal Valkowycia	[illegible]	9/0/47
4	MAH Stout	[illegible]	7/1680
5	Dgt Pilgreen JAMES	[illegible] Pilgreen	3/3/78
6	Jeff "The Body" Lebourge	[illegible]	2/01/77
7	Carole L. Fund	[illegible]	4-11-97
8	Phillip Stevens	[illegible]	6/09/72
9	Adam Spencer	[illegible]	6/09/
10	Elton D. Anderson	[illegible]	12-19-76

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3434

No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
1	Stephanie L. Baur	[signature]	8-31-70
2	Colin Assiant	[signature]	5/9/71
3	Melissa Budsa	[signature]	9-4-79
4	Audrey Hoak	[signature]	02-01-72
5	Stephen Ludwig	[signature]	10/6/78
6	Chris Boyd	[signature]	3/30/74
7	SB Atkinson	[signature]	2/18/67
8	Zlata Lokteva	[signature]	02/03/76
9	Shawn Devenney	Shawn Devenney	10/10/75
10	Marisa Henley	[signature]	9/8/78

34

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3449

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1	Jill Cannon	Jill P Cannon	4-15-77
2	Rebekah Starkey	Rebekah L Starkey	10-29-79
3	DANTE BIANUCCI	[illegible]	1-14-71
4	Josh Burosky	[illegible]	08-02-74
5	Patrick W Ryan	Patrick W Ryan	05/10/79
6	Brad Helvey	Brad Helvey	10/17/78
7	Michael Golden	Michael Golden	8/23/77
8	Anthony Thomas	Anthony Thomas	2/27/78
9	Heide [illegible]	[illegible]	8/4/75
10	[illegible]	[illegible]	10/24/78

34

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OF THE UNION OF STUDENTS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE (USUAA)
ASSEMBLY URGING THE EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL TRUSTEE COUNCIL TO WORK WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA TO CREATE A GENERAL ENDOWMENT TO THE UNIVERSITY FROM THE EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL RESOTRATION RESERVE FUND

WHEREAS, the northern Gulf of Alaska was impacted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill, which damaged the biological resources in the Prince William Sound area, and disrupted the economic and social life of many of the local residents; and

WHEREAS, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council is in charge of restoring, rehabilitating, replacing, enhancing or acquiring equivalent resources and services in the oil spill region, and the accumulation of scientific knowledge to manage any future oil spill must be placed in a high priority within the Council's program; and

WHEREAS, one idea that promises many benefits for Alaskans is to use these funds to establish endowed research centers and chairs within the University of Alaska, especially since these funds represent the last chance to create a university endowment with the oil spill settlement money, and

WHEREAS, such endowments would allow research for restoring and protecting spill affected areas, and for developing and marketing education courses and patent for oil spill cleanup technology; and

WHEREAS, use of the EVOS Reserve Fund would go a long way in creating a self-perpetuating environment of teaching and learning.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Union of Students at the University of Alaska Anchorage Assembly resolves:

Section 1: That the Assembly urges the Exxon Valdez Oil spill Trustee Council to work with the University of Alaska to create a general endowment to the University from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Fund.

Section 2: That the Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage petitions the general body of students of UAA to sign in support of this resolution, and on September 22, 1998, will present all signatures gathered to the EVOS Trustee Council and the EVOS Public Advisory Group.

3454

No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
1	Shawn O'Shea	[signature]	2-24-76
2	Rob Douglas	[signature]	11-8-75
3	Gerry Lindgren	[signature]	9-14-68
4	Karl Wojtaszek	[signature]	12/6/78
5	Sergey Matiushev	[signature]	05/29/79
6	Jonathan W Dykstra	[signature]	2-15-72
7	Dmitri Rakhanski	[signature]	12-14-79
8	Marc Charbonneau	[signature]	04-16-77
9	Jennifer Gardline	[signature]	8-25-7?
10	Diana L. Bottoms	[signature]	6-15-78

34

A RESOLUTION
OF THE UNION OF STUDENTS
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No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
1	Tiffany Ramirez Dearellian	[signature]	8.31.77
2	Sergey [illegible]	[signature]	8.05.29??
3	Jens Brower	[signature]	8-15-80
4	Cesar Correa	[signature]	9-01-98.
5	Mark G. Cummings	MGC	04/11/53
6	Gabrielle Bauer	[signature]	11/2/79
7	MARK D. FITZ	[signature]	7-29-74
8	Alex J. Moonin	[signature]	5-16-76
9	Josh Keller	[signature]	7-28-80
10	Steve Lyall	[signature]	6-16-78

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No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
1	Corey Hackworth	Corey Hackworth	5-16-79
2	DENNIS BOUDEN		8-15-62
3	STEVE TLUSHY		10-11-70
4	RICHARD GERBER		11-14-71
5	PATRICK HILLIKER		05-06-72
6	JUDY GUST	Judy K Gust	11-27-62
7	DENAYNE GLENN	Denayne Glenn	12/14/79
8	Torvald Thomas	Torvald P. Thomas	7-19-80
9	Chris Mosteller		4/22/80
10	DEBRA Blood	Debra Blood	8/24/71

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No.	Printed Name	Signature	Date of Birth
3483 ✓1	Galaga P. Sahar		3-17-77
✓2	Ilona M. Demenina		4-18-80
✓3	Holly Shackelford		3-7-79
✓4	Brett Starr		9-22-72
✓5	Paul Reves		9-1-78
✓6	Justin Lloyd		6/15/79
✓7	Ryan Darby		3/21/80
✓8	DUANE CUNNINGHAM		6/21/69
✓9	Rosita Nadezhdena		5/15/80
34[illegible] 10	I.G Kononov		6/19/77

3493 ✓

October 16, 1998

Benjamin B. Enticknap
PO Box 1086
Haines, AK 99827

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, AK 99501-3451

It has been brought to my attention that you, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees, are receiving considerable funds for a "Restoration Reserve." I am writing this letter to urge you to use at least 75% of the reserve for habitat protection by purchasing large and small tracts of land. I strongly feel that in order to provide maximum protection for wildlife and their habitat is to set aside land for that purpose.

I work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on fisheries studies in the watersheds surrounding Haines. As a biologist, I understand that scientific research can offer significant information beneficial to the entire community. Certainly many scientists desire the opportunity to study the area affected by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. Information from future research may show what species or areas of Prince William Sound are struggling from the effect of the oil spill. Unfortunately, no matter how paramount the findings, it will not benefit wildlife and their habitat if that habitat is not securely protected. Volumes of scientific research become purely academic if left to sit on a library shelf. I suggest that the primary goal of the Trustees is to purchase land to be designated as a habitat preserve. Scientific research of habitat affected by the oil spill should be a secondary objective.

Lastly, I would like to commend you and your staff on the work being done to ensure that Exxon's restoration money is appropriated wisely. Please continue to use this money in a way that will bring the greatest and most lasting protection to the biologically unique area damaged by our countries most awful oil spill.

Sincerely,

Benjamin B. Enticknap

3494 ✓

Rebecca Williams

From: Donald R. Leaver
ent: Thursday, September 24, 1998 11:55 PM
o: Rebecca Williams
Subject: UA Endowment

Donald R. Leaver II
7935 Pipers Creek #203
San Antonio, TX 78251

24 Sep 98

To whom it may concern,

Please let it be known that I strongly support establishing endowed research centers and chairs at the University of Alaska with EVOS Restoration Reserve Funds. I am an University of Alaska Anchorage Alumnus.

Thank You.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Leaver II
UAA Grad '97

3495 ✓

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6150

WWW.SENATE.GOV/~ENERGY

September 22, 1998

Ms. Molly McCammon
Executive Director
EVOS Trustee Council
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Molly:

I strongly believe it is time to focus attention of the remaining Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) funds toward a long term understanding of the Prince William Sound ecosystem and not on a short term goal of habitat acquisition. Therefore, I want to voice my strong support for creating an endowment for the University of Alaska from the EVOS Restoration Reserve funds. The creation of a University endowment stands firmly on its own merits as an excellent way to combine the goals of the Trustee Council with the capabilities of the University.

In this regard, I am very proud of the efforts by Alaskans to create an endowment. Recent resolutions passed by the cities of Anchorage and Fairbanks show that Alaskans understand the value of their University in meeting the needs of Alaskan communities. Letters of support from UAA Chancellor Lee Gorsuch, UAF Chancellor Joan Wadlow, UAF Alumni, and University faculty and students show that the University wants to serve the public and has the capability to do so. The many other letters of support from Mayor Mystrom, and the Voice of the Times provide further confirmation that creating a University endowment is the right thing to do.

I hope you will consider the growing numbers of Alaskans who are expressing their opinions in support of endowed chairs and centers within the University of Alaska at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Frank H. Murkowski
Chairman

3496 ✓

CHARLES P. MEACHAM
CAPITAL CONSULTING
533 MAIN STREET
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
(907) 463-3335

September 24, 1998

Mr. Kim Sundberg
Executive Director
Alaska SeaLife Center
P.O. Box 1329
Seward, AK 99664

Dear Mr. Sundberg:

I am sorry to have missed you when the Public Advisory Group to the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council visited the SeaLife Center. This was actually my third visit to the Center--I have enjoyed it every time. Dr. Castellini did an excellent job both as tour guide of the physical plant and in arranging for briefings from scientists using the facility.

While at the SeaLife Center, I shared with Dr. Castellini a draft article on use of the EVOS Restoration Reserve that I was asked to prepare for a new outdoor magazine. The approach I was asked to take was that the reserve be used for scientific monitoring/research and education. Someone else was asked to write a similar article from the position that the reserve be used for additional land purchase.

A portion of my article deals with endowment of several academic chairs associated with the University of Alaska but located within the spill area, including the SeaLife Center. I have attached a copy of my draft article for your information. If you think the idea has merit, I suggest that you consider contacting representatives of the other organizations noted in the article and see if there is interest in preparing a joint proposal for endowed chairs that the EVOS Trustees could consider.

The views expressed in my article and this letter are my own and not necessarily those of the Public Advisory Group.

Sincerely,

Charles P. Meacham
Principal

cc EVOS Trustees
For your information regarding
the Restoration Reserve.

Exxon Valdez Research and Educational Endowment
Legacy for an Oil Spill

by
Charles P. Meacham

Beaches have been cleaned—in many cases, rock by rock. Hundreds of thousands of acres of formerly private land have now been purchased and placed under government protection. Restoration of Prince William Sound and other areas affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill is well underway. Many of the fish and wildlife species injured by the spill are now recovering. Unfortunately, for others the future remains uncertain. Yet, in a short time, all of Exxon's financial obligations will have been met and no further funding will accrue to the restoration process.

Trustees given the responsibility for overseeing expenditure of settlement funds from this spill, the worst oil spill in the history of the United States, had the foresight to create a Restoration Reserve—a savings account set aside as part of a long-term restoration program. When fully funded, the reserve should total approximately $140 million. Trustees are now asking the public how to best use this reserve.

Two schools of thought are emerging. Some believe that most of the reserve should be used to buy more private land, while others believe it should be used to endow long term research, monitoring, and education.

Of the $620 million settlement received to date, nearly $400 million has been spent or obligated for land. About 650,000 acres of land including 1,300 miles of shoreline and 280 salmon streams will have been protected. But this is only half our obligation. Protecting upland habitat is only part of the job. Biological understanding of fish and wildlife resources is also needed.

We have largely exhausted large parcel purchase opportunities. For the entire oil spill area, only about 15% of the land remains in private ownership. In Prince William Sound, private land probably constitutes less than 5% of the total. The incremental restoration value of additional land purchases has diminished greatly.

My vision for use of the Restoration Reserve is that 10% be used for purchase of small parcels of critical habitat and

90% be placed into a self sustaining "Exxon Valdez Research and Educational Endowment."

Interest and investment income from this endowment would be used (1) to fund programs directed toward better understanding and use of fish and wildlife resources, and (2) to inflation-proof the endowment to insure benefits are continued in perpetuity. With a $140 million endowment, I anticipate approximately $4-5 million would be available annually to fund operations.

Elements of an endowment should include environmental monitoring and research coupled with an educational component.

The monitoring and research program would track, and eventually help predict, ecosystem changes and lead toward a thorough understanding of how elements within the ecosystem interact with one another. The first lesson learned from the oil spill was just how very little we really know about this portion of Alaska—especially fish and game resources. Lack of information frequently causes resource managers to unduly restrict human uses of resources. Resource managers clearly need better information and increased understanding in order to properly set conservation priorities and make informed management decisions.

However, making environmental knowledge available does not ensure use by policy makers, resource managers, or those using the resource. New information must be transferred and applied. This can be accomplished through promoting linkages between scientists, policy makers, resources users, and residents of the area.

Building a commitment to science and academic understanding would begin by endowing academic chairs through the University of Alaska. Provisions should also be made for participation by students who can be enthusiastic sources of energy and labor, contribute fresh ideas, and who can provide an all-important link between science and the rural communities within the spill area. Undergraduate and graduate stipends or scholarships would be linked to each endowed university chair and would be made available to students from the spill affected communities. Research and environmental monitoring field activities should include use of high school students from local communities, as well. It would also be beneficial for resource managers and users to be directly involved in both design and implementation of research and monitoring efforts.

Endowed University chairs could be located at the Prince William Sound Science Center in Cordova, the Sealife Center in Seward, the Fisheries Industrial Technology Center in Kodiak, the Community College in Valdez, and at the University in Anchorage or Fairbanks. Professors could occupy an endowed chair for 3 to 5 years, after which a new visiting professor would be recruited.

In conclusion, we must look beyond this spill to the long-term productivity and use of an environment once impacted by oil. Maintaining the capacity of our environment to provide resources and services requires of us an increased understanding of our ecosystem and an ability to effectively apply this understanding to policy decisions and resource management actions. Developing and applying increased understanding of our natural environment is an effective way to serve both the resource and mankind. This can best be accomplished through an Exxon Valdez Research and Educational Endowment.

3497

Mark R. Hamilton
President

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA STATEWIDE SYSTEM
202 BUTROVICH BLDG
P.O. BOX 755000
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99775-5000
PHONE: (907) 474-7311
FAX: (907) 474-6342
EMAIL: syprs@alaska.edu

September 28, 1998

via fax – 586 7589 – 2pg

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 "G" Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Trustees:

Beginning in 1993, the University of Alaska, along with a significant portion of the Alaska public, has been requesting that the Trustee Council maximize the long-term impact of the Exxon settlement through the establishment of a research endowment and the creation of University endowed chairs in appropriate disciplines. Now, in 1998, with over 85% of the EVOS Restoration Reserve expended, no research endowment in place, and no endowed chairs established, I urge you to seriously reconsider these proposals.

Although significant research projects have been supported by the Council, many important areas of inquiry remain that can only effectively be addressed over an extended period of time. Additionally, there are significant areas of applied endeavor relating to spill technology, restoration methods, and ecosystem preservation that have been learned from work thus far that now needs to be pursued and extended for maximum public benefit.

The establishment of an endowment with a major portion of the remaining Reserve will provide a modest annual flow of funds that will allow, through direct grants and leveraging of additional state, federal and private funds, the continuation of important basic and applied research on the coastal ecosystem of the EVOS impacted area. Additionally, the establishment of selected endowed chairs in relevant instructional, research and/or public service programs would further assure that the lessons learned from the Exxon tragedy will continue to be explored and discussed in classrooms, laboratories, public seminars, and community outreach programs.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

Although, it seems most appropriate for the EVOS endowment to be established through the University of Alaska, it would be my recommendation that proposals for annual funding be accepted from all sources, including federal and state government. To secure the maximum benefit for the state and particularly the EVOS impacted area, the earnings of the endowment should support priorities established by an advisory group representing regional interests, including those of major industries, state and federal government, scientific representatives, and regional fisheries and aquaculture associations.

I have tremendous respect for the difficult and controversial task that you have performed on behalf of Alaska and the magnificent region that was impacted by the Exxon oil spill. I urge you now to give your support to the proposal for establishment of a permanent endowment to assure that the spill response technology, environmental restoration and monitoring programs, and public education projects that you have initiated and supported will continue long into the future.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Hamilton
President

MRH:dm

3498

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. Since the 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, activists within this outstanding conservation program have listened to local citizen's concerns and used settlement monies wisely to protect lands all across Alaska's spill zone. Lands in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park and Chugach National Forest are just a few of the places permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses.

I support allocating 75 percent of the "Restoration Reserve" to **protect fish and wildlife habitat through acquisition of both small and large parcels of land.**

First Name Meghan Last Name Mullins

Residence Address P.O. Box 436

City Cordova State AK Zip 99574

Email ✓ Fax (907) 424-3739

3363

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First Name Elijah Last Name Portyn

Residence Address PO Box 1464

City Cordova State AK Zip 99574

Email Fax

3499 ✓

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First Name CRISTINA Last Name NEWNAM

Residence Address 815 ORCA RD.

City CORDOVA State AK Zip 99574

Email ✓ Fax ✓

3500 ✓

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First Name Sierra Last Name Drake

Residence Address 815 Orca Rd.

City Cordova State AK Zip 99574

Email — technology Fax — drains

2669 V

Chugach Regional Resources Commission

Chenega Bay

Eyak

Nanwalek

Port Graham

Qutekcak Native Tribe

Tatitlek

Valdez Native Tribe

Testimony to the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council

September 29, 1998

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony. This testimony is being submitted by Patty Brown-Schwalenberg, Executive Director, in behalf of the Board of Directors who represent the member villages of the Chugach Regional Resources Commission (Tatitlek, Port Graham, Chenega Bay, Nanwalek, Cordova (Eyak), Seward (Qutekcak), and Valdez.

In 1994, verbal testimony provided to the Trustee Council by community members from the oil spill impacted communities prompted the Trustee Council and Restoration Office staff to look more closely at providing for projects which addressed concerns expressed by the Native villages. As a result, a wide array of community based projects have been funded as well as other projects conducted by state and federal agencies which address concerns and interests expressed by the communities themselves. In four short years, significant strides have been made by the Trustee Council in involving those communities directly affected by the oil spill in the restoration effort. However, the communities feel that this is too little too late. With the payments from Exxon coming to a close, and the projects winding down, the communities are feeling that the restoration of their homelands is nowhere near to completion.

Now, there is an opportunity to continue the restoration effort, perhaps even into perpetuity, with the establishment of the Restoration Reserve. This also presents an opportunity for the communities affected by the oil spill to become actively involved at the onset in both the decision-making process regarding the Reserve, as well as in the projects which will ultimately be funded from the Reserve. Next year will mark ten years

4201 Tudor Centre, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99508, 907 / 562-6647, FAX 907 / 562-4939

since the oil spill occurred. The communities initially spent a large amount of time in uncertainty and confusion, wondering what their future would be like with an oiled back yard. Then their uncertainty and confusion turned to determination as they joined together to develop the political will to become more actively involved in the restoration process.

The Board of Directors of the Chugach Regional Resources Commission, in consultation with the villages in the oil spilled region, have developed a proposal for consideration by the EVOS Trustee Council. That plan is to establish a $20 million set-aside (community fund) out of the Restoration Reserve specifically for community-based projects. The justification for the establishment of such a Community Fund is threefold: 1) under the present system, communities must compete for funding with university, state, federal, and private sector professionals to get their projects funded. The differences in the level of expertise as well as the difference in priorities puts the communities at a disadvantage in the funding selection process. Although the communities would still be competing with each other for funding under our proposed Community Fund structure, the level of competition would be more equitable; 2) regulations regarding allowable projects under the current system could be broadened to allow for the funding of projects that are important to the communities but considered ineligible for funding under the current regulations; and 3) one of the main concerns of the communities is stewardship of the natural resources upon which they depend. A portion of the $20 million Community Fund could be dedicated to long term stewardship -- something that is very important to the communities but very difficult to find continuous funding for.

Other examples of projects that could be funded under the $20 million community fund could include habitat restoration, salmon enhancement, mariculture projects, spirit camps, youth and elders conferences, marine mammal and other community based research, youth area watch, continuing education and scholarships to encourage community members to pursue degrees in the field of natural resources, and tribal traditional natural resource stewardship programs and projects.

Although a comprehensive proposal is still under development stages and will have to go through extensive reviewand approval by the communities prior to publication, the basic points are as follows: A $20 million fund should be set aside for communities affected by the oil spill. This fund should be set up as an endowment to allow for perpetual funding of not only community based projects but for long term natural resource stewardship as well. Proposals submitted by communities would be selected through a panel review process based on whether or not they meet the criteria which addresses the fund's long term goals and

objectives. All the normal financial and narrative reporting requirements would apply to this grant program similar to the Trustee Council's current structure.

The $20 million community fund could be set up in one of two ways, as discussed by the communities. The first option would be to set up a public charitable nonprofit organization with a board comprised of tribal, state and federal representatives whose responsibility would be to administer the fund. The second option would be to add this money to the current criminal settlement account with an advisory board tasked with the responsibility of reviewing and making recommendations on which proposals to fund. If the second option were to be instituted, the tribes in Cordova, Valdez, and Seward are interested in amending the language to include their tribal constituents. They are currently ineligible for this funding because they are not located in unincorporated communities.

The benefits to such a community fund are immeasurable and would have far reaching effects. The local community economies would benefit, the community members can make significant contributions to the restoration effort, more locally determined projects will be funded; the stewardship component of the fund will fill a niche currently unmet and will provide a diverse approach to the restoration effort, including traditional knowledge and management philosophy, scientific research, and monitoring through a cooperative management regime. The communities will also have equal access to funds and if placed in an endowment, this will allow for long term restoration, monitoring and stewardship.

In addition the our comments on the Restoration Reserve, we also express our support for the proposals submitted to assist in the reconstruction of the Port Graham Hatchery, the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Project, as well as the Clam Restoration Project.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you and if you have any questions, I would be happy to address them.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Brown-Schwalenberg
Executive Director

2669

Chugach Regional Resources Commission

Chenega Bay

Eyak

Nanwalek

Port Graham

Qutekcak Native Tribe

Tatitlek

Valdez Native Tribe

Position Paper on the Proposed Uses of the

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Restoration Reserve

The following positions have been adopted by the Chugach Regional Resources Commission Board of Directors at their meeting held April 27-28, 1998, regarding the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Restoration Reserve. The CRRC Board represents the seven village councils of Tatitlek, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Chenega Bay, Eyak, Qutekcak, and Valdez, in all matters related to our natural resources. If you have any questions regarding this position paper, please contact the CRRC Office at 907/562-6647.

USE - How should the money be allocated?

In order to determine the state of the resources, they must be monitored on a continuous long term basis. This should be one of the key components of the use of the Restoration Reserve. In conjunction with research and monitoring, a long term management plan must be developed as a guide for taking care of the resources injured by the oil spill. Tribes in the oil spill affected region must play a key role in these activities for these programs to be effective. The local residents in the communities are the most knowledgeable about the resources in their respective areas, and as such are the most qualified to make management decisions regarding those resources. Working government-to-government with state and federal management agencies on a co-equal basis, the land and resources acquired under the habitat acquisition program as well as those currently held by the Tribes and Native corporations will be protected, preserved, and managed in a manner that is beneficial to all users. Community based restoration projects and some level of technical training and assistance at the local community level through a specific set-aside for tribes would enhance this effort as well. The existence of a set-aside for Tribes would alleviate the difficulty of tribes competing for funds with highly educated staffs from universities, state and federal management agencies, etc., as well as to encourage increased participation from the local Native

4201 Tudor Centre, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99508, 907 / 562-6647, FAX 907 / 562-4939
A Tribal Organization Focusing on Natural Resource Issues Affecting the Chugach Region of Alaska

communities. Such a set-aside could be modeled after the DCRA Criminal Settlement Fund, where the review process is simple, and the application process is unencumbered. We believe that this set-aside should be at least $20 million, placed in an interest bearing account and be disbursed over a set amount of time. Projects to ensure continued communications between tribes and scientists such as what is being provided by the Community Involvement/Traditional Ecological Knowledge Program currently funded by the Trustee Council should be continued. Projects also eligible for funding under this $20 million set-aside should be cultural preservation projects such as spirit camps and subsistence conferences, beach clean-up, as well as projects addressing the human damage from the oil spill. Helplessness, distrust and disenfranchisement within the Native communities is prevalent and an effort to address these issues would go a long way towards healing these communities.

In reviewing the list of properties acquired under both the large and small parcel land acquisition programs, we do not believe that continuing this program would be a wise use of the funds. Neither the federal or state management agencies have sufficient resources, financial or personnel, to manage the land they currently own. Simply purchasing more land will not solve the problem. Funds should be provided for management of the current properties now held by those agencies. Projections for the Afognak Joint Venture acquisition on Afognak Island are approximately $70 million. Other acquisitions are from $2 million to upwards of $46 million. The total amount of the state/federal settlement projected to be used for acquisition of $392.3 million, a total of 42% of the settlement. Because of the costs of habitat acquisition, we believe this would detract from the potential of the Restoration Reserve to address other more important concerns.

Public education is an important element to any program of this magnitude. The notebook series currently compiled and distributed by the Trustee Council should be continued as well as newsletters directed at the general public in a non technical genre. The funding of scholarships and internships for spill area residents in the sciences and natural resources field would also be beneficial. This would allow the local residents to become educated in western science to enhance their knowledge of the ecosystem and provide opportunities for them to become leaders in restoration.

Finally, as you may know, the five federally recognized tribes in Prince William Sound (Eyak, Tatitlek, Chenega Bay, Port Graham and Nanwalek) are currently involved in a lawsuit over the aboriginal title to the lands and waters of the Outer Continential Shelf. If the tribes prevail in this case, this could mean the EVOS Trustee Council may not have been entitled to all of the monies they

received as a result of the settlement, and as such, the tribes would be seeking reimbursement for those funds. Perhaps some funding should be set aside to address this eventuality.

GOVERNANCE - How should key funding and policy decisions be made?

A new board should be established with equal representation from tribes in the oil spill affected area, state and federal management agencies, and the science community. This would be a better balanced group than the current setup because it provides for equal input from all parties responsible for the stewardship and knowledgeable about the resources in the oil spill area. All members on this governing body should have limited terms with the possibility for re-election. Representatives should be elected by the organizations/tribes they represent.

PUBLIC ADVICE - How should public input and public comment be obtained?

The best use of the limited amount of funds should be to eliminate the Public Advisory Group and put some of the savings realized from this action toward public outreach and education. We have not been convinced that all members of the Public Advisory Group are getting information to their constituents, or whether they are there for their own personal interests or the interests of the general public they serve. When special interests are the deciding factor, they create coalitions and divisiveness.

TERM - How long should the program last?

Since restoration, monitoring, management, and research is a continuous process, we recommend that a permanent endowment be established with a new board with equal representation from tribes in the oil spill affected area. We do, however, caution that an endowment fund should not be established to perpetuate a top heavy administration requiring that researchers/PIs wade through mountains of bureaucratic red tape and paperwork in order to get any real work accomplished. The establishment of the Restoration Reserve and its associated organization and development process is the one chance to establish a user friendly proposal process for both the funding organization and proposers. The current process has so many layers of authority and bureaucracy that it becomes cumbersome and oftentimes resulting in delayed start times of seasonal projects.

We suggest you review the granting process of the Administration for Native Americans, Department of Health and Human Services. This federal agency administered approximately $34.9 million in projects in FY97 to tribes and tribal organizations nationwide. The proposal review process is done by outside reviewers three times per year. No one reviewer can review projects of which they have any knowledge, thus eliminating bias. Projects can be one to

three years in length and are monitored by a staff of approximately 15 people. Currently they are funding approximately 283 different projects. Funding is handled through a national computerized payment management system where project personnel can electronically request their funds on an as needed basis, but funds cannot be drawn down if all the required financial reports have not been submitted in a timely manner. A six-month written report and a final report are also required. If you would like additional information regarding this model, please let us know.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on the Restoration Reserve. We would like to commend the leaders of the EVOS Trustee Council and staff for their foresight in placing the long term restoration of our natural resources as a priority in the restoration plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Brown-Schwalenberg
Executive Director
Chugach Regional
Resources Commission

3163 ✓

Grant C. Baker
P.O. Box 240986
Anchorage, Alaska 99524

October 12, 1998

EVOS Trustee Council and PAG
645 G. Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 276-7178 (fax)

RE: Additional Public Comment and Documents Supporting the Creation of a Research Endowment with the EVOS Restoration Reserve.

Dear Trustees and PAG members:

I gave public testimony at the September 29, 1998 EVOS Trustee Council meeting. My testimony was in support of creating a research endowment at the University of Alaska with the EVOS Restoration Reserve. It appears a few documents of support that were submitted may not have arrived in time to be included in the material reviewed by the Council. Since my comments were based upon the documents, they are enclosed for completeness and for your convenience while you consider what to do with the Restoration Reserve. These documents include letters from Senator Frank Murkowski, UA President Mark Hamilton, and one from me titled "Proud Moments".

The enclosed documents, and several others supporting a research endowment, are posted on an Internet WEB site at:

http://www.alaska.net/~baker/evos.htm

It is a very simple grass-roots WEB site and was created to help the voice of Alaskans be heard. I urge all of you to review the WEB site and its documents.

Alaska Governor Tony Knowles' letter supporting a research endowment was presented at the EVOS meeting and is available on the above WEB site. As you now know from his letter, Governor Knowles also supports the creation of a research endowment with the bulk of the Restoration Reserve, as well as an endowment for a small parcel purchase program. Governor Knowles noticeably did not include support for additional large parcel purchases. This makes sense since it would cause the other long-term needs of the settlement funds to be neglected.

The term 'research' seems to suffer from the misconception that it is only measurements and monitoring. A few, mostly outside special interest groups, are concerned about the idea of a research endowment because of this misconception. However, a research endowment can provide work in several areas that are far more reaching and diverse than just taking measurements and monitoring. Research can also include development of oil-spill cleanup and protection technology, production of educational materials for spill response and rural outreach

programs, and integration of the newly developed oil-spill restoration and prevention technology into industry and rural communities through educational programs. After it is explained that research is very diverse and multifaceted, these concerns transform into strong support for an endowment. It is important that the Council be aware of the occasional misconception so that unnecessary fears and misunderstandings can be alleviated.

Any differences between a research endowment established at the University and a research endowment controlled by a specially created board, or a combination of the two ideas, should not be allowed to distract from the importance, need, and numerous benefits of a research endowment.

It is becoming well known that the $900 million EVOS settlement is not going to be enough to restore the oil damaged areas. Many species are known to have not recovered. The reasons why, and what needs to be done about it, are unknown due to a lack of understanding of the problems. What is known is that there are many problems that continue to exist.

A point that needs to be recognized is that creating a research endowment, and the formation of a justifiable basis for obtaining an additional $100 million under the re-opener provision of the Consent Decree, are very compatible efforts and compliment each other. This point is one that the Council should consider when planning for the Restoration Reserve. The creation of a research endowment with the bulk of the Restoration Reserve provides a firm basis that shows problems, many unforeseen at the time of the settlement, continue to exist and sizable funds are needed to fix them.

As mentioned in my attached letter titled, "Proud Moments", the creation of an EVOS research endowment meshes very well with the needs and purpose of the EVOS settlement funds and is the right thing to do. A research endowment would be a legacy of the Spill funds and of the Trustee Council.

Sincerely,

G. C. Baker

Dr. Grant C. Baker
Assistant Professor Civil Engineering
University of Alaska Anchorage
Tele: (907) 786-1056 (wk)
Fax: (907) 786-1079 (fax)
Email: afgcb@uaa.alaska.edu

Attachments:
September 22, 1998 letter of support from Senator Frank Murkowski
September 25, 1998 letter from G. C. Baker titled "Proud Moments"
September 28, 1998 letter of support from UA President Mark R. Hamilton

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6150

WWW.SENATE.GOV/~ENERGY

September 22, 1998

Ms. Molly McCammon
Executive Director
EVOS Trustee Council
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Molly:

I strongly believe it is time to focus attention of the remaining Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) funds toward a long term understanding of the Prince William Sound ecosystem and not on a short term goal of habitat acquisition. Therefore, I want to voice my strong support for creating an endowment for the University of Alaska from the EVOS Restoration Reserve funds. The creation of a University endowment stands firmly on its own merits as an excellent way to combine the goals of the Trustee Council with the capabilities of the University.

In this regard, I am very proud of the efforts by Alaskans to create an endowment. Recent resolutions passed by the cities of Anchorage and Fairbanks show that Alaskans understand the value of their University in meeting the needs of Alaskan communities. Letters of support from UAA Chancellor Lee Gorsuch, UAF Chancellor Joan Wadlow, UAF Alumni, and University faculty and students show that the University wants to serve the public and has the capability to do so. The many other letters of support from Mayor Mystrom, and the Voice of the Times provide further confirmation that creating a University endowment is the right thing to do.

I hope you will consider the growing numbers of Alaskans who are expressing their opinions in support of endowed chairs and centers within the University of Alaska at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Frank H. Murkowski
Chairman

Grant C. Baker
P.O. Box 240986
Anchorage, Alaska 99524
(907) 786-1056

September 25, 1998

Ms. Molly McCammon
Executive Director
EVOS Trustee Council
645 G. Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

RE: "Proud Moments" – The effort to create an endowment for the University of Alaska from the EVOS Restoration Reserve funds.

Dear Molly:

In the past few months, there has been growing support from Alaskans to create a research endowment for the University of Alaska from the EVOS Restoration Reserve. The benefits of the plan are so plentiful, and mesh so well with the needs and purpose of the EVOS settlement funds, that an endowment seems to be a natural thing to do.

Recent editorials have appeared in the Anchorage Daily News concerning the use of chemical dispersants among other tools for oil-spill cleanup. Television news stories have recently reported on oil-spill response teams and cleanup equipment. A news-article appeared in today's Anchorage Daily News about a near miss between an oil tanker and another vessel in Prince William Sound. These recent discussions about oil spill recovery and mishaps highlight the continued need for improving cleanup and restoration technology. Work in these areas is ideally suited for our University.

Research can be many things. In this case, research happens to be what is needed most from the EVOS funds for recovery. Research refers to studies of the marine ecosystem as well as developing practical technology and methods for restoration, cleanup, and protection from oil damage. Such research would help Alaskan waters recover from the 1989 Exxon oil spill. Furthermore, cleanup technology developed for Alaska would benefit recovery throughout the world where oil spills have occurred and will likely happen again.

Among the many Alaskans that have voiced their support for creating an endowment, there are some individuals and groups that deserve special mention. Foremost, James King a 1949 UAF graduate and retired state biologist living in Juneau deserves special recognition for his efforts. Mr. King is a member of the Public Advisory Group for the Trustee Council. He has spent many hours encouraging the creation of an endowment. UAF can be very proud of Mr. King for his perseverance to do a good thing for all Alaskans.

Anchorage Assembly members created and passed a resolution to support a University endowment this past summer. Several assembly members stepped forward and asked to be co-sponsors. It was a proud moment to see public representatives of all political backgrounds put aside their differences on other issues and act for the good of Alaskans when it was needed. The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce passed similar resolutions of support in 1993 and again recently. Anchorage Mayor Rick Mystrom and his office stepped forward and helped with their support.

UAA Chancellor Lee Gorsuch was one of the first University leaders to act this year when he submitted his letter of support last April. Since then many more letters of support have been submitted such as from UAF Chancellor Joan Wadlow, University alumni, and University faculty and students. This shows the University recognizes the importance of an endowment to serve the needs of the public and to satisfy its mission to teach and learn.

The Restoration Reserve represents the last opportunity to create a permanent endowment for the University since it is the last of the EVOS settlement funds. This is a rare opportunity to do something that promises many benefits for all Alaskans in perpetuity.

The Trustee Council members should be applauded for their endurance serving on the Council for the good part of a decade. Now, Council members are faced with making the important decision about the Restoration Reserve. Standing up to create a University endowment will take courage and wisdom. It would be an enduring legacy of the Trustee Council for all Alaskans. Creating an endowment would be an accomplishment that would make the Trustee Council and all Alaskans very proud.

Sincerely,

G.C. Baker

Grant C. Baker
UAA engineering faculty,
UAF alumni, and commercial fisherman

Mark R. Hamilton
President

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA STATEWIDE SYSTEM
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September 28, 1998

via fax – 586 7589 – 2pg

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 "G" Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Trustees:

Beginning in 1993, the University of Alaska, along with a significant portion of the Alaska public, has been requesting that the Trustee Council maximize the long-term impact of the Exxon settlement through the establishment of a research endowment and the creation of University endowed chairs in appropriate disciplines. Now, in 1998, with over 85% of the EVOS Restoration Reserve expended, no research endowment in place, and no endowed chairs established, I urge you to seriously reconsider these proposals.

Although significant research projects have been supported by the Council, many important areas of inquiry remain that can only effectively be addressed over an extended period of time. Additionally, there are significant areas of applied endeavor relating to spill technology, restoration methods, and ecosystem preservation that have been learned from work thus far that now needs to be pursued and extended for maximum public benefit.

The establishment of an endowment with a major portion of the remaining Reserve will provide a modest annual flow of funds that will allow, through direct grants and leveraging of additional state, federal and private funds, the continuation of important basic and applied research on the coastal ecosystem of the EVOS impacted area. Additionally, the establishment of selected endowed chairs in relevant instructional, research and/or public service programs would further assure that the lessons learned from the Exxon tragedy will continue to be explored and discussed in classrooms, laboratories, public seminars, and community outreach programs.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

Although, it seems most appropriate for the EVOS endowment to be established through the University of Alaska, it would be my recommendation that proposals for annual funding be accepted from all sources, including federal and state government. To secure the maximum benefit for the state and particularly the EVOS impacted area, the earnings of the endowment should support priorities established by an advisory group representing regional interests, including those of major industries, state and federal government, scientific representatives, and regional fisheries and aquaculture associations.

I have tremendous respect for the difficult and controversial task that you have performed on behalf of Alaska and the magnificent region that was impacted by the Exxon oil spill. I urge you now to give your support to the proposal for establishment of a permanent endowment to assure that the spill response technology, environmental restoration and monitoring programs, and public education projects that you have initiated and supported will continue long into the future.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Hamilton
President

MRH:dm

Miscellaneous
Correspondence

Gil Kruschwitz
13034 Bates Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99515
(907) 345-0871
gil@micronet.net

November 25, 1998

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 "G" Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Council Member:
I started boating in Prince William Sound in 1974 and have seen the amounts of solid and liquid waste increase with increasing use of the Sound. Increasing intensity of use of those portions of the sound proximate to developments such as Whittier, Valdez, Chenega, and Falls Bay cause the accumulation of even "minor spills" to become significant upon the commercial, recreational and ecological elements of the Sound. This increase is likely to accelerate with completion of the "Road to Whittier", expansion of Whittier Harbor and other planned developments in the Sound.

In addition to my observations, I have spoken with several people with the Coast Guard in Anchorage, Valdez and Juneau: Alaska Department of Natural Resources; Several people with DEC; and the Harbormaster's offices in Whittier and Valdez. I have also reviewed the Prince William Sound Waste Management Plan and have learned the following:

At least one person at DEC thinks that discharges - especially oil - from boats is a huge problem and will likely become worse with more use of the sound. She said that there needs to be more public awareness and reporting, and that reporting that is coming in now is often too late to do any good, but with reports of spill and names of boats in the area the state could follow up with a notice to boaters that a spill was seen in their proximity.

The EXXON Valdez Trustees Council funded a Sound Waste Management Plan through PWS Economic Development Council. Also, the EVTC also funded collection facilities in Chenega, Cordova, Valdez and Whittier. The Waste Management Plan report noted that chronic pollution from community sources is believed to have significant adverse effects on the marine environment; refined petroleum products are very toxic to fish and wildlife, and the cumulative effects of chronic marine pollution can substantially increase the stress on fish and wildlife resources. With regard to the mortality of seabirds, chronic marine pollution is believed to be at least as important as large-scale spills.

The people I spoke with all indicated that pollution from oil products and other products including sewage is still a problem and should be addressed further. Valdez Harbor has continued to expand collection and enforcement efforts but reports that even with their expanded efforts and improved facilities, use of proper disposal facilities is not as high as it should be.

It is clear that the issues of cost, convenience and enforcement must be dealt with.

I think a system should be developed or an existing system be enhanced to:

1. encourage proper disposal of pollutants and
2. permit prompt discovery, notification, remediation and discouragement of "minor spills" in PWS.

This would help restore the resources injured by the 1989 Exxon Valdez Spill by protecting them from further stress (liberal paraphrase from your PWS waste management report) and would consist of the following elements:

- •EDUCATION
- •REDUCED COST AND GREATER CONVENIENCE
- •ENFORCEMENT
- •PREVENTION

EDUCATION

Education is critical to all aspects of this system. Compliance will be higher if people are more informed of the need to keep pollutants out of the environment, of regulations concerning disposal of pollutants, and of the opportunities for properly disposing of various pollutants. This will result in decreased pollution at lower cost.

1. Therefor, we should inform and encourage people to use these facilities and to avoid even "minor" dumps and spills.

   Most people know it is illegal to discharge any amount of oil or oil product (other than from specific exemptions such as normally running outboards) into Prince William Sound.

   Very few of the people I spoke with know it is illegal for boats to discharge raw sewage into the Sound - though one person at DEC did say that boaters are asked to do so as far from shore as possible to avoid contaminating shellfish beds. There also seems to be some difference of opinion as to what constitutes treated sewage and specifically whether chemicals poured into a boat's holding tank satisfy this requirement.

   Greater public awareness could be achieved by making proper disposal a condition of use of the Sound by incorporating requirements for the provision of proper facilities and requirements for proper disposal of pollutants in all State licenses, leases, permits, and resource planning policies. Installation of signs at entrance points to the Sound, at the docks and other publicity programs such as inserts in bills, notices, and licenses associated with activities in the Sound should be expanded.

REDUCED COST AND GREATER CONVENIENCE

Both of these items can be addressed by the provision of local disposal sites available to boat operators at no or low cost.

Installation and maintenance of adequate pollutant disposal facilities at major activity areas such as in the communities of Whittier, Chenega, Valdez, and Cordova, which do have some facilities in place, and conveniently located in harbor oriented facilities in those places as well as in activity centers such as fish hatcheries, Falls Bay, and any other locations which may be developed in the future as sources of marine activity.

There are on-shore oil-product disposal facilities (including those which you funded) in Whittier, Chenega, Cordova, Tatitlek and Valdez. I understand that some of these may be able to take oil directly from a floating boat. However, most existing facilities are apparently not able to handle gasoline, paint thinners, anti-freeze, emulsified oil or solids effectively.

To what extent are they being used? Can they be made more effective by locating facilities at fuel docks and on boats capable of off-loading the boats while they are docked?

Sewage pump-out facilities are provided in Valdez and Whittier (I don't know about Cordova or Chenega) - though a person I spoke with at the Coast Guard said their cutter has had to leave the harbor and the Sound to dump its holding tanks and the pump facility in the Whittier Small Boat Harbor, the pump-out is on "B" float, which seems to be full all summer. It is especially critical for sewage disposal facilities to be convenient.

I suggest that the EVOS Trustees consider funding additional collection facilities in more convenient locations and/or on mobile units to permit boats to be pumped without the need to leave their dock.

ENFORCEMENT

The facilities constructed and operated as a result of your Prince William Sound Waste Management Plan sought to "reduce the flow of used oil into PWS from vessels, boats, vehicles and other community-based sources due to lack of sufficient management and equipment". The people I spoke with at DEC, the Coast Guard, and others all pointed out that the lack of enforcement resources lessens the utility of even very effective facilities. will be enhanced by:

1. Surveillance: People throughout PWS who are watchful for spills, who know that such spills are destructive and improper, who know that resources are available to remediate minor spills, who know that persons responsible for spills should be reported, and who know what information and materials are necessary to properly report and document a minor spill.

   These objectives would be achieved by the education component of publicity, including signs at entry points to the sound concerning regulations on spills or dumping of various pollutants, and pointing out that spills are dangerous, that they should be reported, that there is an effective system to report them, and what information should be provided in a report.

   This will provide increasing motivation for people to comply with disposal regulations even when they are in areas outside the immediate view of enforcement authorities.

2. Notification: A method for these people to alert appropriate officials and / or organizations to evaluate the spill, remediate the spill if appropriate, and document or investigate the cause of the spill. The method of communication should be readily available to as many people as possible from as much of the area within PWS as possible. It should also be reliable and on-duty 24 hours per day, every day. And it should be secure to the extent that people reporting a spill will be protected from identification and retaliation by anyone trying to prevent reporting of a spill.

These objectives would be achieved by:

Phone numbers, staffed 24 hours per day by persons able to contact the appropriate authorities or agencies (DEC has its 24 hour number forwarded to Troopers when DEC offices are closed).
Increased cell phone access from throughout PWS to enable contact from currently blocked areas.

The people answering the phone should be familiar with (or able to properly refer callers to people familiar with) discharge limitations for all materials.

3. Intervention: Response individuals or teams capable of: a. evaluating the size and nature of the reported spill, its location, and conditions to determine the type of remediation response necessary and the means to implement it; and b. Documenting or investigating the cause of the spill by recording necessary information from the person reporting the spill or by examining the site and potential responsible parties.

These objectives would be achieved by:
Spill response agreements between DEC and local communities and organizations.
Designated and trained (hazardous materials, etc.) individuals who are either located at points throughout the Sound (such as the people responsible for overseeing the pollutant disposal facilities) or who are frequently traveling though portions of the sound (Tour boat crews, charter operators, fishermen, hatchery personnel, Coast Guard Auxiliary, etc.)

PREVENTION

The state should adopt planning policies and resource licensing procedures to:

Require adequate disposal facilities, management and enforcement as conditions for any land transfers, leases, or permits for uses which will attract or increase marine activity in the sound.
Require use (perhaps including proof of use) of proper disposal facilities by anyone using state resources in Prince William Sound, including the waters of Prince William Sound.

I hope such a system of education, reduced cost - increased convenience, enforcement, and prevention will help protect Prince William Sound from increased degradation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gil Kruschwitz

TESTIMONY TO THE *EXXON VALDEZ* OIL SPILL TRUSTEE COUNCIL

by Gary P. Kompkoff, Chief and President
Tatitlek IRA Council

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony to you today. The substance of my comments will focus on the Restoration Reserve, and specifically, the $20 Million Community Fund.

In the early years after the oil spill, the communities stood by and watched as state, federal, and private scientists and researchers conducted studies in the oil spill affected area, who oftentimes did not let the communities know what they were studying or why. In recent years, we have taken a greater role in the restoration process through various projects such as the Community Involvement and TEK projects, the Clam Restoration Project, and several salmon enhancement projects. Although I feel there is much room for improvement in facilitating the involvement in the research, we have come a long way since 1989.

The support of the Trustee Council in establishing the $20 Million Community Fund would mean much to the people of Tatitlek. I realize you cannot address the human element of the oil spill, which has long been on the agenda of the communities. Establishing the Community Fund would facilitate the involvement of the people directly affected by the oil spill through scientific research determined and conducted BY the local residents, natural resource stewardship and management conducted BY the local residents, and would foster a cooperative working relationship between federal and state management agencies so that other projects could be conducted jointly by the tribes, state, and federal agencies. This type of direct involvement in the restoration process, would in effect, address the human element of the spill. It would bring a sense of dignity to the community members by contributing to the restoration effort, thus reducing the sense of helplessness that currently exists. For this reason, I urge you to seriously consider supporting the $20 Million Community Fund concept proposed by the Chugach Regional Resources Commission and supported by the local residents throughout the oil spill affected area.

I would also like to express my support for the Clam Restoration Project, the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Project, and the Port Graham Hatchery Reconstruction Project, which are all on deferred status. Your careful consideration of these proposals is also much appreciated.

In closing, I would like to include in my testimony the speech written by Walter R. Meganack, Sr., just a few months after the oil spill. What he says in this speech should bring home to all of us the devastation brought upon the local people by the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill and that we must not forget that the Native people of Prince William Sound, Lower Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and the Alaska Peninsula, who depend upon the natural resources for their livelihood, will be here long after the money is gone and the researchers have gone home.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary P. Kompkoff, Chief
Tatitlek IRA Council

The Time When the Water Died
by Walter R. Meganack, Sr. - Port Graham

The Native story is different from the white man's story of oil devastation. It is different because our lives are different, what we value is different; how e see the water and the land, the plants and the animals, is different. What white men do for sport and recreation and money, we do for life; for the life of our ancient culture. Our lives are rooted in the seasons of God's creation. Since time immemorial, the lives of the Native people harmonize with the rhythm and the cycles of nature. We are a part of nature. We don't need a calendar or a clock to tell us what time it is. When the days get longer, we get ready. Boots and boats and nets and gear are prepared for the fishing time, the winter beaches are not lonely anymore, because our children and our grownups visit the shellfish, the snails, the chitons. When the first salmon is caught, our whole villages are excited. It is an annual ritual of mouth watering and delight. When our bellies are filled with the fresh new life, then we put up the food for the winter. We dry and smoke and can. Hundreds of fish to feed a family.

Much has happened to our people in recent centuries. We have toilets now, and schools. We have clocks and calendars in our homes. Some of us go to an office in the morning. The children go to school in the morning. But sometimes the office is empty and locked. Sometimes the child is absent from school, because there are more important things to do. Like walking the beaches. Collecting the chitons. Watching for the fish.

The land and the water are our sources of life. The water is sacred. The water is like a baptismal font, and its abundance is the Holy Communion of our lives. Of all the things that we have lost since non-Natives came to our land, we have never lost our connection with the water. The water is our source so life. So long as the water is alive, Chugach Natives are alive.

It was early in the springtime. No fish yet. No snails yet. But he signs were with us. The green was starting. Some birds were flying and slinging, the excitement of the season has just begun, and then we heard the news. Oil in the water. Lots of oil. Killing lots of water. It is too shocking to understand. Never in the

millennium of our tradition have we thought it possible for the water to die. But it is true.

We walk our beaches, but the snails and the barnacles and the chitons are falling off the rocks. Dead. Dead water. We caught our first fish, the tradition delight of all -- but it got sent to the state to be tested for oil. No first fish this year. We walk our beaches, but instead of gathering life, we gather death. Dead birds. Dead otters. Dead seaweed.

Before we have a chance to hold each other and share our tears, our sorrow, our loss, we suffer yet another devastation. We are invaded by the oil company. Offering jobs, high pay. Lots of money. We are in shock. We need to clean the oil, get it out of our water, bring death back to life. We are intoxicated with desperation. We don't have a choice but to take the jobs, we take the orders, we take the disruption. We start fighting. We lost trust for each other. We lost control of our daily life. Everybody is pushing everyone. We Native people aren't used o being bossed around. We don't like it. But now our own people are pointing fingers at us. Everyone wants to be boss; we are not working like a team. We lose control of our village.

Our people get sick. Elders and children in the village. Everybody is touchy. Everybody is ready to jump you and blame you. People are angry. And afraid.. Afraid and confused. Our elders feel helpless. They cannot work on cleanup. They cannot do all the activities of gathering food and preparing for winter. And most of all, they cannot teach the young ones the Native way. How will the children learn the values and the ways if the water is dead?

The oil companies lied about preventing a spill. Now they lie about the cleanup. Our people know what happens on the beaches. Spend all day cleaning one huge rock, and the tide comes in and covers it with oil again. Spend a week wiping and spraying the surface, but pick up a rock and there's four inches of oil underneath. Our people know the water and the beaches. But they get told what to do by ignorant people who should be asking, not telling.
We fight a rich and powerful giant, the oil industry, while at the same time, we take orders and paycheck from it. We are torn in half. Will it end? After five years, maybe we will see some springtime water life again. But will the water and the beaches see us? What will happen to our lives in the next five years? What will happen this fall, when the cleanup stops and the money stops? We have lived through much devastation. Our villages were almost destroyed by chicken pox and tuberculosis. We fight the battles of alcohol and drugs and abuse. And we survive.

But what we see now is death. Death -- no of each other, but of the source of life, the water. We will need much help, much listening in order to live through the long barren season of dead water, a longer winter than before.

I am an elder. I am Chief. I will not lose hope. And I will help my people. We have never lived through this kind of death. But we have lived through lots of other kinds of death. We will learn from the past, we will learn from each other, and we will live. The water is dead. But we are alive. And where there is life, there is hope. Thank you for listening to the Native story. God bless you.

-- Walter Meganack, Sr.

Chugach Regional Resources Commission

Chenega Bay
Eyak
Nanwalek
Port Graham
Qutekcak Native Tribe
Tatitlek
Valdez Native Association

TELEFAX TRANSMISSION

Date: 11/30/98 **Time:** 10:20 A

To: Rebecca
Name/Title
EVOS Restoration Office
Organization
Telephone 276-7178 Telefax

From: Patty
Chugach Regional Resources Commission
4201 Tudor Centre Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99508
Telephone 907/562-6647 • Telefax 907/562-4939

Re: Gary Kompkoff requested that his written testimony to be read aloud during the public comment period

Thank you
Patty

NOTE: This telefax includes the cover page, plus 3 pages. If you have problems in the transmission of this telefax, please call 907/562-6647.

DRAFT

The Gulf Ecosystem Monitoring (GEM) Program:
A Permanent Fund for the Management and Conservation
of the Northern Gulf of Alaska Marine Ecosystem.

Mission: To efficiently sustain a healthy and productive marine ecosystem in the northern Gulf of Alaska, while maintaining the quality of life and economic opportunities for residents and visitors.

Concept: Using funds now set aside in the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill (EVOS) Restoration Reserve, establish a perpetual, inflation-proofed endowment, from which the earnings would support long-term ecological monitoring and research in the EVOS area and adjacent northern Gulf of Alaska. This interdisciplinary program would improve understanding, conservation, and management of the living marine resources of the northern Gulf of Alaska. The GEM Program would aim to:

-track lingering oil spill injury (e.g., oil exposure in sea otters) and apply what is learned to injury assessment and response to future oil spills (e.g., NRDA/contingency planning);

-identify and understand annual and long-term changes in the marine ecosystem, distinguishing natural variability from human influences (e.g., wide swings in salmon, marine mammal, and seabird populations);

-develop new fish and wildlife management tools (e.g., genetic stock identification in commercially important fish species);

-provide integrated and synthesized information on the status, trends and health of fisheries and other marine resources, including water quality and contaminants in fish and wildlife consumed by people (e.g., produce annual "state of the gulf" report, with periodic updates as new information becomes available);

-support the identification and protection of important marine habitats (e.g., assist with siting of marine industrial and mariculture facilities; establish protected reserves);

-foster efficiency through interagency coordination and scientific leadership and the leveraging of GEM funds to guide uses of funds from other sources (e.g., the NOAA/NSF GLOBEC program on climate change and the oceans); and

-involve stakeholders in guiding and carrying out the program.

Program Elements: Building on the current EVOS restoration science program and, without duplication, the on-going programs of government agencies, academic institutions, and other entities, the core program would have four main aspects:

-long-term (decadal scale) monitoring of productivity and health of the marine ecosystem, including oceanic influences, the composition, size, and distributions of fish and wildlife populations, and contaminants in organisms and the environment;

-shorter-term (3-5 years) research directed to understanding and resolving specific problems, including the development of new tools and techniques needed to advance fish and wildlife conservation and management;

-ongoing participation and education of residents, young people and future professionals through traditional knowledge projects, scholarships, student research and University of Alaska endowed chairs in coastal communities and at such institutions as the Near Island Research Facility, Alaska SeaLife Center, and the Prince William Sound Science Center; and

-ongoing interagency coordination through workshops and other means and the integration and synthesis of data from multiple sources to constantly update understanding of the status, trends, and health of the marine ecosystem.

Governance and Administration: The GEM Program would be governed by a new board with representatives of state and federal natural resource agencies, stakeholders, and the scientific community, and it would be administered by an executive director and small professional staff with the aid of a panel of scientific peer reviewers. Public education and participation would be encouraged through an annual work plan, "state of the gulf" reports, community and school presentations, and a web site. Minimum annual cost would be $5-6 million dollars, inclusive of all aspects of the program.

[1-Oct-98]

11-14-98

PLEASE CONSIDER TERMINATION POINT & LONG ISLAND FOR ACQUISITION. MOST WEEKENDS FOR MY FAMILY ARE SPENT IN THESE TWO PLACES. ONE IS ROAD ACCESSIBLE AND ONE BY SKIFF. KODIAK NEEDS THIS.

20 YEAR RESIDENT,

MARK WITHROW, MD
1818 REZANOF E.
KODIAK AK 9960S
907-486-6065

November 17, 1998

Molly McCammon, Executive Director
EVOS Trustee Council
645 G. St., Ste. 401
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Molly,

First, I'd like once again to thank you and all others involved in accomplishing the habitat protections secured by the Trustee Council, particularly those in Prince William Sound. With the recent Eyak shareholders vote in overwhelming support of that deal, most of the at-risk private land within the Sound has received significant protection from further habitat damage. Additional private lands in the Sound that need similar protection in the context of the Restoration program are those owned by Chugach Alaska Corporation, such as those at Knight Island, Nellie Juan River, Latouche Island, Montague Island, and the subsurface estate beneath the village corporation lands. I would appreciate hearing the Council's plan to address those additional private resources.

In testimony before the Trustee Council this past August, I raised a couple of additional concerns that I would appreciate hearing from you about. The first issue is the need for additional protections on public lands and waters within the oil spill region that would complement the protections that have been secured on private lands for Restoration purposes. From a Restoration standpoint, these public lands are at least as important and perhaps even more significant to ecosystem recovery than the private lands within the region - they are certainly more extensive. Clearly, any comprehensive restoration program that takes an ecosystem approach, such as is stated in your Restoration Plan, must provide protections on critical habitat within the region regardless of whether it is in public or private ownership. And while the Trustee Council has spent $150 million or so to secure the protections on private resources in the Sound, similar protections on publicly owned resources should cost virtually nothing.

As you know, the Chugach National Forest is presently engaged in an extensive planning effort, and as any activity on this part of the Chugach could have implications to the restoration and recovery of the oil spill region, it seems critical that the Trustee Council recommend a detailed proposal for additional protections and management restrictions on Chugach forest lands. I would appreciate hearing from you regarding the Trustee Council's position on this very important issue. In particular, I'd like to know if the Trustee Council will be developing and forwarding a proposal to the Chugach National Forest for additional protections on publicly owned lands and waters within the spill region.

Some additional protective measures that should be considered include designation of Forest Service lands in Prince William Sound as a National Monument protecting them from threats in conflict with recovery and Restoration; wilderness designation for the Nellie Juan/College Fjord study area; wild and scenic river status for those rivers already found to be eligible by forest planners; and finally the transfer of the Copper River Delta unit of the forest (which is partially within your defined oil spill boundary) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be managed as a wildlife refuge, or the designation of the Delta as a National Monument within the national forest system. It is my understanding that much of this can be done administratively (i.e. by Executive Order), without Congressional action.

It is critical that the Trustee Council exert its restoration mandate on an ecosystem basis, and to do so obviously must involve protections on publicly owned resources as well as those privately owned. This is the sort of comprehensive, ecosystem-based program that was envisioned by the consent decree and the Restoration Plan, and to do anything less would, to be blunt, be ridiculous.

The Trustee Council should advance a comprehensive protective management plan within the present Chugach forest planning process, directly to The White House, and to Congress if necessary.

Finally, I also asked the Council at the August meeting for its position regarding the $100 million reopener for unforeseen damages from Exxon from 2002-2006. I would appreciate hearing any further thoughts or actions regarding this important issue as well.

Thanks again for your consideration. I will look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rick Steiner
P.O. Box 231824 Anchorage AK 99523

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

2291 W. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802
P.O. Box 8249
Missoula, MT 59807-8249
(406) 523-4500
Field Office Fax (406) 523-4550
General Office Fax (406) 523-4581
E-mail - rmef@rmef.org

October 7, 1998

Ms. Molly McCammon, Executive Director
EVOS Restoration Trustee Council
645 "G" Street
Anchorage AK 99501

Dear Ms. McCammon:

In April I contacted you via letter and expressed the interest of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) in Afognak Island and the conservation efforts of the Trustee Council. This past June I visited Afognak and spent a couple of days. Specifically, I visited the Afognak Lake area and discussed the resource values of that area with officers of the Afognak Native Corporation (ANC). The area is an important segment of the elk habitat on Afognak but also contains habitat for other species; notably sockeye salmon and brown bear. We are in the rly stages of discussing a cooperative effort with ANC to provide long-term protection of the Afognak Lake atershed for wildlife, fisheries, and cultural values. I am hopeful that we may be able to facilitate a conservation easement with ANC that will provide for long-term fish and wildlife resource protection yet allow traditional uses and protection of important cultural values. The support and involvement of the Trustee Council will be a critical ingredient if the RMEF is to be successful in this effort. We are some time away from a specific proposal, but I wanted to make you and the Council aware of our interest and actions.

The RMEF is a habitat-based organization and since our beginning in 1984, we have cooperatively funded nearly 2,000 habitat projects in Canada and the United States, including Alaska. Our lands department deals with acquisitions, easements and exchanges on a regular basis and has helped facilitate long-term conservation of fish and wildlife values on nearly one million acres.

We, therefore, strongly urge the Council to continue your excellent record of habitat protection through the use of the Restoration Reserve spending plan. Habitat acquisition is the best value for the general public, now and for future generations. I am optimistic that the RMEF can join forces with the Council and work together to protect nationally significant fish and wildlife habitat on Afognak Island.

Sincerely,

Alan G. Christensen
Vice President – Conservation Programs

AGC/dar

THE IDEA OF
WILDERNESS
NEEDS NO DEFENSE.
IT ONLY NEEDS
MORE DEFENDERS.
Edward Abbey

Dear Molly McCammon:

I'm writing the Council to include the entire Bering River region into THE EVOSTC restoration zone. This area needs protection from shortsighted corperate schemes such as the Carbon MT Project forever.

thanks

Bruce Muhlbradt
614 E. Gallatin Ave.
Belgrade MT 59714

Bruce & Karen Muhlbradt
614 E Gallatin
Belgrade MT 59714-4003

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council

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

October 12, 1998

Mr. Bruce Muhlbrandt
Ms. Karen Muhlbrandt
614 E Gallatin
Belgrade, Montana 59714-4003

Dear Mr. Muhlbrandt:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the Trustee Council's habitat protection program and your interest in protecting habitat values in the Bering River region. As it appears you are aware, the lands in question are outside of the area oiled by the *Exxon Valdez* spill.

Under the terms of the court-approved settlement between the federal and state governments and Exxon trust funds under the jurisdiction of the Trustee Council must be used for the restoration of resources and services injured by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. The Trustee Council undertook an extensive public planning process over the course of several years to develop a *Restoration Plan* that was formally adopted in late 1994. This process, which involved preparation of a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), included a geographic definition of the spill-impact region. A map of the spill impact area is enclosed for your reference.

Public involvement during development of the *Restoration Plan* generated an enormous volume of public comment. One of the issues posed for public consideration was whether restoration actions should take place in the spill area only or include areas outside the spill region. Approximately two-thirds of all those who commented on this issue favored limiting restoration actions to the spill area. Support for this view was even stronger among residents of the spill-impacted region where three-quarters of those who commented indicated that they wanted to see restoration actions limited to the spill-area.

In the *Restoration Plan* a formal policy was adopted regarding the location of restoration actions:

> "Restoration activities will occur primarily within the spill area. Limited restoration activities outside the spill area, but within Alaska, may be considered under the following conditions: when *the most effective restoration actions for an injured population* are in a part of its range outside the spill area; or when the information acquired from *research and monitoring activities* outside the spill area will be significant for restoration or understanding injuries within the spill area." (*Restoration Plan*, p. 14, emphasis added.)

To this point, land purchase and protection agreements within the spill area have been successfully negotiated with nearly all of the major spill area landowners initially contemplated in 1994. Habitat protection efforts have been concluded with ten major land owners (Kachemak Bay, Akhiok-Kaguyak, Chenega, English Bay, Koniag, Old Harbor, Orca Narrows, Seal Bay/Tonki Cape, Shuyak Island, Tatitlek) and other efforts are progressing well (AJV, Eyak, Koniag-Phase II). Only one Large Parcel habitat protection effort was halted after the landowner (Port Graham) declined to participate further.

Assuming successful conclusion of present efforts under the Large Parcel program, it is projected that approximately 636,000 acres of land in the spill area will have been protected. This will provide enhanced protection to approximately 1,320 miles of coastline and 287 anadromous fish streams. In addition, under the Small Parcel program it is expected that more than $20 million will be invested to protect approximately fifty individual small parcels totaling more than 8,000 acres. Together, efforts under the two programs along with the associated support costs represent a commitment approaching $400 million or substantially more than half of the settlement funds under the control of the Trustee Council.

A significant number of public comments have recently been received by the Trustee Council urging that the spill area boundaries be expanded to the east of Prince William Sound to encompass the entire Copper River/Bering River delta in order to allow purchase of habitat potentially threatened by development. This area is outside of the designated spill area and was not impacted by oiling from the spill. While the landowner (KADCO) of a portion of the subsurface estate in the vicinity of Carbon Mountain has indicated a willingness to sell those holdings, the surface estate owner (Chugach Alaska Corporation) which also has subsurface holdings in the area has publicly indicated opposition to having its lands considered for acquisition. As the primary government land management agency for this area, the U.S. Forest Service informally examined the KADCO proposal but has not been able to identify a significant linkage between the restoration of injured resources in the spill area and the proposed purchase of KADCO's subsurface holdings.

Again, thank you for providing your comment. Please know that a copy of your letter will be provided to each of the Trustee Council members.

Sincerely,

Molly McCammon
Executive Director

enclosure

cc: Jim Wolfe

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

September 23, 1998

Rupert Andrews
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 G Street
Suite 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Rupert:

Thank you for your letter regarding your desire for the Congress to enact legislation that will enable the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to minimize management fees and maximize net returns on the civil settlement funds. I appreciate the chance to review your comments and I apologize for the lack of a timely response.

This issue is addressed in Section 619 of the Senate version of the Senate version of the fiscal year 1999 Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary Appropriations bill. This legislation passed the Senate on July 23, 1998, by a vote of 99-0. I voted in favor of this legislation. Now, the House and Senate versions of this legislation will be reconciled during the conference committee process. I will be sure to keep your views in mind as the fiscal year 1999 appropriations process continues.

Enclosed is a copy of this section for your review. Thanks again for your letter.

With best wishes,

Cordially,

TED STEVENS

THIS SEARCH
Next Hit
Prev Hit
Hit List

THIS DOCUMENT
Forward
Back
Best Sections
Doc Contents

GO TO
New Bills Search
HomePage
Help

S.2260

Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (Placed on the Calendar in the Senate)

(A) the taxation of the Internet by States and political subdivisions thereof;

(B) access to the Internet; and

(C) communications and transactions conducted through the Internet.

(3) EFFECTS OF TAXATION- With respect to the taxation of the Internet, the study conducted by the Secretary under this section shall examine the extent to which--

(A) that taxation may impede the progress and development of the Internet; and

(B) the effect that taxation may have with respect to the efforts of the President to keep the Internet free of discriminatory taxes on an international level.

SEC. 619. (a) PURPOSE- The purpose of this section is to allow for the investment of joint Federal and State funds from the civil settlement of damages from the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

(b) INVESTMENT OF JOINT TRUST FUNDS- Notwithstanding any other provision of law, upon the joint motion of the United States and the State of Alaska and the issuance of an appropriate order by the United States District Court for the District of Alaska, the joint trust funds or any portion thereof, including any interest accrued thereon, previously received or to be received by the United States and the State of Alaska pursuant to the Agreement and Consent Decree issued in United States v. Exxon Corporation, et al. (No. A91-082 CIV) and State of Alaska v. Exxon Corporation, et al. (No. A91-083 CIV) (hereafter referred to as the `Consent Decree'), may be deposited in appropriate accounts outside the Court Registry, including the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Fund (hereafter referred to as the `Fund') established in title I of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1992 (Public Law 102-154, 43 U.S.C. 1474b) and such accounts outside the United States Treasury consisting of income-producing obligations and other instruments or securities of a type or class that have been determined unanimously by the Federal and State natural resource trustees for the Exxon Valdez oil spill to have a high degree of reliability and security: *Provided,* That any joint trust funds in the Fund and any such outside accounts that have been approved unanimously by the trustees for expenditure by or through a State or Federal agency shall be transferred promptly from the Fund and such outside accounts to the State or United States upon the joint request of the governments: *Provided further,* That the transfer of joint trust funds outside the Court Registry shall not affect the supervisory jurisdiction of such District Court under the Consent Decree or the Memorandum of Agreement and Consent Decree in United States v. State of Alaska (No. A91-081-CIV) over all expenditures of the joint trust funds: *Provided further,* That nothing herein shall affect the requirement of section 207 of the Dire Emergency Supplemental

Appropriations and Transfers for Relief From the Effects of Natural Disasters, for Other Urgent Needs, and for the Incremental Cost of `Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm' Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-229, 42 U.S.C. 1474b note) that amounts received by the United States and designated by the trustees for the expenditure by or through a Federal agency must be deposited into the Fund: *Provided further,* That any interest accrued under the authority in this section may be used only for grants for marine research and monitoring (including applied fisheries research) and for community and economic restoration projects (including projects proposed by the fishing industry and facilities): *Provided further,* That the Federal trustees are hereby authorized to administer such grants: *Provided further,* That the authority provided in this section shall expire on September 30, 2002, unless by September 30, 2001 the trustees have submitted to the Congress legislation to establish a board to administer funds invested, interest received, and grants awarded from such interest.

THIS SEARCH	*THIS DOCUMENT*	*GO TO*
Next Hit	Forward	New Bills Search
Prev Hit	Back	HomePage
Hit List	Best Sections	Help
	Doc Contents	

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
ALASKA

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CHAIRMAN
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

FINANCE
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
INDIAN AFFAIRS

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KENAI, AK 99611-7716
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KETCHIKAN, AK 99901-6489
(907) 225-6880

851 E. WESTPOINT DRIVE, SUITE 307
WASILLA, AK 99654-7142
(907) 376-7665

September 18, 1998

Mr. Rupert Andrews
Chair, Public Advisory Group
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Cnl.
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, AK 99501 - 3451

Dear Rupert:

Thank you for contacting me regarding the investment of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill civil settlement funds.

As I've stated before, I strongly support a long-term research priority for the use of the remaining funds. It is my intent to help the Trustee Council maximize its investment dollars by allowing them to be invested outside the Court Registry. In turn, I want the assurance that a majority of those dollars will be directed toward marine research, community development projects, and the like. I definitely think these endeavors will be more valuable to Alaska than further habitat acquisition, and I want to see that reflected in the expenditures of the Trustee Council.

Again, thank you for contacting me, and I look forward to working with you on this issue in the future.

Sincerely,

Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senator

Media Contacts
Summer 1998

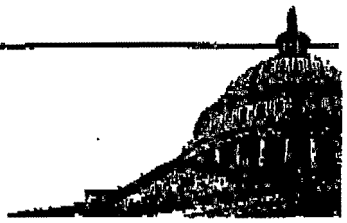
National Geographic Magazine John Mitchell, writer Karen Font, writer's assistant Karen Kasmauski, photographer Kerra Fisher, photographer's assistant Phillip Elliot, cartographer Jen Christiansen, artist Glen Hodges, legends writer	Planning 28-page spread for March issue
National Geographic Television Caroline Satchell, coordinator Mark Schwartz, producer	Planning 20-minute documentary for spring airing of National Geographic Explorer
Natalie Fobes Photographer	Freelancer filmed in PWS in anticipation of 10th anniversary needs
Shipping News Tradewinds Tom Jensen	Worldwide shipping trade magazine did feature on Alaska, including fallout from and restoration of EVOS
Boston Globe Scott Allen, health and science writer	Reporter and photographer in Alaska in prep for 10th Anniversary coverage
ABC News Melissa Dunst, producer Michael Gullan, science correspondent Good Morning America	Filmed in Alaska in prep for 10th anniversary coverage
Alaska Magazine Al Grillo, photographer	Planning 10th Anniversary spread for March
Audubon Magazine Rachel Weisman	Requested information on EVOS
Wild Things Steve Lenschner, producer	Sought help to film with EVOS researchers
Any Place Wild TV Holly Peterson	Doing feature on PWS and EVOS for late summer 1999.
Dateline NBC Jeff Pohlman	Sought info on spill response techniques
History Channel Mallory Sandor Vanocour, host	Looking for someone to be a guest for showing of the movie: Dead Ahead, the Exxon Valdez Story

Peninsula Clarion Doug Loshbaugh (Doing ANCSA story)	The Clarion and Empire are each Morris Communication newspapers. Both are planning a many-part series on ANCSA and one story is the buying of Native lands by EVOS. Expect this in October/November.
Juneau Empire Cathy Brown (Doing ANCSA story)	
The Oregonian Bill Monroe	In Alaska in prep for 10th anniversary coverage.
Game Warden Wildlife Journal Stephanie Griggs, producer	Sought footage of wildlife
Jack Hannah's Animal Adventure Rick Pregeb, producer	Sought footage of wildlife, considering 10th anniversary coverage.
Japan Times David Waddell (stopped by)	Requested information for possible story
Hong Kong Television Percy	In Alaska and requested information for possible follow-up story on EVOS
London Times Susan Greenwood (stopped by)	In Alaska, requested information for possible follow-up story
Earth Endeavors TV Tyson Miller, producer	Sought footage of early days of spill
Gary Lumpkin Cable TV show	Sought footage of spill
Gun & Gear Magazine Curt Garfield, editor	Planning point-counterpoint on uses of the Restoration Reserve
Atlanta Constitution Patricia Guthrie	Requested information for possible story.
KTUU News John Tracy	Doing a major 10th anniversary documentary
National Public Radio John Neilson, science reporter Peter Breslow, producer	In Alaska in prep for 10th anniversary coverage.
Sierra Club Magazine Joan Hamilton	Requested information for possible story.

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF

FRANK MURKOWSKI

United States Senator • Alaska



For Immediate Release: Contact: Chuck Kleeschulte or Cindi Bookout
November 25, 1998 O (202) 224-9306; H (301) 283-4149; O 224-8767
(Email: chuck_kleeschulte@murkowski.senate.gov)

MURKOWSKI OPPOSES NEW EVOS LAND ACQUISITION

WASHINGTON -- At a time when Alaska's fisheries are in an emergency, Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski severely criticized the most recent decision of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council to spend more than $70 million on new land acquisitions on the northern side of Afognak Island.

"We in Congress just agreed to spend $50 million of taxpayer funds to combat a true fisheries emergency in Alaska. Now the trustees disregard the views of most Alaskans and spend $70.5 million to acquire land that largely was unaffected by the oil spill. This money could have gone for fisheries research and development to prevent future fishery disasters. These types of spending decisions make it very, very difficult to win support for real Alaska disaster needs in Congress," said Murkowski.

"I certainly don't object to the sellers getting what they can. But why the trustees would spend more than the appraised value of the lands, especially when many of them have already been harvested for timber, is impossible to justify. They already have acquired 452,000 acres in the area. Once the settlement money is gone, it is gone; but any problems generated by the spill might live on." said Murkowski.

He said the council has already obligated $416.5 million of the $900 million settlement to acquire 646,724 acres of land – an area the size of Rhode Island. That leaves relatively little money of the $210 million still to be paid to the trustees by Exxon for other purposes. "All the money possible should be set aside to sustain important fisheries and for ecosystem research to help generations still to come," said Murkowski, who questioned the priorities of the trustees.

Murkowski continues to work on legislation to increase the interest earnings to the council from the last payments of the oil spill settlement – money he wants to see devoted to fisheries research and fish development projects. The Clinton Administration continues to oppose that, wanting the money to go for land acquisition in excess of the 649,000 acres already identified for government purchase.

-30-

THE PENINSULA CLARION
NOVEMBER 15, 1998

For Perryville residents, spill still not over

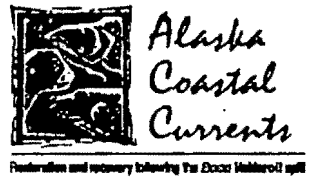
Editor's note: It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of Alaska crude oil. Time has since told quite a lot about the spill's long-term effects. To help tell the story, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is providing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region.

By JODY SEITZ

PERRYVILLE — This tiny village is over 500 miles from Bligh Reef, where the Exxon Valdez ran aground, yet it still felt effects from the 1989 oil spill. Today, residents look to that event as the start of troubles over fish and wildlife abundance. In their minds, the spill still is not over.

You might say residents of Perryville are accustomed to huge natural forces. Their ancestors fled the Katmai eruption of 1912 to settle here, five miles south of Coal Cape, on the shores of the north Pacific. Nearby, the Kametolook River rushes off the flanks of Mount Veniaminov, an active volcano. Volcanic eruptions, violent storms and blizzards are a part of life here. Spring runoff and glacial melt can completely change the course of local rivers. Nothing but air, water and the trackless tundra connect Perryville to any other community. And residents like it that way. "It's one of the better places in the state," says resident Marvin Yagie.

Unfortunately, it wasn't remote enough to avoid the oil spill. In 1989, as the spill reached down the length of the Alaska Peninsula, managers closed commercial fisheries to avoid contamination from the tar balls and oily sheens. Yagie was there. He says the emotional impact of the spill was tremendous. The sight of dead animals, thousands of birds washing ashore, the confusion and the fear of eating contaminated marine foods took its toll on the people.



"I think that's the problem we had with that spill. It was like all this stuff was going wrong around us and there was nobody to take care of the mental side," said Yagie.

Residents say they're not the only ones that have not recovered. Many of the species they depend on have not returned in full. Yagie is circumspect about whether pollution from the spill is still a problem or whether other factors play a significant role.

"Back then you could see what happened," he said. "These days you can't tell because there's so many more chemicals in the ocean. There are more ships and they're dumping stuff.

"I think you can't tell the difference if it's a big ship going by that's doing the oil or it's still the old Exxon spill. I'm pretty sure in 10 years it should be cleaned by itself."

Perryville elder Boris Kosbruk says the spill is only partly to blame for declines in marine mammals. He faults the practice of bottom trawling near haulouts. "To my knowledge, the reasons they (seals and sea lions) haul out there is that's their source of food, and that's being taken away from them," he said.

But the most worrisome issue for Kosbruk is the salmon runs.

"There's three streams in Perryville and there's nothing in them — not like it used to be," he said. "There once was an abundance of fish. There's no way we could fish them out just for subsistence. We've done that all our lives."

Residents have found a way to boost local silver salmon runs, with help from the Exxon Valdez settlement funds. They've closed the spawning areas to fishing and are incubating silver salmon eggs in boxes in the Kametolook River. The first year's eggs were successfully reared to fry stage and released. More fry will follow this spring. From a low of 183 fish in 1995, they've already quadrupled escapement to 800 fish last fall. Biologists say they have a realistic goal — to reach historic levels of about 3,000 spawning cohos.

That, residents say, would help them shake off some of the mental baggage from the 10-year-old spill.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
NOVEMBER 17, 1998

Shellfish farming falls

PETERSBURG — Over the past decade Alaska's shellfish-farming operations have declined by 20 percent, according to an University of Alaska Anchorage researcher. The state has 56 aquaculture operations, primarily in Southeast, down from about 70 a decade ago, but the survivors are larger, said Ray Raloud of UAA's Marine Advisory Program. Last year more than 1 million oysters were produced, along with 30,000 pounds of clams and 5,000 pounds of mussels. Raloud said a new shellfish hatchery in Seward will help aquaculturists by supplying a local and consistent source of seed oysters, clams and other species.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
NOVEMBER 13, 1998

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Researcher takes bird's eye view of fisheries

When Evelyn Brown began studying juvenile herring at the University of Alaska Fairbanks she was hoping to develop another tool to help fish managers predict herring returns in Prince William Sound.

Three field seasons later, she not only has helped develop a deeper understanding of herring, but also about other species of fish important to seabirds.

Prior to Exxon Valdez oil spill studies, scientists knew close to nothing about tiny forage fishes, such as sand lance, capelin, hooligan (eulachon), or juvenile herring. This made it impossible to understand how the oil spill impacted their populations or affected the seabirds that preyed on them. In addition to the spill, there also were natural factors affecting their populations. Some seabird populations that depend on these fish for food have declined over the last 20 years, possibly due to a major ecosystem shift that changed their food supplies.

To find out how successful birds are at foraging for food, researchers have been mapping the distribution and abundance of these fishes using hydroacoustics and an underwater video camera. They found schools of forage fish, but saw few birds feeding on them.

Brown took a more aerial approach. The underwater surveys were too deep, she said. "It's pretty simple," Brown said. "Basically I'm flying in an airplane so I'm seeing what birds see and they seem to be visual predators. Seeing subsurface and seeing other birds feeding is a really important cue to them."

Brown conducts daily surveys of the sound over the course of the summer using an airplane with a GPS (Global Positioning System) coded video camera mounted inside. Between the acoustic surveys and the aerial surveys, researchers have found out a lot more about forage fishes.

"There are places in the sound where these fish occur year after year after year," Brown said. "If you look for them you can see shelves where there's good ocean circulation and eddy formation. And hooligan seem to be feeding on these shelves." Accurately identifying a school from the air can be tricky.

Brown developed her aerial survey with advice from spotter pilots and techniques learned from her days as a fisheries biologist at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Over the past three summers she's worked with catcher boats to verify the schools she was seeing from the air.

She says the surveys can be accurate for age-one herring, but that it can be difficult to tell the subtle difference between schools of age-zero herring and age-zero sand lance. With capelin, hooligan, and age-one herring there's very little error — less than 10 percent, she said.

Brown has documented basic information for these forage fish species, especially for sand lance, which are difficult to assess other than by aerial survey. "We knew sand lance were abundant and played an important role in the ecosystem but we really didn't have any idea of how widely distributed they are or what kind of population shifts take place."

These studies represent the first data on these four species in the northern Gulf of Alaska. Though researchers have seen increases in all these species since 1995, it's still too early to say if this represents a trend in the Gulf of Alaska.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Trawlers face multiple threats

Kodiak's trawl fishermen — and the processors who depend on them — are reeling this month as both their gear type and their fisheries face challenges from three diverse groups.

Environmental organizations are calling for sweeping area closures as Steller sea lion numbers continue to decline. Stellers are effectively becoming the "spotted owls of the North Pacific," as their population from the central Gulf to Attu, which is already considered endangered, shrinks even more.

Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, and the American Oceans Campaign are suing the National Marine Fisheries Service. They say the agency is failing to protect the Stellers' critical habitats by continuing to allow trawling anywhere near sea lion populations.

In response, NMFS has circulated a document proposing vast area closures. Pollock trawlers assert the closures will almost certainly put many in the shorebased, locally-owned fleet out of business.

It remains to be seen whether NMFS will follow through and implement the proposal. The

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
NOVEMBER 13, 1998

FishNet

By Mark Buckley

agency pulled it off the table at this week's emergency meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. However, NMFS says they will be back at the council's December meeting with proposals affecting the January pollock opener.

The second threat is the result of a bill passed recently by Congress. Fishermen and processors in the Gulf groundfish industry say provisions in the American Fisheries Act will give unfair competitive advantages to their Bering Sea brethren.

Gulf trawlermen and processors worry over the creation of what is effectively a quota share, limited entry pollock fishery applicable to both fishermen and processors in the Bering. The new system will give Bering Sea groups more flexibility to determine how fast they want to prosecute the fishery. The "old" system was a derby-style free for all, with the fastest fishermen catching the biggest shares.

Without a version of the new type of regulatory regime in place here, some Gulf groups say, Bering Sea supertrawlers will swoop in and gobble up the quota. Again, that will threaten local boats and perhaps local plants.

Right now Gulf pollock processors, with the tacit encouragement of many trawlermen, are asking the North Pacific Council to create a system in the Gulf that will mirror the new system in the Bering.

But that request is under attack from seafood companies who don't process pollock. They feel the establishment of limited entry for pollock processors will give the "haves" an unfair advantage over the "have nots."

Some fishermen also object, saying the new Bering Sea system — which ties boats to their traditional markets in perpetuity — goes a long way toward turning independent fishermen into little more than contract laborers.

Whether the Gulf groundfish/trawl industry will get its wish for a Bering Sea-style pollock regime also remains to be seen.

The third threat to the trawl fleet is perhaps the least serious, but has nonetheless gotten their attention.

A current proposal asks the Alaska Board of Fish to close Kodiak's state waters to bottom trawls. That proposal is supported by some longliners and pot fishermen, who compete with trawlers for groundfish stocks and who resent trawl halibut bycatch.

The local Fish and Game advisory committee has referred the issue to a working group, which may hammer out a compromise involving closing some state waters on the east side of Kodiak to trawling.

With threats coming simultaneously from three directions, trawlermen will more than ever need to be organized and on top of the situation. With a large portion of Kodiak's economy dependent on the groundfish industry, it will be in the community's interest to monitor the developments carefully.

JUNEAU EMPIRE
NOVEMBER 12,1998

Sea lions may get more official protection

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE – Fisheries managers hope to have a decision next month on whether to limit pollock fishing in the Bering Sea to protect endangered Stellar sea lions.

The National Marine Fisheries Service asked for a special session of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council this week. But when the Anchorage session began, the agency didn't have a conclusion on whether fishing is hurting the sea lions.

There had been wide speculation that NMFS would rule commercial fishing is hurting the Stellars, and ask for new curbs on the lucrative pollock fishery in the Bering Sea. In a draft plan last month, NMFS biologists made several proposals to protect the animals, including no-trawl zones around sea lion rookeries and haul-outs, breaking the pollock season into three rather than two seasons, and cutting the catch in certain areas.

Since 1975, the Stellar population in Western Alaska has fallen 80 percent, to about 20,000 animals. Last year, federal authorities ruled Stellars were in danger of becoming extinct, despite fishing restrictions already imposed around their rookeries.

"Can we say for sure that pollock fishing is driving this? No. There is still some uncertainty," said Jim Balsiger, acting regional director of NMFS. "Because pollock is so important, we're trying to be more careful."

Balsiger said he hoped to have a recommendation for the council next month.

Andrew Trites, a marine mammal biologist from the University of British Columbia, said a climate shift in North Pacific waters may be reducing the amount of capelin, herring or other prey species available to sea lions.

"Is this a matter of biology or politics?" said Al Geiser, a Kodiak fisherman at the meeting.

NMFS struggles with sea lion decline

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
NOVEMBER 12, 1998

ANCHORAGE(AP) — Fisheries managers hope to have a decision next month on whether to limit pollock fishing in the Bering Sea to protect endangered Steller sea lions.

The National Marine Fisheries Service asked for a special session of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council this week. But when the session began here, the agency didn't have a conclusion on whether fishing is hurting the sea lions.

Without the NMFS ruling, "We're all kind of wondering what we're doing here," said Dorothy Childers, executive director of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council.

There had been wide speculation that NMFS would rule that commercial fishing is hurting the Stellers, and ask for new curbs on the lucrative pollock fishery in the Bering Sea.

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See SEA LIONS, Page 2

Sea lions

Continued from Page 1

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"Can we say for sure that pollock fishing is driving this? No. There is still some uncertainty," said Jim Balsiger, acting regional director of NMFS. "Because pollock is so important, we're trying to be more careful." Balsiger said he hoped to have a recommendation for the council next month.

"Everyone assumes pollock is the problem, but a lot of the science disagrees with that," said Glenn Reid, executive director of the North Pacific Seafood Coalition, an industry group.

A climate shift in North Pacific waters may be reducing the amount of capelin, herring or other prey species available to sea lions, said Andrew Trites, a marine mammal biologist from the University of British Columbia at an advisory panel meeting Tuesday.

"In the Bering Sea you've got huge removals of fish, and Stellers are going down. But there's no pollock fishing in Prince William Sound and you see the same decline," said Al Geiser, a Kodiak fisherman. "Is this a matter of biology or politics?"

But conservation groups say the circumstantial case against the fishing industry is too strong to ignore.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
NOVEMBER 12, 1998

Bering Sea crab catch near quota

By MARK BUCKLEY
Mirror Writer

Despite a strong catch, Fish and Game officials are estimating the recent Bristol Bay red king crab fishery will produce slightly less than the quota.

"Right now we think the harvest will total around 15 million pounds," said Forrest Bowers, assistant area management biologist with the Dept. of Fish & Game in Dutch Harbor. "The guideline harvest level was 15.8 million, so the catch might be a little low."

"We'll have the final numbers in a few days," he added.

The 1998 fishery, which opened Nov. 1, attracted 275 boats — 57 of them from Kodiak — and lasted just five days. Fish and Game closed the season effective Nov. 6. With a season that short, not every boat was able to do well.

"For the most part, people were happy with the season, but there were definitely some winners and losers," Bowers said. "The fishermen who got on crab from the get-go put in pretty good seasons; there were deliveries of over 100,000 pounds.

"But there were some boats in the 15–20,000-pound range, too," he added. "I understand the boats that started out in the traditional grounds in the southeast part of the district didn't get on crab right away and didn't really have time to move their gear onto better fishing."

Fishermen also seemed content with the price.

Before the season opened they settled on a base of $2.60 per pound, a price Kodiak skipper Tyler Schmeil reported he was paid when he delivered in the Pribilofs. Skipper Kevin Suydam, of the F/V Lady Alaska, reported the Dutch Harbor price was $2.80 per pound.

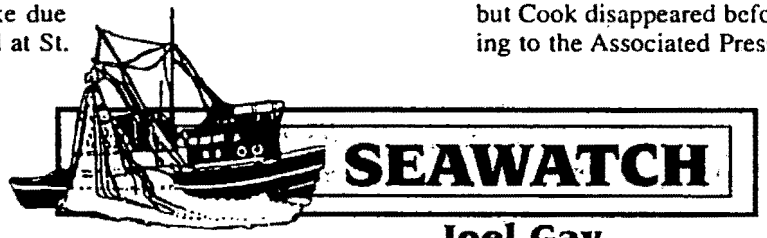
Bowers estimated most boats delivered between 35–60,000 pounds.

"The crab were good size, averaging just under 7 pounds," he said. "The average number of legal-size males per pot ranged from 19 on the first pick to 15 at the end. But at least one boat was got 50–60 keepers per pot. They were very happy."

Mark Buckley photo

Bravely lifting a live king crab, Jessica Riley, 9, is happy her dad returned safely from the Bering Sea. Carlos Riley is a crewman on the Lady Alaska. The Bristol Bay red king crab season lasted just five days, producing 15 million pounds for the 275-boat fleet.

Bristol Bay crab season comes off without a hitch



Joel Gay

KING CRAB FISHERMEN IN BRISTOL BAY made short work of their quota, landing some 16 million pounds in five days of fishing. The fishery began at 4 p.m. Nov. 1 and ended at 4 p.m. last Friday. The quota was nearly double that of last year, at 15.8 million pounds. The fleet, which had been dogged by fears of a strike due to low prices paid at St. Matthew Island and the Pribilofs, agreed before the season to fish for $2.60 a pound, according to the Dutch Harbor Fisherman. Last year they received $3.45 a pound. Some 256 boats participated. Weather was good for the first several days, but deteriorated to 45-knot winds by the end, said Forrest Bowers, assistant Area Shellfish Biologist for the Department of Fish and Game in Unalaska.

THOUGH THE WEATHER PLAYED A ROLE in the speedy fishery, the crab stock itself was the key to the high catch, Bowers said. Last year in five days they caught just under 9 million pounds. Even at the end of this year's season, when catches normally start to drop off, crews found 16 to 17 legal crab per pot. The future looks rosy, too, he said. Surveys in the recent past have showed a large class of prerecruit crab, some of which entered the fishery this year. The rest are expected soon, and while the average size of the crab may shrink a bit, their overall numbers could cause next year's quota to rise. Bowers was optimistic, but realistic. "The next few years look real favorable," he said, "depending on the survey this summer."

ONE MAN DIED during this year's crab fishery, which is a far cry from the years when half a dozen or more disappeared. A crewman on the Providence, Michael Cook of Seneca, Ore., went overboard Thursday night, less than 24 hours before the closure. Another crewman on the boat jumped into a survival suit and went in after him, but Cook disappeared before he could be reached, according to the Associated Press. On the Adventurer one crewman was stabbed by another, and a crewman on the Diligence had his fingers crushed when they came between a line and the boat's rail and had to be evacuated by helicopter.

A DRAGGER OVERTURNED in Shelikof Strait two weeks ago, but all four crew members were rescued without incident. The 108-foot Ocean Hope I was hauling in a cod end of pollock at the southwest end of Kodiak Island at around midnight on Oct. 30 when it began listing and never recovered, according to the Kodiak Daily Mirror. The skipper got off a Mayday while the crew — including one filling in for a regular — got into their survival suits and launched a raft. The vessel then sank. The crew was picked up by the trawler Gold Rush and taken back to Kodiak.

HALIBUT SEASON ENDS SUNDAY at noon and it appears Alaska longliners will come close to catching the entire 58 million pound quota. As of Monday, the fleet had landed 89 percent, including 91 percent from Area 3A and 94 percent from 3B, according to National Marine Fisheries Service. Homer will end the year, for the first time since IFQs were instituted, as the top port for landings. As of Monday, 20 percent of all halibut caught in the North Pacific had been landed in Homer — slightly more than 10 million pounds. Kodiak was second with 16.9 percent, followed by Seward at 10.8 percent. The price paid by the Auction Block appears to have peaked at $2.68 a pound for 12,000 pounds landed Nov. 2, and slipped back to $2.17 by Nov. 4.

THE HOMER ICE PLANT and cold storage units shut down for the winter next Thursday, according to the city. Fishermen should plan to have their bait out by then or risk losing it.

KACHEMAK BAY CLAM DIGGERS still have a ways to go fulfill their quota of littleneck clams and mussels in the Southern District of Cook Inlet. About nine diggers this year had harvested some 23,500 pounds in the first three quarterly allocations, according to the Department of Fish and Game, leaving 6,500 for the fourth quarter. Starting Nov. 1, howEever, the Hardshell Clam Management Plan requires that openings be limited to 48-hour periods in which air temperatures are above freezing.

EIGHTY NATIONS HAVE AGREED to fish less in the future, and the United Nations is expected to approve the agreement in February to make the deal final. The historic agreement came at the end of a weeklong Food and Agriculture Organization conference in Rome. Faced with evidence that overfishing is killing the world's oceans, all the major fishing nations agreed to reduce their fishing capacity in hopes of rebuilding stocks, and especially to reduce fishing pressure on sharks and seabirds, according to the Associated Press.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
NOVEMBER 10, 1998

Feds move to extend albatross protection

HONOLULU (AP) — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants to correct a nearly 30-year-old mistake by protecting the Alaska and Hawaii habitats of an albatross species that numbers no more than a thousand birds.

The short-tailed albatross already is considered an endangered species under federal law, but that protected status extends only to its presence on the high seas and in Japan and Russia.

Any habitat in the United States was excluded because sightings of the species were rare. The Fish and Wildlife Service said that was an "administrative oversight."

The service now wants to extend those protections to the albatross' American habitats, namely the coastal waters of Alaska and Hawaii and the potential breeding ground of Midway Atoll.

The short-tailed albatross has a predominantly white body and a hooked, pink bill. Its wings are black and white and can reach a span of 7 feet.

It is the largest albatross inhabiting the North Pacific Ocean.

The birds once numbered in the millions with breeding colonies on several islands south of the main islands of Japan.

But hunters, volcanic damage to nesting habitats, entanglement in fishing lines and competition for nesting habitat with black-footed albatrosses has reduced that population to about 1,000, federal officials said.

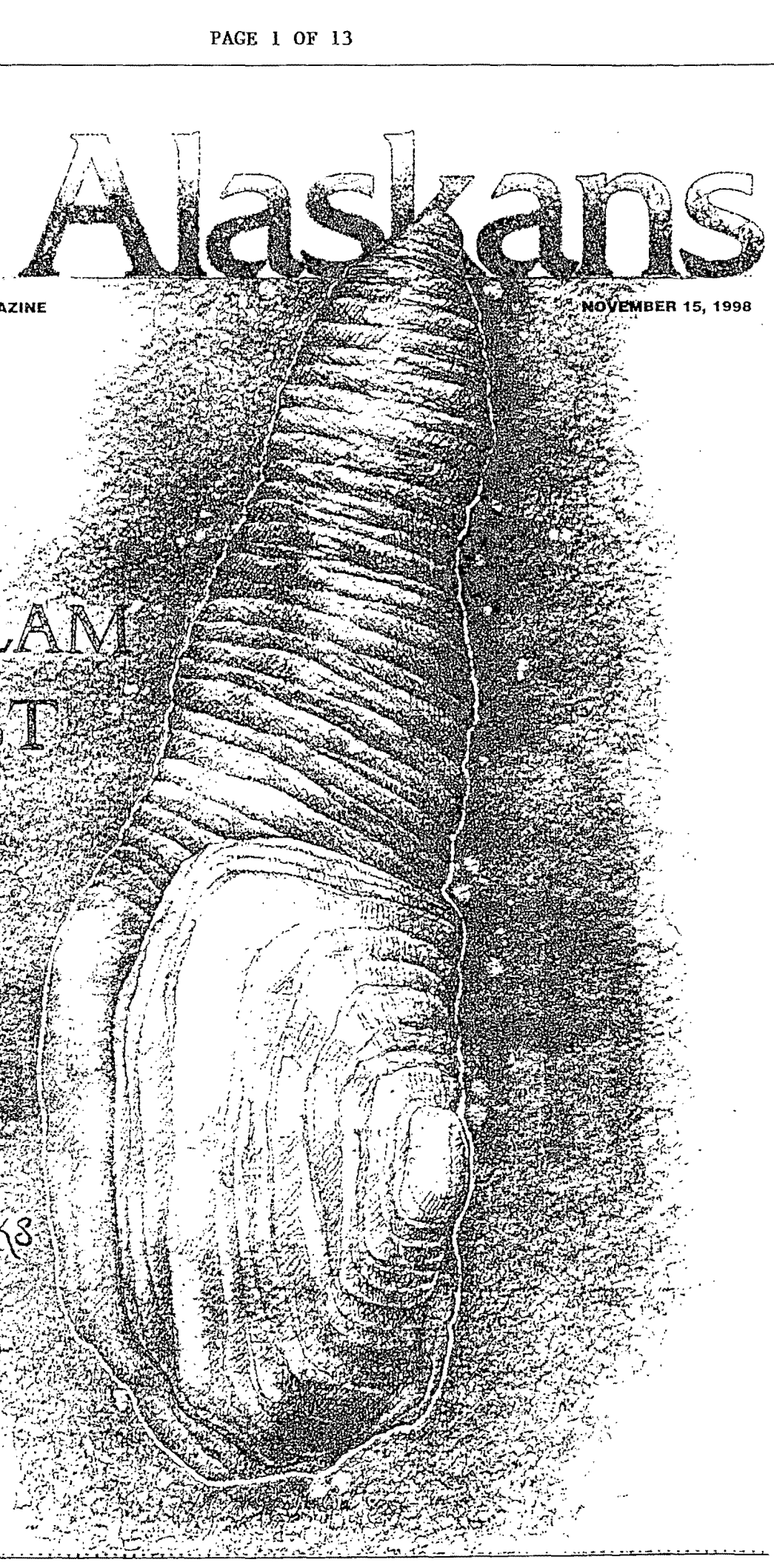
Now, the birds mainly breed on Japan's Torishima Island and Minami-kojima Island. Nesting pairs also have been seen on Midway Atoll.

We Alaskans

THE ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 15, 1998

THE GREAT CLAM HARVEST



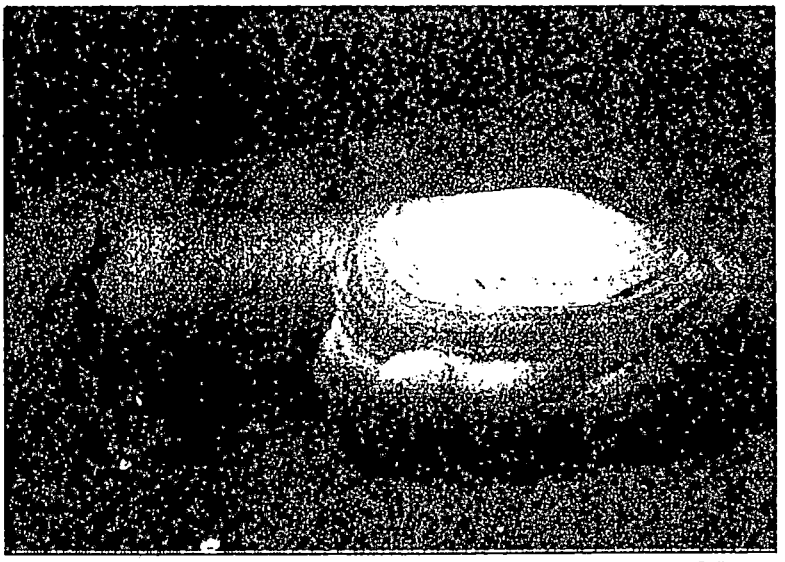
At $50 apiece those giant geoducks are no joke

This Week

BERING SEA BATTLE: Alaskans fishing in North America's last great fishery argue that more of the harvest and the money from it should stay with Alaska communities. **Page 4**

GIANT CLAMS: The geoduck, a big clam with a funny name and a high price on its neck, is turning heads in Southeast Alaska. **Page 6**

COVER: Geoduck illustration by Dugald Stermer

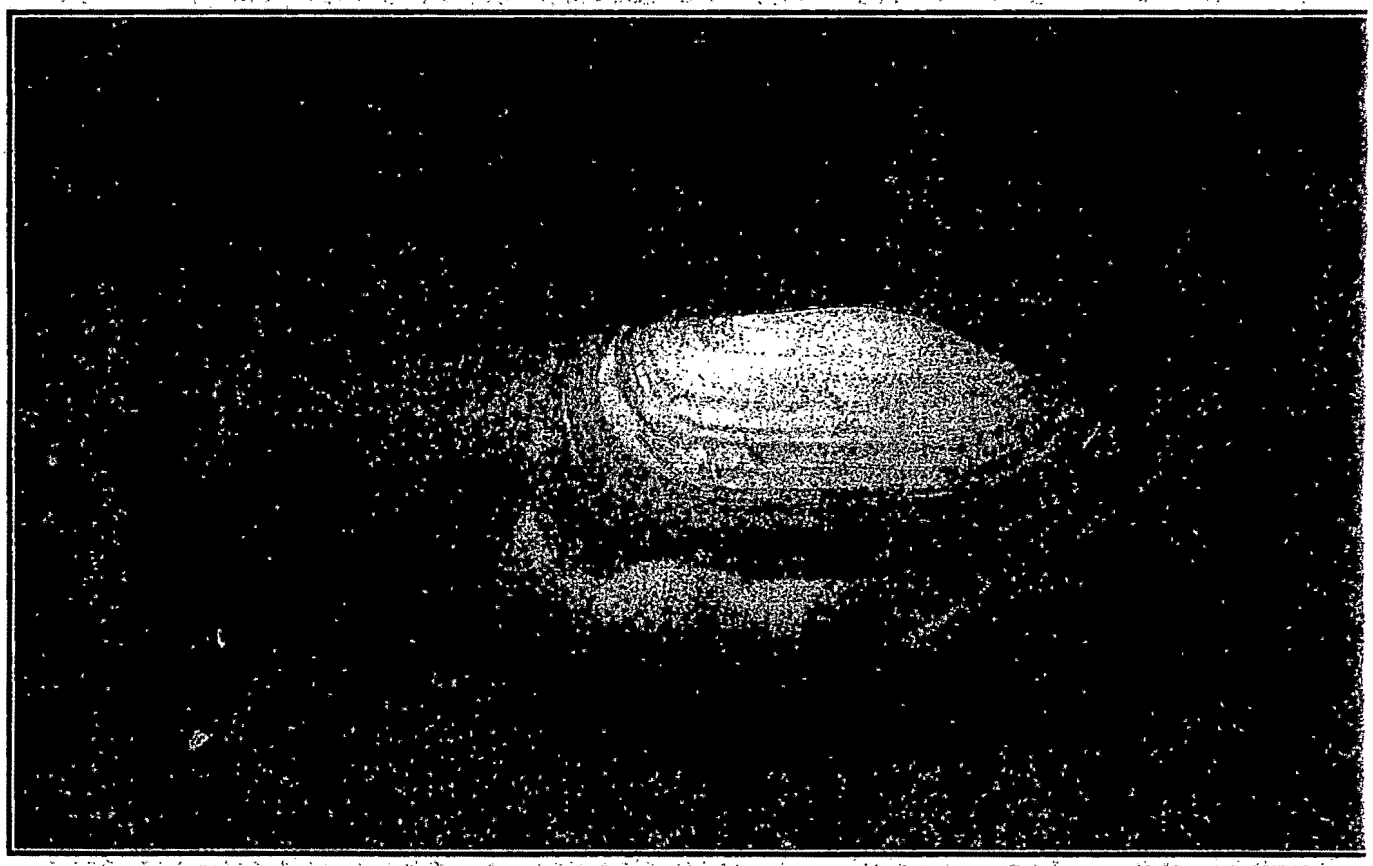


RICK HARBO / Special to the Daily News

An average geoduck weighs 4 pounds, but they can get as big as 10 pounds. The clams have a life span up to 150 years.

Bonanza Beneath The Sea

BY DOUG SCHNEIDER



A giant clam with a funny name and a high price on its neck is turning some heads in Southeast

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICK HARBO

KETCHIKAN — When Steve LaCroix came to Ketchikan in 1985 to dive for geoducks, this largest of all clams fetched about 20 cents a pound and a good day on the water might fetch him $80. Ten years later, the price had risen to 50 cents a pound. But that was just the beginning.

"Now we're looking at over $4 a pound for just the meat, and live ones have gone for double that," says LaCroix. "So now there's a bit of this gold-rush mentality. Some people think they're going to get rich."

Prices have surged because of an insatiable appetite for fresh seafood in Asia, particularly Japan and China. Despite current Asian economic woes, sushi lovers still pay top dollar for geoduck clams.

"A friend of mine just got back from Taipei and saw a geoduck there selling for $170 U.S. dollars," says Sitka diver Burgess Bauder.

Because of the high price on their heads — make that necks —geoducks are suddenly attracting attention, and the industry finds itself at a crossroads.

"We used to just go out and fish and it wasn't a problem because there weren't that many people doing it," says LaCroix. "But now there are a lot of people who want to do it, and we want the growth to occur in ways that don't hurt the stocks. So we're taking it upon ourselves to develop this fishery wisely from the beginning."

Pronounced "gooey-ducks," they are, quite simply, giant clams. The Nisqually Indians in what is now coastal Washington state, were the first to discover the firm, succulent meat of geoducks. The word itself means "dig deep."

Geoducks are found in muddy, sandy tidal bottoms from California north through British Columbia and Southeast Alaska. Averaging 4 pounds, monsters have tipped the scales at 20 pounds — making the geoduck the largest burrowing clam in the world. They're also among the longest-living creatures, with a lifespan up to 150 years. The average age of commercially harvested Alaska geoducks is 44 years, said Robert Larson of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Petersburg.

They grow slowly, says John Beattie of the Washington Department of Fisheries, taking up to 10 years to reach a harvest size of 2 pounds.

Each winter, some 100 divers harvest 220,000 pounds of geoducks in Southeast, the only region in the state where geoducks are found. About 110,000 pounds of the total are taken in waters around Craig, Metlakatla, Petersburg and Wrangell. Another 100,000 pounds are dug from the sea floor off Ketchikan's Gravina Island.

bay's 10,000-pound quota is small, the entire harvest is sent alive to overseas markets, where live shellfish command a premium price. Live shipment is possible because the bay's waters have historically been free of the natural marine toxin, paralytic shellfish poison (PSP).

Geoducks harvested elsewhere are more likely to be contaminated by the toxin. Fishermen in these areas send their catch to be processed, a step that removes entrails where the toxin accumulates. The meat is then sold fresh or frozen — for roughly half the price paid for live geoducks.

"The most-desired ones have white meat and long necks," says Larry Trani of the Sitka Dive Harvesters Association. "Every one of the 'ducks we have here in Sitka Sound are No. 1 export grade. That means they have white meat and long necks. We're talking animals with necks that stretch 3 feet."

Treasure Hunters

When not underwater, Bauder works as a veterinarian in this small Southeast fishing town of 8,500 people. Friends say that since he arrived in 1973, there are a lot more three-legged dogs in town.

"He just doesn't want to put them down if he doesn't have to," said a friend.

"Yeah, that's true," Bauder says. "They even have a band here called Three-Legged Dog, named after me. When I come in the bar, they bow to me in tribute."

When he's not tending to dogs, cats and cockatoos, Bauder enjoys diving for geoducks in Sitka Sound.

"It's just pretty, pretty, pretty," he says. "I love the lifestyle, the camaraderie among the divers," he says. "These guys are all driven to do better than the next guy. But when we're down there on the bottom everybody is competitive. It's fun. It's risky. And it pays well.

"I like reaching into the sand and pulling out a $35 dollar bill," says Bauder, who calls geoduck diving a treasure hunt for adults.

Bauder's treasures lay buried in the ocean floor. To reach them, he and other harvesters practice a modern form of "hookah" diving, donning dry suits and breathing through a hose that brings fresh air from the surface. This method is preferred over scuba diving because divers can stay on the bottom longer. Breathing that way while working hard is also easier than it is with scuba tanks, he says.

> "These geoducks are worth $8 to $10 a pound alive. When you're pulling 4- or 5-pounders out, that's $50 bills you're pulling out of the sand."
>
> *—Larry Trani, Sitka Dive Harvesters Association*

Divers carry a second air hose called a "stinger," which resembles the wand of a pressure washer. The device blows 246 gallons of water per minute at high pressure, and divers use it to blow mud and silt away from a buried geoduck.

"That's a lot of water. It lifts you right off the bottom when you point it down," Bauder says.

To keep from being tipped over, divers strap lead weight to their waists. Bauder straps an extra 80 pounds of lead to his waist. Walking slowly on the bottom, the trick is finding what's called a "show," a dimple in the mud or sand. The clam lies below it.

"When you see the show, you take the tip of your nozzle and stick it right where the neck is," Bauder says. "You have to move quick,

FIELD NOTES

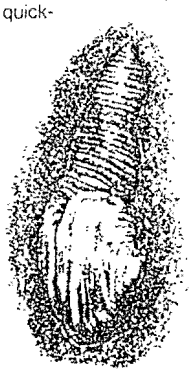
MORE THAN
200,000
POUNDS
of geoducks were harvested by divers in Southeast Alaska during the 1996-1997 season.

UP TO
150
YEARS
is how long a geoduck can live.

5
BILLION EGGS
can be produced during a female geoduck's 100-year lifetime.

20
POUNDS
is the weight for some of the rare giant geoducks that have been found. A weight of 4 to 7 pounds including the shell is more typical.

BURROWING BEASTS
A geoduck can extend its neck 3 feet up from its home beneath the sea floor. The neck, more appropriately called a siphon, can quickly be retracted by the geoduck if predators approach.



GOING UNDER
Geoducks have a small foot they use to dig themselves into the sea floor. Once they've established a home as adults at 3 feet below the surface, they stay put, unable to move out of their deep burrows.

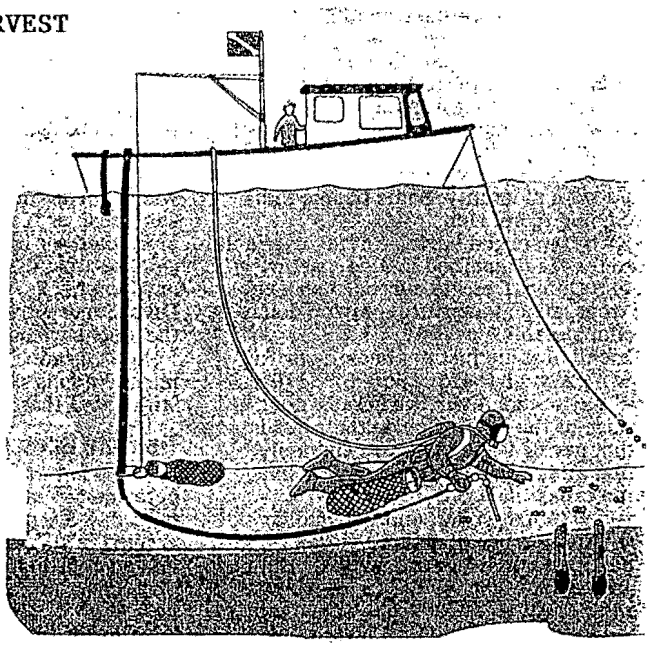
A PLACE TO CALL HOME
Geoducks are found in lower intertidal and subtidal zones of bays, sloughs, and estuaries to depths of about 360 feet. They are most abundant between 30 feet and 60 feet below the mean tide mark. The mollusks burrow in a variety of substrates, ranging from soft mud to pea gravel, mostly in stable mud or sand bottoms.

PREDATORS
Young geoducks that are not fully buried are especially vulnerable to being eaten by snails, sea stars shrimp and bottom-feeding fish. Crabs are particularly lethal to geoducks. Fully buried adult geoducks are also susceptible to attack. Marine animals such as the dogfish shark and Pacific staghorn sculpin have been found to eat siphon tips. Sea otters can dislodge buried geoducks and the giant pink sea star positions itself over geoducks' burrows and waits for them to appear.

MAKING BABIES
There are no mating rituals for these mollusks. Known as "broadcast spawners," geoducks release sperm and eggs into the water and rely on waves and currents to unite the two. A female may release as many as 5 million eggs, no bigger than a sand grain, at a time.

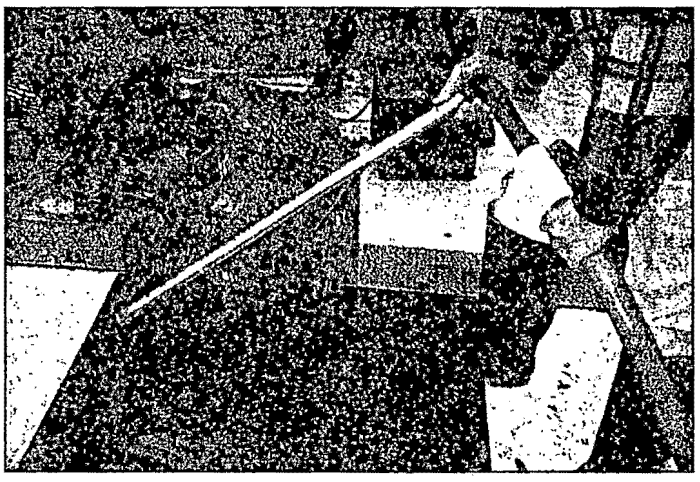
Source: People for the Puget Sound Field Guide to the Geoduck by David George Gordon, Alaska Diving Safety, Doug Schneider

Diving For Dollars



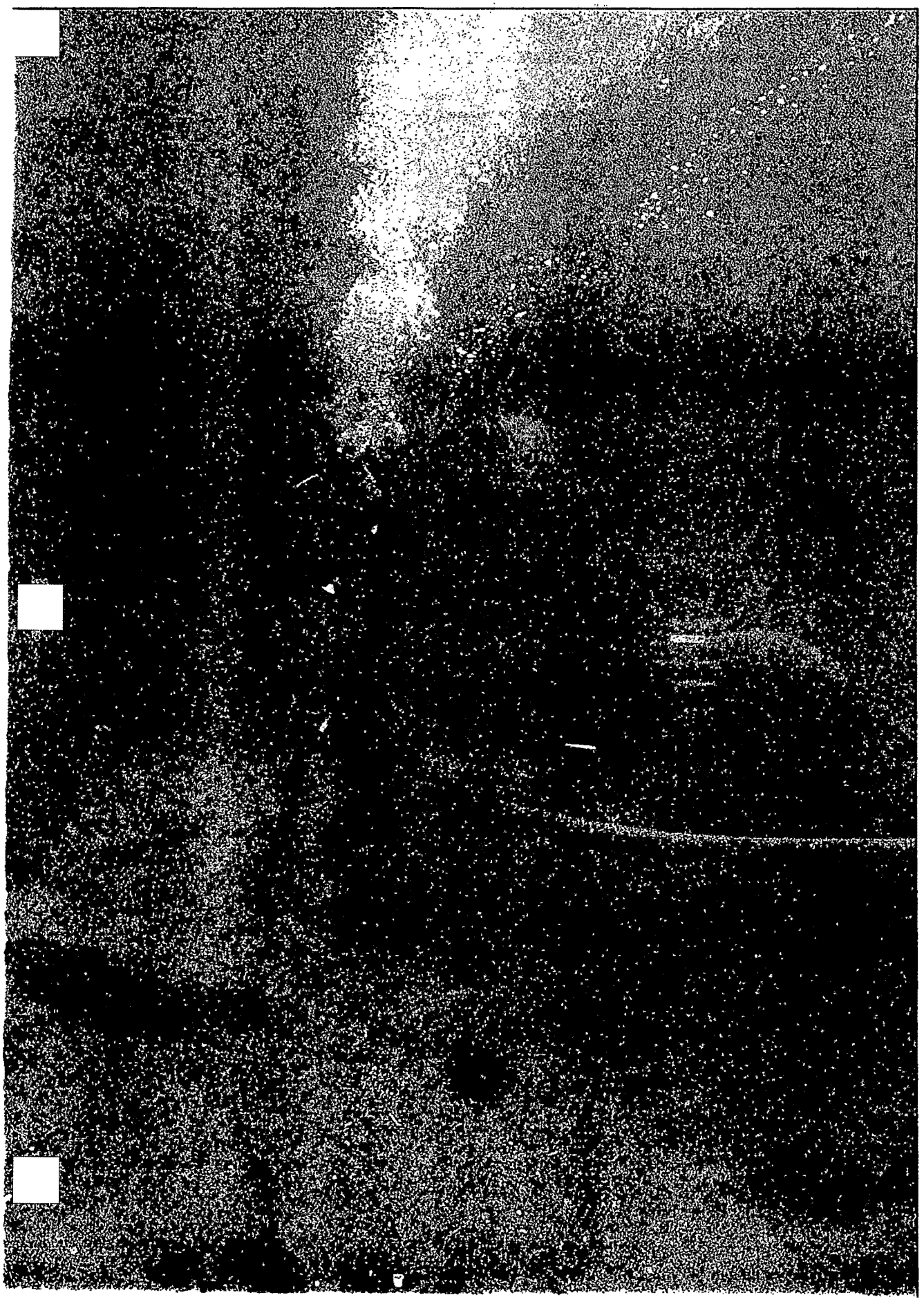
RON E.

Geoduck divers use a modern form of "hookah" diving. They wear dry suits and breathe through a hose that brings fresh air from the surface. This allows the divers to stay submerged longer and makes it easier to maneuver because scuba tanks aren't needed. Divers carry a second air hose called a "stinger," which acts like a high-pressure wand at a car wash. When the diver sees a "show," or dimple, he fires the stinger at mud and silt where the geoduck is buried.



The "stinger" that geoduck divers use to harvest the world's largest clams, blows 246 gallons of water per minute.

A geoduck diver surveys an area for possible harvest. The giant clams are found in muddy, sandy tidal bottoms from California north through British Columbia and Southeast Alaska.



A diver harvests geoducks, which can sell for as much as $170 aplece in Taiwan.

GEODUCKS
Continued from Page 9

because the neck is just a few inches below the bottom, and (the geoduck) can retract that neck three feet back to its shell.

"So as soon as you start washing the mud away you start feeling for the neck and when you get hold of the neck you just wash down along the side of it."

All that washing kicks up a huge cloud of silt and mud, cutting visibility to nearly zero. Divers rely on touch and experience to wrest the clam free. But too much force can injure the geoduck's valuable neck or break its fragile shell.

Divers spend 45 minutes to an hour on the bottom during each dive. On a good day, a diver with the right touch can collect nearly 100 clams. At about $32 apiece for the average 4-pounder sold alive, that's a treasure indeed.

Risky Business

Nevertheless, geoduck diving has its risks.

"Mostly, it's breathing problems. The air supply coming down from the surface can get cut off," says Bauder. "I've had that happen like 25 times over the past five years.

"Most of the time, the hose just gets kinked for a few seconds."

On a dive two years ago, Bauder's weight belt loosened in 30 feet of water while on the bottom. He surfaced to try and fix it.

"When I got to the surface my weight belt — 80-pounds of lead—popped off and hung up on my air hose," Bauder said. "The weight pulled my face into the water for about three minutes."

He nearly drowned.

"My partner gave me CPR and got me jump-started. I went to Juneau and spent about 16 hours in Bartlett Hospital under observation and was back at work the next day. Film at eleven."

Freak accidents are rare, but they do happen. Another diving hazard is the bends, which can afflict divers who return to the surface too quickly . A fast ascent can cause nitrogen that has accumulated in the body's tissues to be released, triggering breathing failure and sometimes paralysis. In rare instances, the bends are fatal.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reports that six Alaska divers died on the job between 1990 and 1996. Three were harvesting sea cucumbers. The other three were clearing lines and nets from boat props and other equipment. Four of the six died after becoming entangled; two died after running out of air.

"Is it dangerous?" Bauder asks. "Yes. You have to tell people that. But if you really believe that (it's too dangerous) then you have to quit diving."

Ketchikan diver Steve LaCroix agrees it can be dangerous, but only for the inexperienced.

"My insurance agent isn't worried," says LaCroix. "I've been doing it for 20 years, and I know what the dangers are."

Reining in the Fishery

Several agencies estimate there are about 100 divers in southeast Alaska — twice as many as three years ago.

"These geoducks are worth $8 to $10 a pound alive," says Trani. "When you're pulling 4- or 5-pounders out, that's $50 bills you're pulling out of the sand. So you can see the gold

A geoduck diver can spend up to an hour underwater before returning with his harvest.

age geoduck stocks at a time when the size of the population is unclear, longtime divers obtained a moratorium three years ago that temporarily forbids new divers from entering the fishery.

"We went in a few years from 50 divers in Alaska to about 100 just before the moratorium," recalls Bauder. "Things were getting out of hand."

The moratorium, which expires in 2000, allows state fishery managers time to develop a plan for managing geoducks, Traini says.

A state tax promoted by divers on their catch also helps pay for the development of management plans.

"My biggest concern," Traini says, "is to see ... this fishery (develop) in a truly sustainable [illegible] and depleted before it gets any attention."

Geoducks Galore

Geoduck divers may soon be allowed to harvest more clams."There is interest in expanding this fishery, both on the state's part and on the industry's part," says Robert Larson, shellfish biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Petersburg. "Much of the range of geoducks has not been adequately surveyed, so there's the possibility (the size of the stock) would increase if we just went out and looked for them."

Some people are doing exactly that.

Southeast Alaska used to be known for tourism, fishing and logging. These days, it's known more for tourism, fishing, and unem-

THE GREAT CLAM HARVEST

A catch of geoducks stacks up on the dock. The clams are worth $8 to $10 a pound alive; $4 a pound if they are processed. The risk of paralytic shellfish poisoning means the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation must test samples of each day's catch to ensure the geoduck is safe to eat. Otherwise the clams are killed and processed.

THE GREAT CLAM HARVEST

GEODUCKS

Continued from Page 10

ployment. Logging in the vast Tongass National Forest has declined, and the federal government last year made millions of dollars available to retrain hundreds of loggers and launch economic development projects. Sitka spent $500,000 of its share to look for geoducks.

"Oh yeah, we found them all right," says Trani, one of the divers hired by the city.

Divers who counted geoducks last summer estimate Sitka-area waters contain 12 million to 24 million pounds of the giant clam. But those surveys weren't scientific and many divers counted geoducks in waters deeper than 70 feet.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game surveys that followed took place in water less than 70 feet, where they found just 1 million pounds of geoducks.

"There is a biomass below 70 feet, but we aren't equipped to survey that deep. So we don't know exactly what the stocks are," says state biologist Dave Gordon, a diver who helped with the survey. The stocks he did see were thriving.

"It was pretty cool," says Gordon. "In some areas their necks stuck a foot up from the bottom into the water. It looked like a forest of geoduck necks sloping off down into water too deep for us to go."

Still, a million pounds of geoducks is a lot of sushi. Under a state plan that allows harvesters to take another 1 million pounds of geoduck this season, Sitka could see its quota triple to 30,000 pounds when the season opens today.

That's enough to make most divers happy as a clam.

Conquering PSP

While geoducks are more valuable than ever, another problem — paralytic shellfish poisoning — is daunting.

"It is a real concern for harvesters and it's what concerns the state as well," says Ray RaLonde, aquaculture specialist at the Alaska Sea Grant Program in Anchorage. "All shellfish are susceptible, and nowhere are Alaska waters immune to an outbreak."

A naturally occurring neurotoxin, PSP can infect any shellfish. Though not harmful to the shellfish, people who eat infected shellfish risk sickness — even death. The toxin works by blocking the movement of sodium through cell membranes, effectively stopping nerve impulses. Symptoms include tingling, numbness, disorientation and paralysis. In advanced stages, the toxin can interrupt breathing.

Since 1990, an average of eight Alaskans a year have become ill from eating untested shellfish that they harvested, according to the state Division of Public Health. Three of them died. So far this year, two people have gotten sick, but no one has died.

No one, however, has ever died or reported that they've contracted PSP from eating commercially harvested Alaska shellfish. By law, those shellfish must pass the state test for PSP, which mandates that shellfish contain fewer than 80 micrograms of the toxin.

But the test is expensive. Divers who want to sell live geoducks must pay $375 to test three geoducks from each day's harvest. If the geoducks pass, the catch can be sold. Failure means the catch must be killed and processed to remove entrails that contain the toxin. The state doesn't charge to test processed geoducks.

Since 95 percent of Alaska's geoducks are caught in areas where PSP can pose a problem, most divers forego the expensive test and opt for the lower price paid by processors, says Brian Paust of the University of Alaska Marine Advisory Program in Petersburg.

"Four bucks a pound from the processor is better than paying for a test their catch likely will fail," Paust says. "A little money is better than getting nothing."

But divers would rather sell live geoducks. And scientists are working on solutions to the toxin hazard.

Putting Biology to Work

Scientists hope the same biological mechanism that makes geoducks vulnerable to PSP may help rid them of the toxin.

Like other clams and oysters, geoducks feed by siphoning seawater through their digestive system, filtering out plankton and other nutrients. That's how they pick up a marine organism called dinoflagellate that causes PSP. But if they're exposed to clean seawater, geoducks will, in time, cleanse themselves of the toxin.

"Animals might be harvested and relocated to bays and inlets that are historically free of PSP," says aquaculture specialist RaLonde. "Or they could be held in special tanks that have filters and pumps to continually move clean water through the tanks and carry out any PSP."

Recently, the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation paid shellfish consultant Roger Painter $50,000 to test the idea.

Down on the Farm

Painter operates an oyster farm on Sea Otter Sound lies at the base of two steep mountains on the west side of Prince of Wales Island. Dramatic tides flush nutrient-rich seawater over some 400,000 oysters.

Reachable only by boat or float plane, Painter's "crop" ends up on dinner tables in restaurants from Seattle to San Francisco. Painter has never had a PSP outbreak, which makes his farm a good place to see how long it takes tainted geoducks, planted by the Science and Technology Foundation, to rid themselves of PSP.

Five weeks, it turns out. That's how long it took for the toxin to decline from more than 100 micrograms to less than 80, the state and federal limit.

"That's too long," laments Painter. "Much longer than two weeks, you start to lose them. They start to die on you. We had hoped it would take only a couple of weeks."

Detox times might be reduced, Painter says, if the geoducks were kept in tanks of recirculating seawater treated with chemi-

cals. "We're on the right track," he says.

Streamlining Red Tape

Each year, DEC tests hundreds of commercially harvested geoducks, along with mussels, crabs and oysters for PSP and other marine toxins. The $375 fee for each test angered harvesters when it was announced by the Department of Environmental Conservation last season; previously, tests were free.

"We had 11 divers participate in the January harvest," says Bauder. "That would've been $375 per day, per diver, over four days. That's $16,500. ... It was absolutely ridiculous."

Bauder and others claim testing so many clams harvested from the same bed is unnecessary, and eventually the DEC changed its policy.

This season, Sitka divers who harvest animals from the same bed at the same time can combine their daily catch into one batch. Instead of 11 divers sending in 33 clams each day, they'll test just three clams per day. Officials say the new policy doesn't increase the risk of PSP to consumers.

"The state is asking for fewer samples because the place has historically been free of PSP," says Sea Grant's RaLonde. "If Sitka geoducks have PSP, it will show up in the smaller sample size."

The state also is considering a plan to monitor PSP-indicator species such as butter clams and mussels — opening geoduck beds only when there's no toxin present. A similar program is used in British Columbia.

"We want the live product to offer the greatest amount of economic return for the harvester," says Mike Ostasz, shellfish program coordinator with DEC. "At the same time we want to be assured that all live product is safe for the consumer."

Other Producers Steaming Ahead

Even if Alaska harvesters solve their problems with PSP, competition from Outside is fierce.

Washington state and British Columbia each sell about 4 million pounds of geoducks a year. And more are on the way.

Within five years, corporations such as Taylor-United in Washington plan to harvest some 3 million geoducks from tidal farms.

Alaska harvesters say if the state continues to open new areas to geoduck harvest, finds solutions to the PSP problem and helps aquaculture farmers develop geoduck farms, Alaska may improve its standing in the marketplace — or, at least, stay neck and neck with the competition.

■ Doug Schneider is the science writer with the Alaska Sea Grant College Program, a marine research and education program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He can be reached at fndgs@aurora.alaska.edu.

"We want the live product to offer the greatest amount of economic return for the harvester. At the same time we want to be assured that all live product is safe for the consumer."

—Mike Ostasz, Department of Environmental Conservation

PUBLIC SAFETY | 8,000 mice die to protect your sushi

STEPHEN NOWERS / Anchorage Daily News

Dick Barrett, of the Department of Environmental Conservation, samples hundreds of geoducks at his lab in Palmer during the height of the season from November to February. Technicians inject a solution that includes the clam's viscera into a mouse, then wait to see if the mouse dies.

If it weren't for the noble Norway mouse, the next clam or oyster you eat could be your last.

Each year, some 8,000 mice sacrifice their lives in the only paralytic shellfish poisoning test available, ensuring that people can safely eat Alaska oysters, clams, scallops and other shellfish.

"I don't like killing mice any more than anyone else," says Dick Barrett, supervisor of the state's food testing laboratory. "If there was another test that would eliminate the use of mice and improve accuracy, we'd be the first ones to go to it."

In 1997, one Alaskan died and several became violently ill after eating untested shellfish they harvested from state beaches. This year, two people have become ill after eating untested shellfish; no one has died.

While shellfish dug recreationally or for subsistence are not tested, commercially harvested shellfish — including geoducks — must be certified safe.

During the height of the season — November through February — hundreds of geoducks arrive at Barrett's lab in Palmer. Most samples arrive in Styrofoam coolers via overnight express mail or air cargo. Technicians quickly extract and test the viscera, where most PSP accumulates, as well as the edible muscle.

Samples are ground up in something that resembles a food processor until they look like pea soup. Technicians then weigh out 100 grams of muscle and viscera. To each they add 100 milliliters of hydrochloric acid to lower the pH. The entire solution is then boiled five minutes. Boiling kills bacteria but doesn't destroy the toxin.

Technicians then inject each solution into separate mice. The effect of PSP is the same on mice as it is on people. A neurotoxin, PSP blocks the movement of sodium through cell membranes, stopping nerve impulses. Tingling sensations, numbness and disorientation often follow. In advanced stages, the toxin can cause paralysis and restrict breathing. If the mice die, the PSP concentration exceeds the state and federal limit of 80 micrograms.

Since Barrett joined DEC in the early 1980s, no one has taken ill or died after eating a commercially raised or harvested shellfish.

"Some people moan and groan about the conservative approach the state takes with PSP," says Barrett. "But a case of PSP (could) set industry back years, because no one will want to buy our products. We aren't willing to take that risk."

— Doug Schneider

Land sale settles road dispute

Fish and Game will manage 30-acre parcel along Kenai River

The Associated Press

SOLDOTNA — A fishing guide here has agreed to sell his land along the Kenai River to the state, dropping a fight for permission to build a road across nearby wetlands considered critical to the health of the Kenai River.

Mark Kuwada, a habitat biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, said the state plans to buy roughly 30 acres from Pat Carter using the last chunk of the $1.2 million Fish and Game received from the criminal settlement after the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The Department of Natural Resources will own the land. Fish and Game will manage it for habitat protection and keep it in its natural state.

"I'm pleased that we have a resolution," said Janet Kowalski, director of the Habitat and Restoration Division of Fish and Game. "It really is a unique piece of wetlands that definitely relates to the success of the spawning areas right next to it."

But Carter, the landowner, said it wasn't a habitat issue. The real issue was a group of neighbors who didn't want to look down on a new road or a new roof, he said, and used the state's permit review system to block him from building his dream house.

"This was a little road project to somebody's private property," he said, and the whole thing got blown out of proportion.

Because the purchase has not closed, Kuwada said he could reveal neither the appraised value of Carter's land nor the agreed-upon price. For tax purposes, the Kenai Peninsula Borough has valued it at $171,000.

Carter said he'll get more than he paid for the land, but given the cost of permits and appeals, he'll lose money overall. And he said the stress of the process had taken a toll on his health.

Carter said he has no problem with controlling development along the river, but if the agencies want to control development, they should develop some overall plan, not do it piecemeal.

"To use the system to try to bankrupt somebody, that's ridiculous," he said. "Private property owners on the river — they can't fight the state."

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
NOVEMBER 14, 1998

INSIDE ALASKA BUSINESS

Sea lion decision delayed

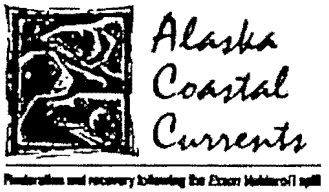
The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council this week delayed until its Dec. 9-14 meeting possible action to curtail bottom fisheries off Alaska's coast to protect endangered Steller sea lions. The council members had hoped that the National Marine Fisheries Service would come to this week's meetings with a finding about whether commercial fishing is affecting the decline and recovery of the sea lion. If NMFS found that fishing affected Steller population, the council will need to change to fishery management to protect the endangered species. This week the council instead took comment on the state of the endangered sea lion and its interaction with commercial fishing. The council voted to send that comment to the NMFS. The council also voted to create a committee of industry leaders, conservationists and biologists to come up with long-term solutions to the Steller problem. The December meeting will be at the Hilton Anchorage.

THE PENINSULA CLARION NOVEMBER 8, 1998

Weir assures fish for Chignik subsistence users

Editor's note: It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of Alaska crude oil. Time has since told quite a lot about the spill's long-term effects. To help tell the story, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is providing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region.

By JODY SEITZ



"Out here it's natural resources, fish, or game. The stores out here aren't that good, and the way the fisheries have been going, if you're not a permit holder you're not going to make that much money. Last year a lot of guys only made $5,000 for the year, so subsistence is really important," said David Owen, manager of the Chignik weir.

When one of the largest sockeye runs in the state can't provide for subsistence, something is wrong.

The Chignik River is among the most productive sockeye systems on the Alaska Peninsula. Until a few years ago, subsistence and commercial fishers peacefully coexisted, some of them harvesting in both fisheries.

Then the price of salmon dropped, reaching a 10-year low in 1993. Commercial fishers began to fish later and later into the season. For a few years, managers didn't realize that commercial catches were too high and that fish needed for subsistence weren't reaching the upper river.

The fisheries of the Chignik district had been managed based on the number of fish escaping past a weir on the Chignik River from June through the first week in August. After the weir was removed in August, managers continued to judge the strength of the escapement by the size of the commercial catches.

"Over the years we probably had too much of a commercial fishery," said Owen.

"Because as time went on, we fished later and later, and we estimated escapement based on our catches and they may or may not have been correct."

Wayne Donaldson, a Department of Fish and Game management biologist explained: "The total escapement was met, but the later portions of the run were weak and not getting through."

Complaints started coming in. People were not getting enough fish for subsistence.

"Yeah, it was a big issue here about three to four years ago," said Johnny Lind, president of the Chignik Lake Village Council. "People were going down to the lagoon and trying to get their subsistence and they couldn't even get any kind of fish. That's when it became a really big issue."

To be able to monitor the escapement and the commercial harvest with subsistence needs in mind, they needed to keep the weir up longer.

In 1995, the Department of Fish and Game received funding from the state-administered criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez oil spill to keep the weir operating into the first week of September. Now they also use lighted underwater video cameras to illuminate the fish as they pass through the weir.

Owen says the problem has essentially been resolved. Now the department has good solid data on which to base decisions.

"When we make our decision, it's not all based on catch data," said Owen. "It's based on escapement data, a lot better escapement data than we had before."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

Exxon adds jury coercion to appeal

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

Exxon hasn't been able to convince a federal court judge that jury tampering and coercion led to a $5.3 billion verdict in the 1989 oil spill case.

So the oil company has added that argument to the long list of issues under appeal with the 9th U.S. District Court of Appeals. The company's arguments were contained in a brief unsealed this week in San Francisco.

Although the jury tampering contention isn't new, the brief contained fresh details about the company's claim that one juror was threatened by a fellow juror and that a courthouse security guard threatened one juror and fraternized with others.

Exxon also contends that federal court Judge Russel Holland failed to investigate and act on the security guard's behavior. Holland presided over the 1994 trial and in July rejected pleas for a retrial based on the jury tampering claim.

The appeal, which is based on more than 20 claims by Exxon, is expected to be considered next spring.

The brief was unsealed this week after both sides stipulated that it could be made public.

Exxon claims that as a result of the threats made to juror Rita Wilson, "she acquiesced in a $5 billion punitive damages verdict with which she did not agree." As evidence, they quote Wilson from a deposition taken in March. Her deposition remains a sealed court document.

In the sworn deposition, Wilson said that a security guard told her she "could be shot, accidentally, with a throw-away gun on break and wouldn't be able to prove who did it ... and he told me that he could kill me and no one would know," according to Exxon's brief.

In explaining why she voted for the $5 billion verdict, Wilson said in the deposition that as the jurors were filing into the courtroom, one of the jurors "told me that my daughters were very good-looking and to think about that when I gave my vote."

Holland heard Wilson's claims and rejected them in his July ruling. He found that Wilson's memory of the trial was "not credible" and the story she told the court during her deposition was "shocking and bizarre."

Attorneys representing the plaintiffs in the lawsuit are scheduled to file a response to Exxon's motion today.

Attorney David Oesting said Exxon has painted an inaccurate picture of what happened between juror Wilson, the security guard and others.

The issue of whether jurors were influenced by outside forces has haunted the case since shortly after the verdict was returned in the fall of 1994. After returning the verdict, many of the jurors in the case agreed to talk about their experience.

They explained that Wilson was not the last hold-out in returning the record verdict. They also described Wilson as very emotional and difficult to deal with throughout jury deliberations.

In the months after the trial, Exxon convinced the court to question the jurors under oath about

Please see Page B-3, EXXON

EXXON: Court brief reveals jury tampering allegations

Continued from Page B-1

tampering and outside influences.

Those depositions revealed that a security guard had inappropriately fraternized with jurors and inappropriately asked about what was going on in the deliberation room. One juror reported that the security guard once flashed a bullet and suggested that it could be used to deal with Wilson, who was visibly emotional about deliberations. The juror said that it made him uncomfortable but that he felt the comment was made in a joking manner.

In a deposition, the security guard denied the incident.

But later, unbeknownst to the court and the litigants, the security guard flunked a polygraph test that the juror passed.

The security guard then admitted he had made comments about Wilson to the juror. The security guard was fired and died five months later of a heart attack. Exxon contends that Judge Holland knew an investigation was being conducted regarding the security guard's behavior, but that the judge failed to act on it.

☐ Reporter Natalie Phillips can be reached at nphillips@adn.com.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
November 13, 1998

Oil-spill watchdog group counters critics

By BEN SPIESS
Daily News reporter

A key protection put in place after the 1989 Exxon oil spill is weathering heavy criticism from the oil industry as the Coast Guard begins evaluating the success of the citizens group created to watchdog Prince William Sound tanker traffic.

Accused of a range of faults, including an unruly board, overstepping its authority and supporting lawsuits against the industry, the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council counters that it is doing its job: monitoring a business that has a poor record governing itself.

■ **EXXON:** Oil company still trying to overturn spill verdict. **B-1**

"Our priority is safety. Their priority is making money, so I'm not surprised that they're critical," said Michelle O'Leary, a Cordova fishermen who represents the Sound's fishing interests on the RCAC board. "If we agreed on everything, I doubt we'd be doing our job."

After eight years, Arco Marine Inc., British Petroleum Shipping and SeaRiver (Exxon's shipping company) find little in RCAC they would like to see applied to other ports in the United States.

"RCAC cannot be held as a model organization should it be seen to be necessary elsewhere," wrote Roger Gale, vice president of the BP Oil Shipping Company in Cleveland, Ohio.

The council was created after the Exxon spill to bring citizen oversight to the huge Valdez tanker port. The 19-member council of people from towns such as Homer and Whittier, and from groups such as fishing, tourism and aquaculture, oversees a staff and a $2 million annual budget that the oil industry funds. Among its activities, the council reviews spill cleanup and prevention plans, researches the problem of icebergs in shipping

Please see Back Page, WATCHDOG

WATCHDOG: Nine years after Exxon Valdez, protection program faces criticism

Continued from Page A-1

lanes, studies tug boat technology and hires experts to examine oil company procedures.

RCAC is unusual in that it gets money straight from the industry it monitors, a unique regulation scheme only shared with the chemical industry. RCAC may also be unusual in its success.

"It's one of the most dramatic examples of effective citizen participation in environmental policy," said George Busenberg, a researcher at the University of Wisconsin, who wrote his Ph.D. thesis on RCACs.

The Coast Guard is charged with certifying RCAC, something it does annually since the group was set up in 1990. The Coast Guard will likely rule on this year's certification by Thanksgiving. Mild criticism from the oil companies is typical, said Coast Guard Lt. Mike Pittman. But this year the Coast Guard began reviewing RCAC as a model for oversight groups that could be mandated for places like Long Beach, Calif., or Puget Sound. Each company lauded safety changes RCAC helped create, but filled most of its pages sharp criticisms.

"Certain board and staff members encourage polarization and adoption of adversarial positions," wrote A. Elmer, president of Exxon shipping in Houston.

Funding for RCAC is "inherently wrong," Gale wrote on behalf of BP.

"The unique history of one port should not be assumed as a model for all other U.S. ports," wrote Hersh Kohut, president of Arco Marine in Long Beach.

Of concern to all the shippers and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. — the oil industry-owned company that runs the Valdez port — is a working relationship that is often confrontational. Meetings are sometimes spiked with barbed comments. At a June meeting, several RCAC board members said they could never trust the oil industry, according to Alyeska's public comment.

"Our mission here is not to get along; it's safety," said Tom Copeland, a board member who represents environmental groups.

The shipping companies also seek changes in structure of RCACs, limiting board members to representatives of local communities, and ending interest group representation because those groups are not accountable to the public.

The shippers also want communities to pay for some of RCAC expenses. Separating power from the purse does not lead to accountability, they contend.

"Those who are assigning priorities of a group should have some skin in the game," said Richard Ranger, manager of safety and emergency response for Arco Marine.

John Devens, executive director of RCAC, said giving control of RCAC to the companies that pay the bills would undercut RCACs credibility.

"We're a group of citizens empowered by this money. It's a unique situation."

Alyeska has perhaps the closest relationship with RCAC. The Anchorage-based company avoided calling for changing the structure of the group, but it criticized RCAC's effort to expand its advisory role beyond Prince William Sound to the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, which Alyeska also runs. RCAC funded a review of the spill plans for the pipeline in the Copper River valley and near Valdez on the grounds that spilled oil in a drainage amounts to oil in the Sound.

Alyeska challenged the council's right to oversee the pipeline and threatened to sue if the group used oil industry money, Devens said. RCAC got other grants and paid for a professional review.

"We're the only citizens' group ever to review that plan. (The law) doesn't restrict us from doing that," he said.

The shippers also contend that a lawsuit from a member is at odds with his role representing the public. Copeland, who represents environmental groups, has appealed the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation approval of a oil spill cleanup plan.

"My role to with RCAC is perfectly in line with that lawsuit," Copeland said. "Sure, RCAC makes the oil industry mad. But this is a symptom of a process that's working."

❑ Reporter Ben Spiess can be reached at bspiess@adn.com.

Drifting buoys reveal the paths of tiny herring larvae

By Jody Seitz

For The Vanguard

The mysterious currents of Prince William Sound are beginning to come into focus. Data from drifting buoys released in 1996 and 1997 have helped identify the major currents that would carry plankton or, perhaps, spilled oil around the sound. Now a new group of nine drifter buoys released in May is showing the more subtle complexities of currents within some bays. Scientists are hoping to learn more about the sound's circulation, especially how tiny herring larvae end up in bays and stay there.

Dr. Shari Vaughan, oceanographer with the Prince William Sound Science Center, is the principal investigator for the project, which is part of an ecosystem study of pink salmon and herring production in the sound.

Buoys have several advantages over a standard oceanographic cruise. They are objective, unbiased tracers of ocean currents. They transmit data continuously for weeks or months. And they are cost-effective. The buoys cost $2,200 each. Most dedicated oceanographic research vessels cost $12,000 to $15,000 per day to charter.

The buoys also produce results promptly. The ones released in May quickly confirmed some previously suspected circulation patterns. The release of all nine buoys was timed to coincide with the hatching of herring spawn and the emergence of billions of larvae.

Each buoy is attached to a large canvas sack, or drogue, that measures the currents 13 to 17 meters down. The buoys transmit their position and the water temperature every two hours to a satellite which then sends the data to a processing center in France called ARGOS, which relays it to the Science Center in Cordova by e-mail.

The buoys were released between Hell's Hole and St. Matthew's Bay, in Port Gravina, historically one of the areas where spawn is the thickest. As of Aug. 11, seven buoys were still transmitting their positions. Two were in the central part of the sound, one exited Hinchenbrook Entrance and made it all the way to Cook Inlet, and four were still within the grip of Port Gravina.

"What these things have told us so far is that there is something retaining them in at least Port Gravina in the springtime," Vaughan said.

In addition to testing circulation models of Prince William Sound, these buoys also may help scientists compare herring stocks in the sound to herring stocks along the southern Kenai Peninsula. "The fact that these drifters, especially from northeast Prince William Sound, could escape (the sound) and stop at every little bay along the southern Kenai until they reach Cook Inlet might have some implications for herring stock relationships."

Vaughan will let the buoys drift until they no longer transmit their position, which could be as long as six months.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Journalist needs oil spill stuff

Internet surfers who survived the Exxon Valdez oil spill can help Cornelia Boos of Germany with her television documentary on life after the oil spill by telling her their stories.

Boos is interested in how the oil spill affected people's lives, not only economically, but emotionally and socially as well.

Contact Cornelia at Cornelia Boos@compuserve.com.

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
November 12, 1998

SeaLife adjusting to slow season

By Colleen Kelly
LOG Staff

A seasonal downturn in visitors has the Alaska SeaLife Center looking at all sorts of possibilities to reverse the trend in visitor numbers.

According to Maureen Sims, coordinator of external affairs, the decrease that occurred after Labor Day weekend was not unexpected. It's just a bigger drop than anticipated, she said.

Sims said the SeaLife Center was at about 90 percent of its projections for summer visitation, but shoulder, or off-season, numbers are further off the mark.

"We've considered everything across the board," the coordinator said. "We're coming up with new and different programs to get traffic up. We're offering several different special deals."

With the hiring this fall of Ben Ellis as development director, Sims said there is a renewed focus on that aspect of generating revenue.

"Development takes a long time to cultivate," she said. "We're looking at the beginning of next year to see the fruits of our cultivation."

For November, the SeaLife Center is conducting a Thanksgiving Food Drive that will offer reduced admission prices to people who donate two cans of food. Adults get $2.50 off their ticket and kids save $2 when they bring in cans, she said.

In turn, the SeaLife Center will give the cans of people food to both the Seward Chapter of the Salvation Army for its annual Thanksgiving dinner and its food bank and to the Seaman's Mission for its food bank. Animal food will go to the Seward Animal Shelter.

This week the center is moving its ticket counter to the second floor. In place of the ticket counter, Sims said, they hope to have an espresso service operating December through April. The SeaLife Center last week issued a request for proposals from vendors interested in running the beverage service. Deadline is Nov. 16.

With ticketing operations on the second floor, Sims said the lobby will be used for a variety of events. Among these is the Old-Fashioned Holiday Kickoff and Seward Appreciation Evening set for Nov. 27 from 5-7:30 p.m. According to Sims, the SeaLife Center will serve music, cider, hot chocolate and Christmas cookies to the community. They are asking the public to bring an ornament to help decorate the SeaLife Center Christmas tree. Seward residents will be admitted free of charge to the facility for the event.

The following day there will be two performances by Good Dog. The musical group will present a children's concert from 11 - 11:45 a.m. and a contemporary folk and pop music program from 1 - 3 p.m. Both performances will be in the lobby area and there will be no entrance fee to either.

CORDOVA TIMES
November 12, 1998

Scientists search for gene markers in pollock

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Coastal currents

Since 1995, there's been a respectable harvest of pollock in Prince William Sound for the handful of boats that join in the fishery. Even though it appears that pollock spawn in the Sound and there's a growing number of them, they are considered part of the Gulf of Alaska population and managed conservatively by the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

All seasons and quotas are set by the council; state waters are rarely open for fishing outside the season specified for the Gulf of Alaska. In the past, the quota for pollock was reached in offshore waters by larger boats before smaller boats could fish in the more protected waters of Prince William Sound.

Before 1995, the harvest in the Sound was about 4 metric tons per year. That spring, fishermen traveling to Cordova spied huge schools of the fish. Nine trawlers caught a total of 2,857 metric tons. In 1997 the total harvest was 1,860 metric tons, including the test fishery. Prince William Sound Science Center researchers doing oil spill research have contributed to the harvest of pollock by tracking the size and location of the school.

Now genetic research is underway to tell whether or not the Sound's pollock actually are part of the Gulf of Alaska population.

Pollock are highly migratory. In addition to those in the Sound, spawning populations have been found in Shelikof Straits, in the Gulf of Alaska off the outer Kenai, off Bogoslof Island in the Bering Sea, and in the Sea of Okhotsk. Even though scientists know pollock live in the Sound all year, the relationship between those in the Sound and those in the Gulf of Alaska has not been clear.

Until 1995, the only stock assessments available were trawl and acoustic surveys carried out by the National Marine Fisheries Service in the adjacent waters of the Gulf of Alaska every three years in summer. The state had not assessed the biomass in Prince William Sound since 1989.

According to Bill Bechtol, Research Project Leader with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, to manage the fishery in state waters, managers need to know the size of the population. But the federal surveys miss the summer pollock in the Sound.

"We know that we have pollock in Prince William Sound in summer time at the same time this survey is conducted in adjacent gulf waters, so by default we know these fish are in fact missed, not assessed by the federal survey," said Bechtol.

Scientists think pollock return to certain areas each winter to spawn. To target the spawning population in Prince William Sound, Fish and Game conducted surveys in the Sound in February of 1995, 1996, and 1998. "We have typically found spawning pollock in the southwest area down around Port Bainbridge and southern Knight Island Passage. This year we found them in the mouth of Orca Bay. There was a fairly substantial biomass all the way from Hinchinbrook Entrance up toward Fidalgo. So we've definitely found spawning populations throughout the Sound," said Bechtol.

State scientists conducting genetic research for the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council are looking at how pollock move around when they're spawning and how their schools change over time.

In hopes of collecting the genetically similar individuals from each area, scientists collected adults from these spawning areas. They've been examining each of these populations' gene markers and comparing them over the last two years.

"We're primarily comparing the Port Bainbridge population to the Shelikof Strait spawning population. We have also obtained a collection from the Bogoslof Island spawning population," said Jim Seeb, a Fish and Game geneticist.

Preliminary indications are that there are some detectable genetic differences between pollock which spawn in Prince William Sound and those which spawn in Shelikof Straits. If these findings are borne out by the final analysis, Fish and Game will have a strong case for establishing separate management guidelines for pollock in Prince William Sound.

They hope to have results on this study by February 1999, according to Seeb.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
NOVEMEBER 11, 1998
PAGE 1 OF 3

Stellers' fate put on hold

Fisheries officials offer no science

By BEN SPIESS
Daily News reporter

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is meeting in Anchorage this week, ready to wrangle over the latest crisis in Alaska's $1 billion bottom-fish business: the plight of the endangered Steller sea lion.

But what changes, if any, the falling numbers of Stellers may force in the pollock and mackerel fishery will wait.

The National Marine Fisheries Service asked for the special meeting on the sea lions, but NMFS showed up with no conclusion about whether fishing is hurting Stellers — a prerequisite for any discussion over changes in the industry.

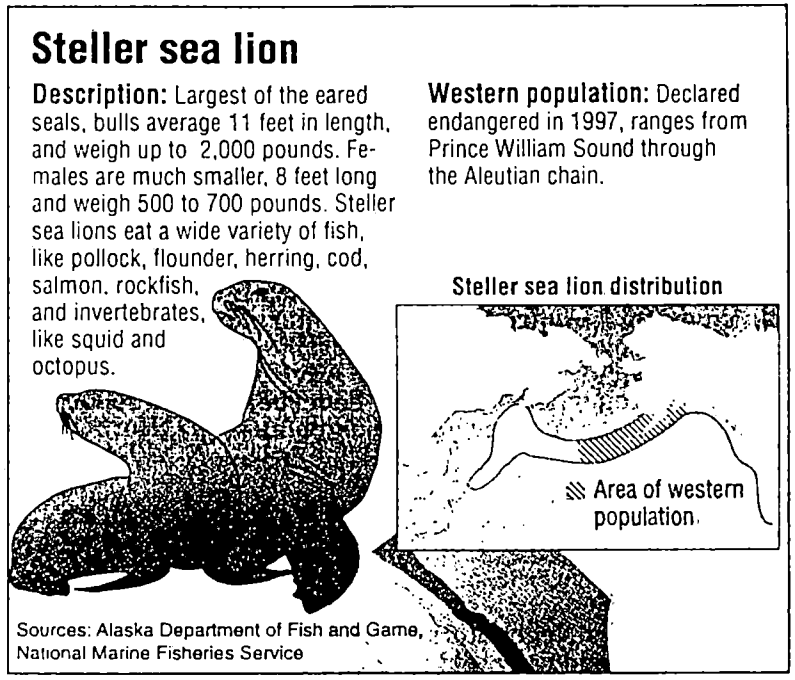
The meetings of the lawyers, fishermen, environmentalists and activists are going ahead at the Anchorage Hilton.

But without the NMFS ruling, "We're all kind of wondering what we're doing here," said Dorothy Childers, executive director of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council.

There has been wide expectation that NMFS would rule that commercial fishing is hurting the Stellers.

Since 1975, the Steller population in Western Alaska has fallen 80 percent, to about 20,000 animals. In 1990, NMFS deemed the sea lions were threatened. Last year, federal authorities ruled Stellers in danger of becoming extinct. In the waters around the Stellar rookeries and haulouts is the largest single fishery in the United States: the nearly 3 billion pound pollock catch in the Bering Sea and

Please see Page F-2, STELLERS



RON ENGSTROM / Anchorage Daily News

ANNE RAUP / Anchorage Daily News

Steller sea lions gather in June 1994 off Chowiet Island. Since 1975, the population in Western Alaska has fallen 80 percent to about 20,000.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
STELLERS' FATE PUT ON HOLD
PAGE 3 OF 3
NOVEMBER 11, 1998

STELLERS: Fate up in air

Continued from Page F-1

Gulf of Alaska.

However, while the circumstantial evidence of an effect is strong, there is no direct scientific link between disappearing Stellers and the pollock fishery.

"Can we say for sure that pollock fishing is driving this? No. There is still some uncertainty," said Jim Balsiger, acting regional director of NMFS. "Because pollock is so important, we're trying to be more careful."

Balsiger said he hopes to have a decision that the industry can act on in December.

Into the scientific gray area, supporters of the pollock industry are trying to cast doubt on blaming the decline on fishing.

"Everyone assumes pollock is the problem, but a lot of the science disagrees with that," said Glenn Reid, executive director of the North Pacific Seafood Coalition.

A climate shift in North Pacific waters may be reducing the amount of capelin, herring or other prey species available to sea lions, suggested Andrew Trites, a marine mammal biologist from the University of British Columbia told the Council Advisory Panel on Tuesday. Stellers may have been forced to feed on the less-nutritious pollock, hurting their overall health.

"In the Bering Sea you've got huge removals of fish, and Stellers are going down. But there's no pollock fishing in Prince William Sound and you see the same decline," said Al Geiser, a Kodiak fisherman, who fishes in the Bering Sea. "Is this a matter of biology or politics?"

But for conservation groups, the circumstantial case against the fishing industry is too strong to ignore.

"We're looking at a species that is in danger of becoming extinct. Two of the largest fisheries in the world are concentrated in that species critical habitat," said Ken Stump of the American Oceans Campaign. That group, the Sierra Club and Greenpeace sued NMFS in April charging the agency has not acted to protect Steller habitat.

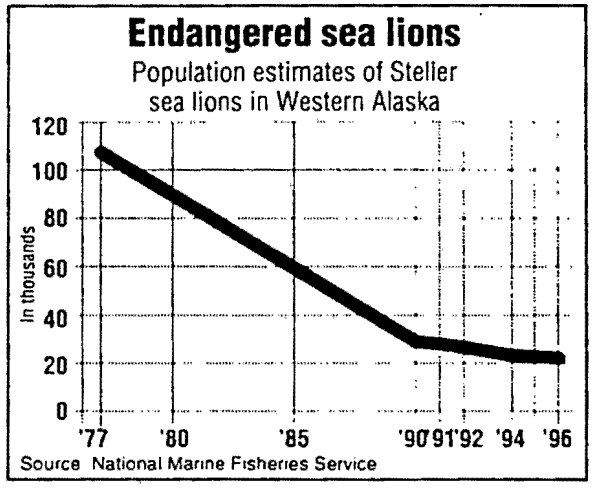
The judge hearing the case has given NMFS until Dec. 16 to reach a decision about whether commercial fishing is affecting Stellers. In a draft plan presented in October, NMFS biologists made several proposals for changing fishing, including no-trawl zones around sea lion rookeries and haulouts, breaking the pollock season into three rather than two seasons and reducing the catch in certain areas.

But NMFS still needs to reach a final decision about fishing before any action is taken.

"We wanted to have a decision for the council and the industry to consider. It's unsatisfying for all of us," Balsiger said.

Meanwhile, the council is turning to the other items on its agenda: the details of the American Fisheries Act, a new federal law that reduces the number of factory trawlers — which catch and process pollock — and shifts more of the pollock catch to smaller vessels that deliver their catches to onshore processors.

Reporter Ben Spiess can be reached at bspiess@adn.com.



RON ENGSTROM / Anchorage Daily News

JUNEAU EMPIRE
NOVEMBER 6, 1998

Biologists get surprise grant to study Pacific

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE – The University of Alaska and the U.S. Department of the Interior are scrambling to determine how to get $6.6 million into the hands of research biologists by next spring to study the North Pacific.

The Alaska money was part of the Interior Department's budget, and it came as something of a surprise.

The appropriations bill stipulates that the money should be used for basic marine research in the North Pacific Ocean. The U.S. Department of Commerce, the Department of the Interior and Alaska officials must approve the study plan.

The money will be turned over to the university to administer a grants program, said Bill Seitz, director of the Interior's Biological Resources Division.

Seitz said a plan should be written within the next few weeks so researchers can submit grant applications in January or February. Seitz wants the program be an open competition that would allow researchers outside the university to apply for the grant money.

Seitz hopes the agencies will agree to follow a study plan developed this year by a number of government agencies to better understand the Bering Sea ecosystem. That includes determining why the endangered Stellar sea lion population continues to decline.

Sen. Ted Stevens secured the study money for the state. The Alaska Republican long has been concerned about the health of the Bering Sea and has pushed to limit the number of factory trawlers working there.

Fishery managers contend the ecosystem is healthy. The Bering Sea is one of Alaska's biggest economic generators. It provided 1.5 billion pounds of pollock in 1997, resulting in products valued at over $350 million and creating jobs for more than 3,000 people.

Environmental groups believe the factory trawlers are harming the marine ecosystem by overfishing and killing a lot of sea life accidentally hauled up in their nets.

The appropriations money comes from the spoils of a 17-year-old lawsuit over development off the coast of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, said Deborah Williams, the top Interior official in Alaska.

When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the state of Alaska nearly two years ago, about $1.4 billion from oil-lease proceeds held in escrow ended in the federal government's coffers.

THE CLARION PENINSULA
NOVEMBER 6-7, 1998

Project guards Kenai River waters

By SHANA LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

Volunteers, scientists and land managers are putting the final touches on a plan to help them understand the Kenai River and protect its water quality. The plan aims to foster cooperation, efficiency and accessibility.

On Wednesday, representatives of federal, state and local government sat down with environmental groups for an all-day workshop on water study projects on the Kenai Peninsula and an evening open house to review a report, the "Framework for Water Quality Monitoring on the Kenai River."

The water monitoring involves testing water samples and measuring the physical traits of the river to check for changes in chemistry, organisms or physical conditions that could signal trouble for the vital waterway.

Participants heard presentations about ongoing science projects by the U.S. Geological Survey, The Kenai Watershed Forum, The Nature Conservancy, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Cook Inlet Keeper and the Army Corps of Engineers.

That evening, The Nature Conservancy hosted an open house to discuss the water quality framework project and report.

The framework report reviews past monitoring efforts, suggests test sites, recommends technical procedures for scientific sampling and sets out guidelines for cooperation among public agencies and private organizations.

One innovative section categorizes levels of data, providing a way even groups without technical expertise, such as elementary school classes, can collect meaningful information scientists can use. The report helps such groups attain rigorous quality

See WATER, back page

...Water

Continued from page A-1

standards without great expense.

The framework ends with a suggested "statement of cooperation" for agencies and groups to sign. The framework is a way for all parties to communicate and work together, without sacrificing their autonomy, said William Ashton, an Anchorage environmental consultant who has been coordinating the framework.

The ideas detailed in the framework already are making a difference.

Agencies and volunteer groups are bridging the gap between government and the public to work together to everyone's benefit. Concerned citizens are learning more about local environmental conditions and applied science; agencies are learning to trust and work with volunteers.

The venture reflects a trend to return government to the people and make it cheaper in the process.

"The public wins," Ashton said. "More data is collected per agency dollar because of volunteers. People become more educated and aware."

The Kenai Watershed Forum, for example, trained volunteers over this past year using materials provided by the Cook Inlet Keeper but reviewed and approved by the state Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Those Kenai Watershed volunteers have assisted Fish and Game and the USGS in some field studies.

In a few years, people will be able to go onto the Internet and find good information on the Kenai River at their fingertips as the project takes shape.

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—William Ashton
Environmental consultant

Over the past year, The Nature Conservancy has organized meetings on the water quality monitoring plan.

Now that the framework is nearly finished, the conservancy is turning the project over to the Kenai River Special Management Area board, an advisory body that reports to Alaska State Parks.

An informal group of agency scientists, environmental groups and citizen volunteers called the Kenai River Coordination Group will organize the details of monitoring projects from now on. Phil North, the federal Environmental Protection Agency's agent on the Kenai Peninsula, chairs the group. It will report to a KRSMA subcommittee set up to oversee water quality monitoring.

The KRSMA board formally recommended ongoing water quality monitoring in its 1997 Kenai River Comprehensive Management Plan, but no agency had responsibility for organizing such monitoring.

The conservancy, although not a monitoring group, decided to "facilitate" the process, said Michelle Brown, head of the conservancy's project office in Soldotna.

The Nature Conservancy, a national nonprofit environmental group specializing in cooperative private ventures to protect habitat, has been working on Kenai River projects for about six years, she said.

The Nature Conservancy hired Ashton to organize meetings and draft a plan to coordinate and enhance water quality testing.

Ashton said it's fairly unique for a nonprofit to step forward and take charge of a project like this. He praised the organization's leadership and effectiveness.

The informal "water monitoring coalition" got together last fall and met during the winter to write a framework strategy.

Based on the meetings, Ashton wrote the draft framework in the spring. The Nature Conservancy circulated it for public comment.

The final document will go to the KRSMA board for final approval at the board's December meeting, he said.

Copies will be available at The Nature Conservancy office in Soldotna.

North Pacific researchers get surprise grant

ANCHORAGE (AP) — The University of Alaska and the U.S. Department of the Interior are scrambling to determine how to get $6.6 million into the hands of research biologists by next spring to study the North Pacific.

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When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the state of Alaska nearly two years ago, about $1.4 billion from oil-lease proceeds held in escrow ended in the federal government's coffers.

The lawsuit was known as the Dinkum Sands suit, named after a small shoal off the Arctic coast.

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Weir assures fish for Chignik subsistence

"Out here it's natural resources, fish, or game. The stores out here aren't that good, and the way the fisheries have been going, if you're not a permit holder you're not going to make that much money. Last year a lot of guys only made $5,000 for the year, so subsistence is really important," said David Owen, manager, Chignik weir.

When one of the largest sockeye runs in the state can't provide for subsistence, something's wrong.

The Chignik River is among the most productive sockeye systems on the Alaska Peninsula. Until a few years ago, subsistence and commercial fishermen peacefully coexisted, some of them harvesting in both fisheries.

Then the price of salmon dropped, reaching a 10-year low in 1993.

Commercial fishermen began to fish later and later into the season. For a few years, managers didn't realize that commercial catches were too high and that fish needed for subsistence weren't reaching the upper river.

The fisheries of the Chignik district had been managed based on the number of fish escaping past a weir on the Chignik River from June through the first week in August. After the weir was removed in August, managers continued to judge the strength of the escapement by the size of the commercial catches.

"Over the years we probably had too much of a commercial fishery," said David Owen, manager of the Chignik weir. "Because as time went on, we fished later and later and we estimated escapement based on our catches and they may or may not have been correct."

Wayne Donaldson, a Department of Fish and Game management biologist explained: "The Total escapement was met, but the later portions of the run were weak and not getting through."

Complaints started coming in. People were not getting enough fish for subsistence.

"Yeah, it was a big issue here about three to four years ago, said Johnny Lind, president of the Chignik Lake Village Council. "People were going down to the lagoon and trying to get their subsistence and they couldn't even get any kind of fish. That's when it became a really big issue."

To be able to monitor the escapement and the commercial harvest with subsistence needs in mind, they needed to keep the weir up longer.

In 1995, the Department of Fish and Game received funding from the state-administered criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez oil spill to keep the weir operating into the first week of September. Now they also use lighted underwater video cameras to illuminate the fish as they pass through the weir.

Owen says the problem has essentially been resolved. Now the department has good solid data on which to base decisions.

"When we make our decision, it's not all based on catch data," said Owen. "It's based on escapement data, a lot better escapement data than we had before."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU
WHALESONG
OCTOBER 16, 1998
VOL 20 ISSUE 2
PAGE 1 OF 2

Wright keeps an eye on the Sound

Cherilyn Johnson
Whalesong Reporter

Bruce Wright, visiting associate professor at UAS, not only teaches about wildlife, he does something about it. Wright, who teaches correspondence courses on bald eagles, bears, and whales, works as Chief of the Office of Oil Spill Damage Assessment and Restoration at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. As such, he serves as NOAA liaison to the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council.

The council is made up of six entities, three state and three federal—the State of Alaska, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Department of the Interior. According to its mission statement, the council's goal is to "restore the environment injured by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill to a healthy, productive, world-renowned ecosystem, while taking into account the importance of quality of life and the need for viable opportunities to establish and sustain a reasonable standard of living."

As part of that process, Wright visited Prince William Sound last month with other council representatives. The council found the area to be in what they consider the restoration phase of its recovery.

According to Wright, the council monitors a number of indicator species and considers the health of the total ecosystem as they evaluate oil spill recovery in the Sound. One indicator species, the bald eagle, has recovered from the effects of the oil spill, and several other species are in the process of recovering. But some indicator species do not seem to be recovering well. (See sidebar, below.)

The council does not leap to the conclusion that this is because of the oil spill, Wright said. Evidence indicates that the entire Northeast Pacific region, including Prince William Sound, experienced what is called a "regime shift" back in 1976. The area changed from a crustacean-based ecosystem to a fish-based ecosystem. Fishermen who had been reaping healthy harvests of shrimp and crab suddenly found their nets coming up empty.

As part of the regime shift, the population of important forage fish species like sand lance and herring dropped sharply. These species had provided food for such indicator species as marbled murrelets and harbor seals. Based on this evidence, it appears that some indicator species were already in decline prior to the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, which took place in 1989. The complete 1998 Status Report of the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council is available through the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Resources and Services Injured by the Spill

Recovered

Photo by Daniel Zatz

Bald eagle

Not Recovering

Photo by Robert Angell

Cormorants (3 species)
Harbor seal
Harlequin duck
Killer whale (AB pod)
Marbled murrelet
Pacific herring
Pigeon guillemot
Sea otter (western PWS)

Recovering

Photo by John Hyde

Archaeological resources
Common murres
Intertidal communities[1]
Mussels
Pink salmon
Sediments
Sockeye salmon
Subtidal communities

Recovery Unknown

Photo by Robert Angell

Black oystercatcher
Clams
Common loon
Cutthroat trout
Designated wilderness areas
Dolly Varden
Kittlitz's murrelet
River otter
Rockfish

Injured Services

Photo by Roy Corral

Commercial fishing
Passive uses
Recreation and Tourism
Subsistence

1. Status of intertidal communities based largely on monitoring in sheltered rocky habitats in Prince William Sound; status of other intertidal habitats is less certain or unknown, though some recovery can be anticipated.

THE CLARION PENINSULA
NOVEMBER 1, 1998

Columbia Glacier ice worries Coast Guard

VALDEZ — Coast Guard officials in Valdez say they remain concerned about icebergs from the Columbia Glacier floating into shipping lanes used by oil tankers.

James Loy, the Coast Guard's commandant, who visited Valdez last week, said the agency is satisfied with its radar network in Prince William Sound, but it isn't completely comfortable with its ability to monitor icebergs calving from the huge glacier at the mouth of Valdez Arm.

The Coast Guard still relies on visual detection for spotting floating ice because radar doesn't pick it up.

Capt. Ron Morris, Valdez port captain, said he expects calving icebergs to be a problem for tanker traffic for at least 20 more years.

It was worries about ice in the Valdez Arm that prompted Capt. Joe Hazelwood to change the course of the Exxon Valdez just before it struck Bligh Reef in March 1989, spilling 11 million gallons of North Slope crude oil.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
NOVEMBER 9, 1998

The Anchorage Times

Publisher: BILL J. ALLEN
"Believing in Alaskans, putting Alaska first"
Editors: DENNIS FRADLEY, PAUL JENKINS, WILLIAM J. TOBIN
The Anchorage Times Commentary in this segment of the *Anchorage Daily News* does not represent the views of the *Daily News*. It is written and published under an agreement with former owners of *The Times*, in the interests of preserving a diversity of viewpoints in the community.

Public views

A FAVORITE ruse of environmental activists is to claim that they are the true representatives of the general public.

When holding their demonstrations or filing their lawsuits to block this or that development project, environmentalists often pretend that they're only doing what the people want done. They tell us that government officials and agency regulators can't be trusted because they only represent big industry and wealthy fat cats — not the people.

One way to debunk the enviro's claim is to note how many votes their candidates get. You didn't see many cast for Green Party candidates last Tuesday.

Public opinion surveys provide another way to verify where a majority of the general public stands on the issues. In Alaska, more often than not, the public isn't standing with the extreme positions of the environmental industry.

Take the issue of beetle-killed trees in Alaska. Professional foresters believe the damaged trees should be harvested and the forest allowed to regenerate. Environmentalists, though, say nature should be left to take its course, with no tree harvest permitted. It's what the people want, they say.

When Anchorage pollster David Dittman asked during a statewide survey in September about beetle-damaged trees, he found that 84 percent favored harvesting them.

A similar result occurred with a question regarding the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees' program to buy up private lands with money from the spill settlement. Environmentalists routinely argue that a majority of Alaskans support the money being used to buy up private land.

The Dittman survey found that Alaskans, by a 3-to-1 margin, prefer the money be used for biological and market research to benefit Alaska's fisheries rather than to purchase private land to add to state parks and preserves.

Environmentalists have alleged that Alaskans don't support building a road between King Cove and Cold Bay, 7 miles of which would cross a national wildlife refuge. In fact, the Dittman survey shows, 70 percent endorse the road; only 18 percent are opposed.

Then there was this question: "As far as Alaska's environment is concerned, when Alaska's congressional delegation of Sen. Murkowski, Sen. Stevens and Congressman Young say one thing would be best for Alaska; and local and national environmental groups say something else would be best — who do you believe and trust the most? Fifty-nine percent said the delegation; 26 percent the environmental groups; and 15 percent were unsure.

In case there are any doubts about the level of public support for the delegation, all you have to do is check the results of Tuesday's election.

An ancient tradition helps modern science

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz

For The Times

Harbor seal populations in Prince William Sound were already doing poorly before the 1989 oil spill, which killed an estimated 300 seals outright. Ecosystem changes rank number one among theories for the decline. Through the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, hunters have become a critical link in research to determine why the harbor seal population has dropped about 80 percent over the last 20 years.

For years after the spill, harbor seal hunters reported seeing abnormalities in seal tissues and livers, but there was no formal way to collect samples from the seals and have them processed. Research on seals was also stymied by a lengthy permitting process, which non-Native biologists had to pursue in order to collect tissue samples for analysis.

That began to change in 1994, with amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Congress gave the Secretary of the Interior authority to enter into agreements with Alaska Native organizations for shared management of subsistence uses of marine mammals.

The decline in seals and the potential for more regulated hunting stimulated the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to carry out research on harbor seal use throughout the seal's range in Alaska. Through a series of meetings with hunters and scientists, Fish and Game's Subsistence Division led an effort for hunters and biologists to discuss human use of seals, along with current life history, distribution and abundance data. The Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission arose out of those meetings. Monica Riedel of Cordova, previously a member of the Sea Otter Commission, stepped forward to serve as its first director.

Riedel said she felt the need for Alaska Natives to be involved in research and management. "We need to be involved, because any decision about harbor seals directly affects us," she said.

Nineteen Alaska Native tribes belong to the statewide commission, which has representatives from the Aleutians, Bristol Bay, Cook Inlet, Chugach Region, Kodiak, and Southeastern Alaska.

Since the commission's inception, Riedel has worked with state biologists to train hunters and young people from Ketchikan to Akutan to collect samples from their subsistence hunts for science. High school students accompany their elders on their hunts and when a seal is taken, collect the samples and record data about the seal. Seal meat is widely distributed in the traditional way, but now tissues are sent to scientists all over the world.

In June, the commission met in Fairbanks. Hunters were invited to tour the mammology collection at the University of Alaska Museum to see samples they helped create.

Founding member Mitch Simeonoff of Akhiok attended. "We went to the museum and then to the university where they keep our samples. That was fantastic," he said.

The most interesting part of the Fairbanks trip for Simeonoff was the mammology museum. "I didn't realize they had that many animals," Simeonoff said. "They had skeletons of all the mammals we have — walrus, seals, whales — and some of them were really old."

Harbor seals have also declined around Akhiok. "The people have noticed it," he said.

The commission and the National Marine Fisheries Service signed an agreement in August of 1997, describing how the co-management agreement process will take place. "It's looking more and more like a partnership," said Riedel.

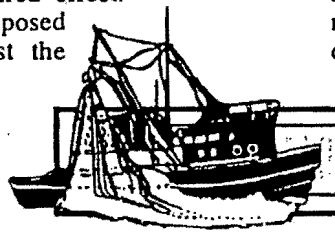
Steve Zimmerman, NMFS Regional Director, agreed that harbor seal management changes are occurring relatively smoothly. "We have a common goal of doing the best thing for harbor seals and allowing subsistence to continue," he said.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

Sea lion declines put Gulf trawlers in jeopardy

STELLER SEA LION WOES continue to multiply and now threaten to cut even more deeply into pollock trawling in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea. A National Marine Fisheries Service survey this summer showed sea lion populations continue to decline — down 13 percent since 1994 — which suggests that the efforts put in place in 1991 to reduce pollock trawling around sea lion rookeries are not having the desired effect.

New measures have been proposed that could dramatically boost the level of protection, said Tim Ragen of NMFS' Protected Species Division in Juneau. Among them is to double the size of no-trawl zones around rookeries to 20 nautical miles, and to expand the no-trawl zones to haul-out areas. The proposals are far from final, however, Ragen said. "This is a starting point for discussion," he said.



SEAWATCH

Joel Gay

KODIAK TRAWL FISHERMEN think the starting point is terrifying and could threaten the viability of their fishery, according to the Kodiak Daily Mirror. "As presented, this plan would devastate the Gulf industy," said Al Burch, executive director of the Alaska Draggers Association. "We see 75-80 percent of the fishing grounds taken away from us and that translates into about 90 percent of our fish."

GREENPEACE SEES IT slightly differently, said Paul Clark of the group's Seattle office — the proposals don't go far enough. After filing a lawsuit against NMFS in April saying the agency hadn't done enough to protect the sea lions, the summer survey is vindication, he said. The group wants pollock allocations on a quarterly basis rather than twice or three times a year with no more than 25 percent taken in any quarter. They also want NMFS to redefine a haulout as wherever 100 or more animals are found — it historically has been 200 animals. Clark acknowledged that climate changes could be affecting the mammals as much or more than fishing, but fishing is the only element over which humans have control. "NMFS has dug us into a deep hole and it's going to take significant measures to get us out of it," he said.

THE SEA LION ISSUE is one of two agenda items at a special meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Anchorage next week. The council may consider emergency regulations for the upcoming trawl season, which begins Jan. 1. The council also will review Senate Bill 1221, the massive rewrite of Bering Sea pollock industry. The council will consider the bill's provisions and their potential impacts on fisheries management. The meeting runs Nov. 10-12 at the Anchorage Hilton Hotel.

AT THE OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING, council members re-elected Rick Lauber and Wally Pereyra as chair and vice-chair, respectively, and kept the license limitation program on track for implementation in January, 2000. The program, which is considered the council's top option for reducing the olympic-style race for fish in all fisheries under its jurisdiction, still must win approval from the Secretary of Commerce.

PACIFIC COD AND BLACKCOD QUOTAS next year should be about the same as this year, assuming the council approves the suggested total allowable catch figures proposed by National Marine Fisheries Service. The 1999 TAC for both species was set at the same level as 1998 — 66,060 metric tons of Pacific cod and 14,120 metric tons of sablefish. Final catch figures are up for approval at the council's December meeting in Anchorage.

PACIFIC COD FISHING in state waters of lower Cook Inlet opened up Saturday when the small-boat fleet failed to reach its guideline harvest level. The Department of Fish and Game dropped the limit on pots and jigging machines each boat can carry and on exclusive registration requirements, said Region Groundfish Management Biologist Charlie Trowbridge. The regulations remain in place until Dec. 31, or the remainder of the 2.4 million-pound guideline harvest level is taken. The combined catch of jig and pot boats to date is just 430,000 pounds.

KING CRAB FISHING STARTED as scheduled in Bristol Bay on Sunday, with good weather reported on the grounds and a fleet of 275 vessels hoping to get a share of 15.8 million pounds. Prices started out at $2.60 a pound, according to the Kodiak Daily Mirror, down some 65 cents a pound from last year.

The Cordova Times
Thursday, November 5, 1998

Decline in Steller sea lion numbers prompts proposed fishing closures

Fish factor

By Laine Welch

The biggest fear for fishing folks this Halloween season is the closures they're facing to protect Steller sea lions. Because of the continued decline in sea lion populations in the Gulf and Bering Sea, federal marine mammal biologists are proposing sweeping closures in traditional fishing grounds used by fleets from Kodiak, Seward, Sand Point and King Cove.

"The existing evidence suggests that the decline of sea lions may be due to lack of available prey," Tim Ragen, Steller sea lion recovery coordinator with the National Marine Fisheries Service told the Kodiak Daily Mirror. "We began by proposing closures affecting the pollock fishery," he added, "but starting immediately we've begun to look at all groundfish fisheries in the Gulf and Bering Sea." Many salmon and herring fisheries are also being scrutinized.

Needless to say, industry members are shocked at the news.

"As presented, this plan would devastate the Gulf industry," said Al Burch of the Alaska Draggers Association. "We see 75-80 percent of the fishing grounds taken away from us and that translates into about 90 percent of our fish." Burch added that NMFS had told people there would be changes, but "they'd be ones we could live with. Now they're proposing massive changes starting when the fisheries open in January and there's no public process for us to provide input," he said.

According to the NMFS proposal, areas could be closed for 10-20 miles around any place where there has ever been a sea lion haul-out. Biologists say they are merely complying with the Endangered Species Act, which prohibits federal fisheries managers from opening fisheries if they place a species at risk. Ragen said although the process of implementing the closures requires no public input, he plans to address the issue at a special meeting of the North Pacific Council set for Nov. 10-12 in Anchorage.

Salmon imports to Japan show decline

Total salmon imports to Japan this year were down 18 percent from 1997 to only 170,000 tons. That's due to the poor Alaska sockeye catch for the second year in a row, and the weak yen against the dollar. According to figures from the USDA, Chile's market share in Japan increased from 58 percent in 1997 to 74 percent for the first half of 1998. Total Chilean exports in 1997 reached 74,000 tons, up 14 percent from 1996.

Chile is expected to gain even more market, as Japan will import roughly 90,000 to 95,000 tons of farm-raised coho and trout by the end of 1998. Japan's import of U.S. salmon this year is expected to be only one-fifth of the average year at 20,000 tons, with the U.S. share of the country's total salmon imports sliding to just 12 percent.

Good medicine from the galley

National Fisherman reports that meat tenderizer is an enzyme that can neutralize toxins and cool the pain from a cut or puncture caused by a fish spine. Likewise, rubbing brewed coffee on a wound from a fish spine eases pain and reduces swelling. A mild acid in vinegar tends to disable the stinging cells that jellyfish leave behind. The inside of banana peels also provides instant relief when rubbed on jellyfish stings. Salt that's diluted in warm water also eases the sting of jellyfish. For generations, Saltines have been considered the best cure there is for sea sickness. Taken 12 to 24 hours before setting out in rough weather, ginger in its various forms can help calm stomachs. When you're done with a tea bag, slap it on an insect bite for fast relief. Raw, grated potato will not only take away the sting of an insect bite, but it can also work as a poultice for drawing the venom out of a sting.

Laine Welch is an independent seafood market specialist based in Kodiak.

Council to consider thorny issues

At a special meeting next month in Anchorage, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will deal with three complex issues crucial to the future of Gulf and Bering Sea trawl and longline fisheries.

Senate Bill 1221: The council will review the bill's provisions and their potential impacts on management of the groundfish and crab fisheries, the license limitation system, marine mammals, and National Marine Fisheries Service enforcement and monitoring capabilities. The council will then consider actions it will need to address in future meetings to implement the bill's provisions.

Steller sea lions: NMFS will report on the status of Steller sea lions and potential fisheries management implications. The council may take emergency actions affecting the 1999 groundfish fisheries to mitigate potential fisheries impacts on sea lions.

Status of short-tailed albatross bycatch: an informational report from NMFS on the status of short-tailed albatross bycatch in the longline fleet.

The council will meet Nov. 10-12, at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Anchorage.

Weir assures fish for Chignik subsistence users

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

"Out here it's natural resources, fish, or game. The stores out here aren't that good, and the way the fisheries have been going, if you're not a permit holder you're not going to make that much money. Last year a lot of guys only made $5,000 for the year, so subsistence is really important." David Owen, manager, Chignik weir.

When one of the largest sockeye runs in the state can't provide for subsistence, something's wrong.

The Chignik River is among the most productive sockeye systems on the Alaska Peninsula. Until a few years ago, subsistence and commercial fishermen peacefully coexisted, some of them harvesting in both fisheries.

Then the price of salmon dropped, reaching a 10-year low in 1993.

Commercial fishermen began to fish later and later into the season. For a few years, managers didn't realize that commercial catches were too high and that fish needed for subsistence weren't reaching the upper river.

The fisheries of the Chignik district had been managed based on the number of fish escaping past a weir on the Chignik River from June through the first week in August. After the weir was removed in August, managers continued to judge the strength of the escapement by the size of the commercial catches.

"Over the years we probably had too much of a commercial fishery," said David Owen, manager of the Chignik weir. "Because as time went on, we fished later and later and we estimated escapement based on our catches and they may or may not have been correct."

Wayne Donaldson, a Department of Fish and Game management biologist explained: "The Total escapement was met, but the later portions of the run were weak and not getting through."

Complaints started coming in. People were not getting enough fish for subsistence.

"Yeah, it was a big issue here about three to four years ago, said Johnny Lind, president of the Chignik Lake Village Council. "People were going down to the lagoon and trying to get their subsistence and they couldn't even get any kind of fish. That's when it became a really big issue."

To be able to monitor the escapement and the commercial harvest with subsistence needs in mind, they needed to keep the weir up longer.

In 1995, the Department of Fish and Game received funding from the state-administered criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez oil spill to keep the weir operating into the first week of September. Now they also use lighted underwater video cameras to illuminate the fish as they pass through the weir.

Owen says the problem has essentially been resolved. Now the department has good solid data on which to base decisions.

"When we make our decision, it's not all based on catch data," said Owen. "It's based on escapement data, a lot better escapement data than we had before."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

THE SEWARD PHOENIX
OCTOBER 29, 1998

2, possibly 3, endangered birds taken in longline fishery

The Associated Press

JUNEAU — Two endangered short-tailed albatrosses have been taken in the longline groundfish fishery in the Bering Sea, according to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

The NMFS says both of the vessels that killed the birds were towing lines designed to scare them away from the fish gear. The deaths occurred on Sept. 21 and Sept. 28.

Another albatross was killed on Sept. 28, but it wasn't clear if it was one of the endangered short-tailed birds, the fisheries service said.

There are only about 1,000 of the rare birds left in the world, and fishermen in the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea are allowed an incidental take of just four birds for 1997 and 1998 under the Endangered Species Act, the fisheries service said. If that take is exceeded, the longline fisheries could be closed.

The birds die when they dive on the baited hooks being lowered from the back of the fishing boats, which fish with long lines of hooks laid on the sea floor.

THE SEWARD PHOENIX
OCTOBER 29, 1998

Dead Steller sea lion plucked from beach

LOG Staff

Staff at the Alaska SeaLife Center are conducting tests on the carcass of a Steller sea lion they recovered Tuesday from a beach just south of Tonsina Creek. A few days earlier a Seward man said he had seen a marine mammal carcass while hiking out at Tonsina Point.

Responding to that report, two staff members from the SeaLife Center took to the water Tuesday to retrieve the animal.

According to James Day, officer with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Seward, he and Fish and Wildlife Protection trooper Rick Swanson accompanied Dennis Christian and Dr. Pam Tuomi from the SeaLife Center on a boat trip out to Tonsina Point. The group was trying to get close enough to shore to get a better look at the animal but were unable to do so because of rough seas of four to five feet at the time.

Day said when the seas calmed down later that afternoon, the SeaLife Center pair set out again — this time in an inflatable watercraft with a rigid hull — with the idea of landing on the beach and hauling the carcass back to shore.

Swanson and Day followed in a Boston whaler and kept watch for safety purposes as Christian and Tuomi brought the sea lion to their facility. They got back to town just at sunset, the NMFS officer said.

See Steller, Page 19

Steller ...

From Page 1

Day said many agencies will probably get samples of the animal, estimated to be about 2- to 3 years old. Unless the animal has been shot or in some other way been unnaturally taken, the carcass will remain with the SeaLife Center, he said.

According to the NMFS officer, the mammal carcass should provide valuable tissue samples for testing purposes.

At one time, Day said he had been concerned that people would harm the Steller sea lions who were competing with them for fish at the mouth of Tonsina Creek. However, he said there appears to be no indication that a fisherman had done anything untoward to the sea lion recovered Tuesday.

OPINION

Point of View

Cook Inlet needs better eyes, stronger muscles

by Paul McCollum

I woke up the other morning to a beautiful fall day in Kachemak Bay. Looking down from near Skyline Drive, I was enjoying the view when along came a fully laden oil tanker. It moved slowly to just between 60-Foot Rock and the entrance buoy, then slowly made a complete turn. It took on a pilot and slowly departed.

I won't pretend that seeing the tanker didn't disturb my reverence for Kachemak Bay that morning, but that's not my point. These tankers come and go in without so much as anyone knowing where they are, what they're doing and whether they are in the proper tanker lanes. Worst of all, there aren't any strategically placed emergency tugs available for assistance in the event of a problem.

The biggest danger of a major oil spill in Cook Inlet is a tanker running aground or colliding with another large vessel or an oil platform.

If you tallied up the huge amounts of money and things even beyond money (image, reputation, public perceptions) involved with major oil spills, you'd think the industry and the regulatory agencies would be gung-ho about minimizing the risks to the greatest degree feasible. OK, so maybe their idea of feasible and your idea of feasible is different. The cost of doing business the right way is not cheap, but it is only a drop in the bucket compared to the cost of one major spill.

Simply put, having the capability to monitor vessel traffic combined with a system that assesses the relative risk for each tankers' operational, structural and human factors are some of the best ways to minimize the structural failures, collisions, groundings and explosions likely to cause major spills. We should consider these things as the cost of doing business.

It is important to realize that there has been a large number of incidents and close calls in Cook Inlet over the years. Due to the lack of any Vessel Traffic System and no formal system of tracking vessels and their problems (voluntary reporting is the only way we know if anything happens here), the actual number of incidents and "close calls" is probably far above what is on record.

Some of the known incidents in Cook Inlet include collisions, groundings, fires, steering and power failures and human error. Fortunately the only one that resulted in a major spill was the Glacier Bay, which grounded off the mouth of the Kenai River on July 2, 1987, and spilled approximately 210,000 gallons of North Slope crude. We've been lucky.

Cook Inlet may be the only port in the world with an active oil industry that does not have standby tug assist capabilities and a vessel tracking system and that allows tankers to dock without tugs. It's time to let the Coast Guard know that this is an unacceptable risk that we are no longer willing to tolerate. Have we learned nothing from the Exxon Valdez spill?

The sad fact of life is that we, the residents of Cook Inlet and Kachemak Bay, cannot depend on the regulatory agencies and congressionally mandated citizens' groups to protect us from oil spills and pollution resulting from oil industry activities

We need a vessel tracking system with good radar and real-time monitoring, mandatory radio contact during transits and ideally with DGPS position and status tracking, no less than three standby tugs (in Homer or Seldovia and Port Graham, and at least one in the upper Inlet for mandatory docking assistance as well as emergencies), and a vessel casualty and human factors database that enables us to assess the relative risks of these vessels and and crews.

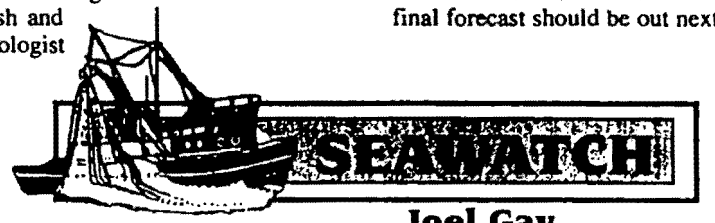
It only takes one incident and we'll be wishing we'd not stood by and allowed Cook Inlet to be virtually bypassed after Congress passed OPA 90, which mandated major improvements in Prince William Sound and Puget Sound, but not Cook Inlet. They'll say they can't afford it, they'll say there aren't that many tankers, they'll say they can drop their anchors if they get in trouble. But it's time to tell the Coast Guard and the oil companies to get with the program.

The sad fact of life is that we, the residents of Cook Inlet and Kachemak Bay, cannot depend on the regulatory agencies and congressionally mandated citizens' groups to protect us from oil spills and pollution resulting from oil industry activities. Whether agency officials feel threatened by the power of the oil industry, or upper level regulators want to keep a door open for future industry employment, it's hard to say. But the reality is that we the people have to work hard to pressure these regulators to do what they are supposed to be doing.

Call the Coast Guard, the Alaska congressional delegation and Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (800-652-7222). Tell them to get proactive and to strive for three or four oil tanker class emergency tugs stationed in lower Cook Inlet, as well as a vessel traffic system run from Homer and Kenai. Or write to Capt. Scott Cooper, Office of Investigations and Analysis (G-MOA), Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, U.S. Coast Guard, 2100 Second Street SW, Washington, DC 20593.

Paul McCollum is a former member of Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Committee and currently a member of Prince William Sound RCAC, representing the city of Homer.

Longtime biologist Paul Ruesch on his way out



Joel Gay

UPPER COOK INLET Area Management Biologist Paul Ruesch has managed his last salmon season and will retire next spring. He will have been with the department 20 years next March, Ruesch said, "But I'll probably stick around until May. I don't want to retire in the middle of the winter." Ruesch started working for the Department of Fish and Game as a shellfish biologist in Dutch Harbor in 1979, and was there when the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery hit its amazing peak of 130 million pounds in 1980. It crashed the following year, when Ruesch transferred to Soldotna. His tenure here has tracked the growth of the upper Cook Inlet fishery, which he said is due in part to higher escapement goals but mostly to good environmental conditions. "We went along for the ride," he said. Ruesch has no retirement plans at this point, he said, other than to take it easy for a while. "I need a break," he said.

THE NUMBERS ARE FAR from final, but 1999 looks to be another disappointing year for Upper Inlet drift and setnet fishermen, with a sockeye harvest expected to be around 2 million fish. Ken Tarbox, research biologist with the Department of Fish and Game in Soldotna, said there is significant discrepancy between the two sets of data normally used to forecast the return. Smolt counts tell one story, he said, while the return of 4-year-olds last year tells another. It's the same situation that occurred two years ago, he said, which the department resolved by splitting the difference between the two — and was right on target. The final forecast should be out next month, he said.

PHIL SQUIRES IS ONCE AGAIN president of United Cook Inlet Drift Association, according to the most recent UCIDA newsletter. New to the board of directors are Bob Merchant, Don Ostling and Chris VanRyzin. At the top of the group's agenda this fall is working to defeat Proposal D, which asks the Board of Fisheries to close drift fishing Aug. 1, double the Yentna sockeye escapement goal and eliminate the upper limit on Kenai escapement. The board heard testimony earlier this month in Wasilla and takes up Upper Inlet issues again in Soldotna in February.

HALIBUT LONGLINERS WHO WAITED until the bitter end to harvest their quota appear to have hit the jackpot. According to the Auction Block, prices climbed over $2 a pound in the last week, and a 44,000-pound delivery last weekend netted $2.47 a pound. With just two weeks to go in the 1998 halibut season, longliners have landed 86 percent of their quota, according to National Marine Fisheries Service. In Area 3A, the catch totaled nearly 22.7 million pounds as of Monday, leaving 3.3 million to go. In Area 3B the harvest was 9.8 million out of the quota of 11 million pounds.

COD LONGLINERS ARE TREADING thin ice after at least one endangered short-tailed albatross was killed in late September. An on-board observer also reported that two others died, though that has yet to be confirmed, according to the Associated Press. If more than four of the endangered birds die over a two-year period, Alaska's longline fisheries except for halibut could be shut down by National Marine Fisheries Service. The last time one of the albatrosses died was 1996. The birds were hunted nearly to extinction in the 19th century.

QUALITY IS THE KEY to consumer confidence in the seafood business, and to encourage fishermen to upgrade their operations the state is now offering low-interest loans for such improvements as refrigeration and hold insulation. The new program lends up to $300,000 at two points below prime, or 6.5 percent these days, according to a press release from Gov. Tony Knowles. The quality incentive is part of the Commercial Fishing Revolving Loan Program, administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. For more information, call (800) 478-5626.

PINBONE WIZARD RAY WADSWORTH is close to unveiling his miracle machine, which will remove pinbones from salmon while leaving a substantial filet, according to the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation. But because processors appear hesitant to try the new technology, the foundation has granted him another $500,000 to improve further his Total Pinbone Removal System, as well as to find a processing partner for full-blown production and to develop a marketing plan to sell boneless filets.

EVIDENCE IS INCREASING that major environmental changes are having an effect on the North Pacific, though whether it's normal, the result of global warming or the lingering effects of El Nino appears to be anyone's guess. A group of fisheries scientists meeting in Fairbanks this week compared notes on the Bering Sea and found evidence of warmer water, ranging from unexpected blooms of certain zooplankton to the arctic ice pack being far north of where it usually is found, according to the Associated Press. Because of reductions in the Steller sea lion population, orcas now appear to be targeting sea otters along the Aleutian Islands, which in turn has allowed sea urchins populations to explode.

. . . Icelandic whale's pen built by Vasey, Parks

ROM PAGE ONE

mal rescue operations during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, the urea barge Oregon capsizing last winter and the Kiroshima oil spill in Dutch Harbor last spring.

During those projects they worked with marine mammal rescue expert Jim Stiers, who pitched the idea of a holding pen last winter to the Free Willy Keiko Foundation.

"It was one of those stories where over lunch they designed it on a cocktail napkin," Vasey said this week. "From a cocktail napkin it must have been within six months that the whole thing was happening."

Stiers contacted Vasey and Parks in April and asked if they would be interested in helping. After discussing between themselves whether this was real or just a marine mammal rescue guy's pipedream, they booked flights.

"Jim likes guys like us," said Vasey. "We're warm bodies with brains that he knows he can call on. He knows our lifestyles; we don't have 9-to-5 jobs."

A Washougal, Wash., industrial plastics company began building the pen last April. Parks and Vasey flew there in May to help build, assemble and disassemble the pieces in preparation for transport to Iceland.

"A lot of it was design and engineer as you go," said Parks.

Kirk Vasey and Michael Parks

The dumbbell-shaped pen is 60 feet larger than Keiko's former tank at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. Its 30-inch pipe frame is filled with styrofoam and supports a 17-ton lift in the center. Sixteen anchors hold it in place. Four are 16,000-pound steel anchors from World War II-era destroyers; the rest are concrete. Finger-width bungee cords wrapped together, stretched with a come-along, fasten the mooring lines to the anchors and gently absorb waves.

The pen is the largest of its kind in the world but its design is not unlike a typical salmon-rearing pen.

It took the world's largest transport plane — a behemoth Russian aircraft — to transport the pen, with pieces weighing up to a ton, to Vestmanneyjar on June 19.

Vasey flew to Iceland on June 15, while Parks returned to Homer to tie up loose ends, then returned to Washington and on to Iceland on June 22.

Vestmanneyjar is a port town of about 5,000 tucked into the Westman Islands that relies on cod and other fish as its industrial mainstay. John McPhee wrote about the town's near-destruction in 1973 from a nearby volcano in his 1989 book "The Control of Nature."

The volcano's lava flow skirted the town and poured into the harbor, creating a breakwater that helped further protect the town from the sometimes seething waters of the North Atlantic, a few degress south of the 64th parallel. But the weather is similar to Homer.

"It's kind of like the banana belt of Iceland," said Vasey. "But I'll tell you what, the wind can blow."

Vestmanneyjar was the foundation's first choice as Keiko's release site, though sites in Scotland and Ireland were also considered. Thousands of orcas swim near its shores, probably including Keiko's family.

Amid postcard Vestmanneyjar days, the two spent a month assembling the pen dockside and towing it to a small cove a 5-minute skiff ride from town.

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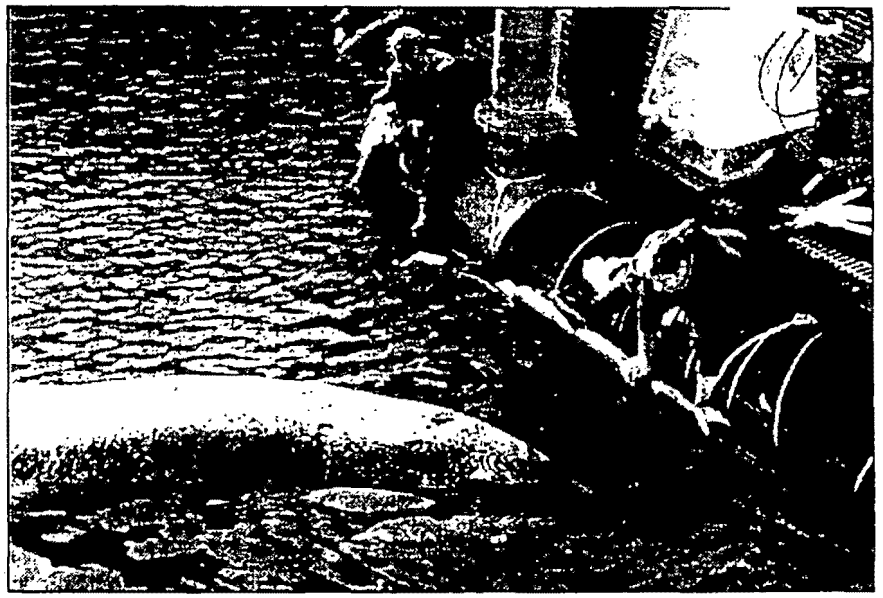

Photo by Kirk Vasey

Soon after his release in Iceland, Keiko touches base with his trainers.

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A U.S. Air Force C-17 was commissioned to transport Keiko in what Air Force brass dubbed "Operation Keiko Drop."

With a fleet of tour boats close behind, the transition to the pen went as smoothly as moving a 5-ton mammal could go, Parks and Vasey said.

Vasey left Iceland soon after Keiko's release to the pen while Parks stayed until earlier this month. When he left Iceland, Parks said, Keiko was doing well.

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Keiko is hand-fed fish, but an ecosystem already has begun to evolve around the pen with crab scurrying to scavenge the sunken fish chunks and small fish attracted to the pen's shadows.

"He's kind of got his own little thing going over there," said Vasey.

"Keiko world," Parks quickly replied.

But both men turned serious when they discussed what many have before — the moral dilemma of spending $15 million on the release of one whale that could go to scores of worthy charities. Mattel Corp. alone donated $500,000 to the Free Willy Keiko Foundation, which claims nearly 5 million members, for rights to create a "Free Willy" Barbie doll.

"People wanted this to happen. That's why they gave their money," Parks said, "to free Willy."

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There is a question about whether Keiko will ever be healthy or savvy enough to be released into the open water. One possibility is that the mouth of the cove will be closed off with a net and he will spend the rest of his life there. But Vasey and Parks, along with everyone else involved in the project, hope he will make it on his own.

A ship that slowly drove past the pen about an hour after Keiko arrived reminded them, however, that they were close to Keiko's home and that his final release was one step closer. The Gudron, which used to be ported in Vestmanneyjar, was the trawler that captured Keiko 20 years earlier.

. . . Icelandic whale's pen built by Vasey, Parks

FROM PAGE ONE

mal rescue operations during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, the urea barge Oregon capsizing last winter and the Kiroshima oil spill in Dutch Harbor last spring.

During those projects they worked with marine mammal rescue expert Jim Stiers, who pitched the idea of a holding pen last winter to the Free Willy Keiko Foundation.

"It was one of those stories where over lunch they designed it on a cocktail napkin," Vasey said this week. "From a cocktail napkin it must have been within six months that the whole thing was happening."

Stiers contacted Vasey and Parks in April and asked if they would be interested in helping. After discussing between themselves whether this was real or just a marine mammal rescue guy's pipedream, they booked flights.

"Jim likes guys like us," said Vasey. "We're warm bodies with brains that he knows he can call on. He knows our lifestyles; we don't have 9-to-5 jobs."

A Washougal, Wash., industrial plastics company began building the pen last April. Parks and Vasey flew there in May to help build, assemble and disassemble the pieces in preparation for transport to Iceland.

"A lot of it was design and engineer as you go," said Parks.

Kirk Vasey and Michael Parks

The dumbbell-shaped pen is 60 [illegible] larger than Keiko's former tank [illegible] Oregon Coast Aquarium. Its 30-inch pipe frame is filled with styrofoam and supports a 17-ton lift in the center. Sixteen anchors hold it in place. Four are 16,000-pound steel anchors from World War II-era destroyers; the rest are concrete. Finger-width bungee cords wrapped together, stretched with a come-along, fasten the mooring lines to the anchors and gently absorb waves.

The pen is the largest of its kind in the world but its design is not unlike a typical salmon-rearing pen.

It took the world's largest transport plane — a behemoth Russian aircraft — to transport the pen, with pieces weighing up to a ton, to Vestmanneyjar on June 19.

Vasey flew to Iceland on June 15, while Parks returned to Homer to tie up loose ends, then returned to Washington and on to Iceland on June 22.

Vestmanneyjar is a port town of about 5,000 tucked into the Westman Islands that relies on cod and other fish as its industrial mainstay. John McPhee wrote about the town's near-destruction in 1973 from a nearby volcano in his 1989 book "The Control of Nature."

The volcano's lava flow skirted the town and poured into the harbor, creating a breakwater that helped further protect the town from the sometimes seething waters of the North Atlantic, a few degress south of the 64th parallel. But the weather is similar to Homer.

"It's kind of like the banana belt of Iceland," said Vasey. "But I'll tell you what, the wind can blow."

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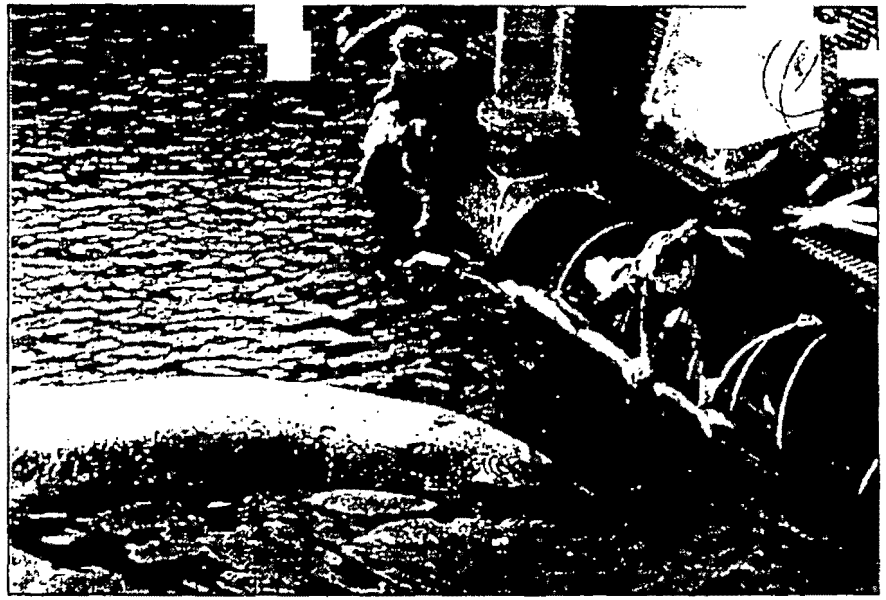

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HOMER NEWS
OCTOBER 29, 1998

Homer mariners help free 'Willy'

by J. Michael Lyons
Staff Writer

On a tiny speck of an island off the southwestern coast of Iceland, Homer residents Kirk Vasey and Michael Parks watched with the rest of the world on Sept. 10 as the 10,000-pound orca Keiko, known to moviegoers as the star of "Free Willy," was lowered into the ocean for the first time since it was captured by an Icelandic trawler 20 years ago.

It was a celebrated day in an unprecedented project to eventually release a captive whale back to the open ocean.

Vasey and Parks stood on shore with schoolchildren, fishermen, mothers and grandfathers — all residents of the nearby fishing village of Vestmanneyjar — as the biggest crane in Iceland lowered Keiko from the biggest barge in Iceland into the football field-sized floating pen made of 30-inch plastic pipe and 6-inch knotless web that the two men from Homer helped build.

For Keiko it was the latest move in a full-circle journey that took him from Icelandic waters in 1979 to a series of aquariums in Canada, Mexico and Oregon and included a starring role in a movie that endeared him to the world and made possible the $15 million project to free him.

Moviemakers found and filmed Keiko in a cramped amusement park in Mexico City for "Free Willy," a movie that portrayed an orca that performed in a run-down amusement park.

After the film's incredible success and with the help of the cast later pitching for donations on the movie's video release, the Free Willy Keiko Foundation was formed and built a $7.2 million facility in Oregon to rehabilitate the underweight and diseased orca with the hopes of someday releasing it.

For Vasey and Parks, the day Keiko arrived in Iceland was the most notable day in a five-month journey that began in a Washington plastics manufacturing plant last May.

The two Homer mariners had earned their trip to Iceland through marine mammal rescue operations during the 1989

See ICELANDIC, Page 6

THE CORDOVA TIMES
OCTOBER 29, 1998

An ancient tradition helps modern science

Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Harbor seal populations in Prince William Sound were already doing poorly before the 1989 oil spill, which killed an estimated 300 seals outright. Ecosystem changes rank number one among theories for the decline. Through the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, hunters have become a critical link in research to determine why the harbor seal population has dropped about 80 percent over the last 20 years.

For years after the spill, harbor seal hunters reported seeing abnormalities in seal tissues and livers, but there was no formal way to collect samples from the seals and have them processed. Research on seals was also stymied by a lengthy permitting process, which non-Native biologists had to pursue in order to collect tissue samples for analysis.

That began to change in 1994, with amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Congress gave the Secretary of the Interior authority to enter into agreements with Alaska Native organizations for co-management of subsistence uses of marine mammals.

The decline in seals and the potential for more regulated hunting stimulated the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to carry out research on harbor seal use throughout the seal's range in Alaska. Through a series of meetings with hunters and scientists, the ADF&G Subsistence Division led an effort for hunters and biologists to discuss human use of seals, along with current life history, distribution and abundance data. The Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission arose out of those meetings. Monica Riedel of Cordova, previously a member of the Sea Otter Commission, stepped forward to serve as its first director.

Reidel felt the need for Alaska Natives to be involved in research and management. "We need to be involved, because any decision about harbor seals directly affects us," she said.

Nineteen Alaska Native tribes belong to the statewide commission, which has representatives from the Aleutians, Bristol Bay, Cook Inlet, Chugach Region, Kodiak, and Southeastern Alaska.

Since its inception, Riedel has worked with state biologists to train hunters and young people from Ketchikan to Akutan to collect samples from their subsistence hunts for science. High school students accompany their elders on their hunts, and when a seal is taken, collect the samples and record data about the seal. Seal meat is widely distributed in the traditional way, but now tissues are sent to scientists all over the world.

In June, the commission met in Fairbanks. Hunters were invited to tour the mammology collection at the University of Alaska Museum to see samples they helped create.

Founding member Mitch Simeonoff of Akhiok, was there. "We went to the museum and then to the university where they keep our samples. That was fantastic," he said.

The most interesting part of the Fairbanks trip for Simeonoff was the mammology museum. "I didn't realize they had that many animals," Simeonoff said. "They had skeletons of all the mammals we have - walrus, seals, whales - and some of them were really old."

Harbor seals have also declined around Akhiok. "The people have noticed it," he said.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

Coast Guard echoes industry criticism of RCAC

By Tony Bickert
Valdez Vanguard

VALDEZ — The commanding officer of the Valdez Coast Guard said a lack of discipline within the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council has contributed to a "serious decay of trust" between the public and the oil shipping industry.

Capt. Ron Morris' concerns came in a letter last month to Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C, an arm of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The DOT must, according to the 1990 Oil Pollution Act, annually seek input from government regulators, the oil industry and public before deciding whether to recertify the RCAC as Prince William Sound's official oil industry advisory group.

Morris' comments echo complaints registered in September by oil shippers Exxon, Arco and British Petroleum that the RCAC lacks management control, accountability and encourages adversity between the council and the oil industry.

The RCAC refutes most of the criticism in its own letter sent Friday to the DOT.

Mandated by Congress in the wake of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, the RCAC's job in general is to advise the oil transportation industry and government regulators — including the Coast Guard — on issues that could harm the environment of Prince William Sound. The 19-member council is comprised of representatives of spill affected cities

See RCAC, page 18

Coast Guard denies it's too cozy with industry

By Tony Bickert
Valdez Vanguard

VALDEZ — The Coast Guard and oil industry last month registered similar complaints against the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council — too similar, says an RCAC founder and University of Alaska professor.

Rick Steiner, professor at the UA Marine Advisory Program, has requested from the Coast Guard via the Freedom of Information Act all information about any private discussions between the Coast Guard and the oil industry regarding the current RCAC recertification process.

The U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington, D.C., annually reviews commen-

See Guard, page 6

RCAC...

From page 1

and villages, as well as communities that potentially lie in the path of future spills. Its members also include representatives of the commercial fishing and tourism industries, as well as a Native corporation and the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce.

Morris and the majority of the shippers endorse recertification, but only if the RCAC agrees to re-examine and adhere to its role as specified in Title 5 of OPA 90, a complex, 13-page document that is subject to interpretation.

"I recommend recertification, but with some reservation," Morris wrote. "While we continue to have many constructive joint efforts with the RCAC, I have witnessed actions by the RCAC that are contrary to some of the original intent of chartering Advisory Councils."

In its 14-page response to the criticism, the RCAC agrees that some in-house improvements are needed and are currently underway, including an RCAC decision last week to invite the Coast Guard and shippers to join the council in creating "protocols to improve and guide our relationship with them."

However, RCAC Deputy Director Lynda Hyce said many of the accusations made by the Coast Guard and shippers are either inaccurate or taken out of context. The RCAC also disagrees that some of its behavior has been inappropriate.

Accusation The RCAC in 1997 inappropriately alleged that Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., in not constructing additional tanker vapor controls at the Valdez Marine Terminal, was committing a "knowing and willful" violation of air pollution laws. (Alyeska is owned primarily by the three oil companies.)

Response: The RCAC apologized for using the phrase "knowing and willful," saying it did not mean it as a charge of criminal intent.

However, the response goes on to say: "So much information was available by mid-1997 regarding future increases in North Slope production that Alyeska should be precluded from claiming later that it had no way of knowing it would have excessive uncontrolled (tanker oil) loading."

Accusation: Some RCAC members inappropriately stated in a May meeting that members of the oil industry "could never be trusted to do the right thing" and "were even called liars in open meetings."

Response: The RCAC does not deny making such comments but said industry members have said similar things about RCAC members.

"We know these remarks are sometimes uncomfortable, but they do 'broadly represent' how our constituents feel and are, of course, a mere shadow of the passions that would erupt in the event of another Exxon Valdez-scale spill," the RCAC said.

Accusation: The RCAC exceeds the scope of OPA 90 by advising shippers and government regulators on issues concerning the on-land section of oil transportation, rather than on-water-only issues.

Response: The RCAC said OPA 90 does not bar it from focusing on pipeline issues if there is potential that a spill on land could reach the sea.

"It should be noted that we disagree that our review of pipeline contingency plans is not appropriate," the RCAC said. As of Tuesday, Coast Guard headquarters in Washington had not issued a statement concerning recertification as it continues to examine all of the solicited commentary, including RCAC response to the criticism.

ALASKA BUSINESS JOURNAL
OCTOBER 29, 1998
VOL 22 NO 44

State funds improved oil spill response in Kodiak

By the Journal Staff

The state of Alaska has provided $400,000 to Kodiak Island officials to station oil spill response equipment in the City of Kodiak and six island communities under a recent agreement with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

DEC is in charge of oil spill prevention and response for the state. The Kodiak agreement is one of more than 20 community spill response agreements DEC has signed with communities throughout Alaska.

The agreement provides for training, equipment and reimbursement of costs when local citizens are called upon by the state to respond during a spill. The $400,000 will be used to place defensive near-shore response equipment in the region's communities, including containment boom, overpack drums, sorbent pads and sweeps, and other first-tier response resources.

DEC and the Kodiak Island Borough will continue to work cooperatively to identify additional regional response equipment to supplement the borough's current stock of 5,000 feet of containment boom.

OIL & GAS

write the state of Alaska in support of the approval of several right-of-agreements associated with the Alpine oil field project. Alliance officials say the support is needed to combat the rhetoric of zero-development activists who oppose the project. The state Department of Natural Resources is accepting comments until Nov. 2. They may be faxed to State Pipeline Coordinator's Office, 411 W. Fourth Ave., Ste. 2, Anchorage, AK 99501-2343; fax: 907-272-0690.

Alaska Coastal Currents...

robing The Impact Of 'Old' Oil On Pink Salmon

By Jody Seitz
Alaska Coastal Currents

Very small amounts of oil, as low as four parts per billion, are all that's needed to damage herring and salmon larvae.

That finding, by scientists at the National Marine Fisheries Service Auke Bay Lab, may explain why more pink salmon eggs died in oiled than unoiled streams of Prince William Sound as late as 1993, four years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Until these studies, most research on the effects of crude oil focused on the light aromatic fraction, which dissi-
:s rapidly after a spill. Unfortunately, the heavier multi-ringed compounds are actually more toxic unit-per-unit. The level of the state water quality standard, 10 parts per billion, also causes effects and is too low to see or taste, according to Dr. Stanley Rice, of NMFS Auke Bay Lab. It doesn't cause immediate mortality, but causes effects later in life. The adults come back smaller and they are fewer in number.

The PAHs (polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons) are attracted to the yolk of the fish eggs. "The [salmon] eggs are large, as fish eggs go and they're in the gravel a long time,"said Rice. "The significance of the yolk is that it's lipid rich and so when a tiny particle of oil comes along and bumps into the egg, it's absorbed and it's trapped. It sequesters it and eventually the dose builds up within the eggs and you get these long-term effects,"said Rice.

These findings have sent a red flag to biologists who review permits for development projects. They are more concerned about everything from parking lots to piers, according Linda Shaw, of the National Marine Fisheries Service. She reviews development proposals as part of the Army Corps of Engineers' permitting process.

She was surprised by the very low levels which could affect herring and salmon. But, she says, now that they know, they're responsible for bringing this up to those proposing development projects which could potentially impact fisheries.

"Knowing that these very low levels could be detrimental tells us that we have to be more mindful of how we design these structures and think of ways to try to minimize the detrimental impacts that the oil could be having on streams the oil could be draining into,"said Shaw.

Shaw recently reviewed a proposal to build a pier in an area where herring spawn. The concern was over leakage of oil. "Our concern was that the vessel activity associated with that pier could introduce fuel spills, and granted they would be at very low levels, but what this research has shown is that it only takes very low levels to have a negative impact on herring larvae."

Diesel oil, crankcase oil, refined oil and bunker oil can all cause the same type of problems because they contain the same type of toxic compounds found in crude oil, according to Jeff Short of NMFS Auke Bay Lab. These spills happen all the time.

This concern goes beyond new development projects. Everyone contributes to the problem, Shaw said.

"It's very prevalent on Juneau parking lots to see oil slicks and see them going in the drain. That's from everyone of us driving our cars and not maintaining our cars, and so everyone of us is contributing to the problem."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region. ★

Coastal Currents

THE VALDEZ VANGUARD
OCTOBER 28, 1998

Virus in herring could be linked to stress

By Jody Seitz

Prince William Sound herring pound fishermen are paying close attention these days to research on a lethal virus. The transmission of viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus in herring held in closed pounds has been the subject of a multi-year study by Dr. Richard Kocan of the University of Washington, begun in 1995 after the herring population crashed in Prince William Sound.

In a pound fishery, several tons of herring are caught and placed into cages, also called pounds, to spawn on a limited amount of kelp. After they spawn they are released back to the general population. Kocan and his graduate student, Paul Hershberger, are studying whether this system causes herring to be stressed and express the virus.

Closed pound fisheries occur all along the Pacific coast. Liz Senear of Cordova has fished both open and closed pounds in Prince William Sound for years. She sees the issue as much broader than the effect of pounds on herring.

"Given the fact that the problem doesn't seem to be occurring in other locations that have similar fisheries, I don't think the fisheries are the prime cause," Senear said. "I think the prime question is still what's different about Prince William Sound such that we seem to be having problems and other places aren't."

Two words — infection and disease — lie at the heart of the issue. It's easy to confound the meaning of the research unless you know and mark the difference. As with other viruses, an organism can be infected with a virus and transmit that virus without being diseased.

For the infection to turn to disease, according to Kocan, the virus has to build to a point that the fish can no longer fight off the disease. For that disease to then occur at a population level, conditions have to be just right. A combination of high density population, low abundance of food, and the presence of the virus could cause a population to crash, Kocan said.

Last year scientists found evidence that herring trapped in a pound had elevated levels of the virus. But by the time the fish were released, the levels had decreased substantially and the herring were immune to the disease. The results were suspect, however, due to problems in the preservation of samples.

This year, a new technique was used. The water of the pounds was tested before and after fish were introduced into the pounds. Within 24 hours of introducing the fish, high levels of virus were found in the water of three of the closed pounds in the study. Virus levels increased daily in the pounds until the fish were released on the eighth day, when the concentration of virus in the water was at its highest. The virus was also found in the water within one meter outside the pounds at slack tide. Based on laboratory studies, scientists believe the levels were high enough to infect and kill herring.

Strangely, although the viral infection spread among the fish in the pounds, none of the fish were actually sick or died from VHS disease.

So far, the primary conclusion of the study is that confinement or high density stresses herring, and stressed herring which have been exposed to the virus are prone to infection. Senear believes that seine or trawl fisheries also may stress the herring. "Fish are held in sets; they're not always pumped because they're not always high quality fish. That stresses the fish and damages the fish. I don't think it's been looked at in detail at this point. It's a much harder thing to study," said Senear.

Researchers have found a virus on a purse seine that was stuck on the bottom for an hour with a load of herring, supporting Senear's theory.

According to Kocan, the pound fishery may be a model for the big picture. "The pound fishery is just a good model for what may be happening on a large scale when herring populations become too dense and simultaneously experience stress," said Kocan.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Group focuses on environment

By STEVE AVERY
Mirror Writer

Taking a wide view of local environmental problems and involving citizens to solve them is the emphasis placed by the Kodiak Community Conservation Network on such highly publicized issues as ground contamination.

Program director Kristin Stahl-Johnson said KCCN is a small, grass-roots organization established in 1990 as a logical successor to 'Crude Women,' a group of fishing women and fishermen's wives who came together to support each other and the community during and after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

Since the group's formation, it has responded to several community conservation concerns, from the impact of forest practices on fishing resources, to outer continental shelf oil development, oil spill prevention and response planning, coastal zone development practices, marine fisheries conservation concerns for Kodiak's fleet — and most recently, the legacy of military and other toxic contamination and its impact on community health.

"Kodiak is too small a community to support different organizations capable of focusing on separate issues," Stahl-Johnson said. "More importantly, the resources and access to expertise lies in larger regional, statewide and national organizations with whom we must work in order to bring coherence to our local issues."

Community, citizen-based solutions

KCCN and the Alaska Community Action on Toxics directed by Pam Miller, held an environmental health conference here in September.

Conference objectives were to raise awareness of contamination problems affecting Kodiak, and to address environmental justice and health issues through community education and presenting solutions that work.

"Judging by attendance, the subject matter covered and the ensuing questions from the community... these objectives were met," Stahl-Johnson said.

Dr. Rosalie Bertell, president of the International Institute of Concern for Public Health, discussed the source of regulatory standards for toxic substances in the environment.

Gretchen Latowsky, project manager for the Community Technical Assistance Program at the John Snow Institute for Environmental Health Studies, described her experience helping citizens investigate and address community environmental health problems based on nearly 20 years of work in Woburn, Mass., one of the nation's largest Superfund sites.

Dr. Ron Scrudato, director of the Environmental Research Center of the State University of New York at Oswego, described his work with the Superfund Research Program of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences on the geochemistry and remedial technology of PCB contamination.

In a letter to Kodiak City Manager Bill Jones accompanying the final report on the conference, Stahl-Johnson wrote, "Clearly there are several serious issues addressed... which will require a significant amount of resources and expertise to address adequately.

"ACAT and KCCN are committed to a community/citizen-based solution to these problems ...

"I discuss the recommendation of forming a citizens' oversight committee in my report. The experience around the country is that these committees not only work well for communities, their presence allows access to far greater amounts of resources and funds to bring about solutions.

"We are hopeful we can facilitate the development of a partnership between local citizens groups and local government in collaboration with statewide and national entities to bring long-term, comprehensive solutions and ensuring community health in Kodiak."

To that end, Miller of ACAT will return to Kodiak Thursday at 7 p.m. in the borough conference room to discuss options for dealing with information about environmental contamination.

Among several other topics, formation of a citizen oversight committee will be discussed.

Anyone interested in pursuing these options is invited.

KCCN will lead the meeting. For more information, call 486-0352, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
OCTOBER 28, 1998

Study: Bycatch falls for most fish species

ANCHORAGE (AP) — An Alaska fisheries study shows that bycatch of groundfish in 1997 was up slightly from the previous year, while that of most other species was down.

The study stated that in 1997, fisheries in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska had groundfish bycatch totaling 644.6 million pounds. Pollock and Pacific cod comprised most of that bycatch.

While that bycatch level was up from the previous year, it was far lower than the 751.2 million pounds recorded in 1994.

The study was done by the Alaska Marine Conservation Council, an Anchorage-based nonprofit group.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council in recent years has been active in trying to reduce bycatch. Last year the council banned bottom trawling for Bering Sea pollock as a way to cut back bycatch levels.

Bycatch is defined as fish unintentionally caught by fishermen targeting other species, those too small for processing machines and those species with no economic value.

Groundfish, while the target species, also make up the vast majority of bycatch in Alaska waters. In some fisheries — notably rockfish and rock sole — more fish was thrown away than was legally kept, the study said.

Halibut bycatch was down slightly from 1996, according to the study, while herring, salmon and king crab bycatch were down considerably.

RCAC might have saved Big Oil $10 billion

By Rick Steiner

In response to solicitation for comments regarding the recertification of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council, I have reviewed the comments provided by Arco Marine, BP Shipping, SeaRiver Maritime, Alyeska and Coast Guard MSO Valdez, and feel obliged to offer my perspective as one of those who initiated the concept for the establishment of these councils in the United States.

First, it is apparent that the RCAC has more than fulfilled its mandate by OPA 90, its contract with Alyeska, and its important responsibility to the citizens of Prince William Sound. As is well detailed by others, this group of volunteer citizens has been responsible for tremendous improvements in oil spill prevention, response preparedness and environmental protection in southcentral Alaska. Put simply, without the dedicated work of the RCAC it is clear that the oil transport system in the Sound would not be nearly as safe as it is today. That was precisely why we argued vehemently for the establishment of these councils even before the Exxon Valdez, and it is precisely the mission of the group.

Regarding the oil industry concerns, in a very real sense, they seem to support the conclusion that the RCAC is functioning well. In fact, I would be worried if their comments were all positive. While there is always room for fine-tuning in any institution - RCACs included - it seems that the very effectiveness of the RCAC is what is most troubling to the industry. Oil companies have had to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to make the system as safe as it is today, largely as a result of the diligent oversight of RCAC. Thus, it is understandable that some industry representatives may feel the continued operation of the council as constituted may be costly to their company.

However, a somewhat broader perspective shows the enormous financial advantage of the work of the RCAC. Exxon Corporation will, by the time it's all over, have paid out over $10 billion for their oil spill back in 1989. It is highly likely that had the PWS RCAC been in place as we had requested back in 1987, an Exxon Valdez sort of casualty never would have occurred - proper citizens oversight would have detected the critical system elements that were missing, and there probably would have been a more effective VTS in operation, and tug escorts would have been in place that would easily have been able to notify the vessel of its disastrous course heading. If RCAC's work prevents just one such spill or even a much smaller spill, it will actually save the industry a great deal of money, and the environment and human communities a great deal of suffering and damage.

On the "lack of trust" issue, it should be remembered that most people in the region lost a great deal of their trust in government and industry as a result of the Exxon Valdez disaster, and one of the very functions of citizens oversight here is to ensure that all remain vigilant in continuing to improve the safety of the oil transport system in the Sound. This shouldn't be taken personally by industry or gov-

See Money, Page 16

Money ...

From Page 4

ernment representatives.

The "trust" issue is much the same as the "consensus" issue. As was stated eloquently by Ginsburg, Sterling, and Gotteherer in their 1993 paper on RCACs in Marine Policy:

"Some government and industry representatives appear to believe that consensus is the only measure of a successful process. Yet, agreement - all consensus is - is meaningless if it fails to make systems safer. Inherent in the need for a citizens' advisory group is the concept of questioning, challenging and testing industry and government decisions. In the long run, RCAC's appropriate role is to maintain a healthy challenge of industry and government decisions to protect the public interest."

This is my understanding of what the citizens of the region expect from RCAC - without a healthy challenge and questioning of industry and government, the people of the region would most certainly feel the process is simply not working.

Additionally, the industry seems concerned that the RCAC concept will be employed in other crude oil ports throughout the U.S. This is something I have felt strongly should happen for some-time. Given the success of the PWS RCAC in improving the safety of the PWS system, I feel it is time to move forward with the establishment of a nationwide network of RCACs, and I hope you will recognize the strength of this approach. Councils similar to the PWS RCAC should be mandated in all significant crude oil or petroleum product ports in the nation.

In short, the RCAC is an important strand in the oil transportation safety net, and they should certainly be recertified, without reservation or significant alteration.

Steiner is a professor with the University of Alaska Marine Program, based in Anchorage.

Letter to the editor

Protect the trawl fleet

To the editor,

Re: Premature Groundfish closures cost Kodiak Millions

Early silence has fallen on the waterfront, very few vessels traveling in the channel. Kodiak fish plants have shut their doors, idling hundreds of workers.

Groundfish fourth quarter closed Oct. 12, 35 days sooner than the fleet, the canneries and plant workers hoped. This is the third early closure for the trawl fleet this year, resulting in approximately 90 days that groundfish was not processed in Kodiak.

Trawl-caught fish has become the backbone for the processing plants in Kodiak, normally helping to keep a large labor force intact. The last two years have witnessed a flight of labor from Kodiak due to early closures, which put the labor force out of work for up to six weeks at a stretch (and now for three months). The loss of experienced plant workers lowers recovery, yielding a net loss in all of the fisheries (cod, sole, salmon and pollock).

The shift in effort by some shore-side vessels and the factory trawlers fishing the Olympic openers is taking a huge toll on the cannery labor force (and the local economy). It's hard on the trawlers to make a business plan in this environment, but the cannery workers are really feeling the pressure every time there is a premature closure due to effort shift.

It's a crying shame what this does to those people cutting the fish. They hear it in the wind and are asking how long will the fishing last (paychecks)? They are trapped in an island economy that may be shut off for six weeks at a crack ... so any money put aside for the homeland is burned up.

These good people are hot bunking (up to 20 in a small house) to make a grub stake cutting our fish. One day when the price of fish goes up (and money grows on trees), there won't be anyone to unload the boats or cut the fish. Every plant in Kodiak was short 40 workers on the floor during the pollock opener. Shifts in effort from the offshore fleet have contributed to these early closures.

This year the "Asian flu" has made it difficult for the factory trawlers to sell yellowfin sole from the Bering Sea, making the Gulf more attractive. This shift impacted the second and third quarters in much the same way; the bottom was closed to all trawling for 28 days in May and 28 days in August with hopes that the fourth quarter would run until Nov. 15. That adds up to 90 days this year that the trawlers sat idle with many thousands of tons of groundfish unharvested (millions of dollars lost to the community).

This loss to the state in raw fish tax and the Gulf communities is having far-reaching effects on the overall productivity of shore-based fisheries. This year has ended on a sour note for most of the shore based trawl fleet. We are the first to feel the effect. Most of the plants have cleaned up and are shutting their doors, next the vendors of fuel, marine hardware, groceries, welding shops, travel agents, landlords, shoe stores, pizza parlors, Sea Land van drivdrivers, et al ... all will feel the economic impact to Kodiak.

What can you do to help your local economy and trawl fleet? Call your City Council members and borough Assembly members; ask them to look into this serious problem. Ask them to talk to the cannery managers, to the Alaska Draggers Association, and then to your state representatives about how this community can protect a very large part of its future.

The Daily Mirror needs to focus a more positive light on the strongest component of the Kodiak economy — trawlers.

Sincerely,

—Albert Geiser

THE PENINSULA CLARION
OCTOBER 27, 1998

Scientists record major sea changes

FAIRBANKS (AP) — Scientists say something is changing in the North Pacific.

A wide band of algae is blooming in the Bering Sea. A biologist working in the area spotted a pod of five to seven right whales, an endangered species that hasn't been seen in those numbers in nearly a century.

And for the first time since the 1940s, Canadian commercial fishermen are harvesting sardines.

No one knows at this point if the changes can be tied simply to El Nino, the weather phenomenon that warmed much of the Pacific Ocean over the past two years, or if it's the result of something even bigger.

But researchers are trying to find out.

Nearly 300 scientists from countries fronting the North Pacific are gathered in Fairbanks to discuss the changes during the seventh annual meeting of the North Pacific Marine Science Organization.

The group on Friday talked about El Nino, the well-publicized phenomenon that changes weather patterns and causes Pacific waters to warm.

The scientists looked beyond the occasional tuna and yellow fin caught of the Gulf of Alaska — much farther north than where they're normally found — to systemic changes in the ocean.

They have documented a 3-degree warming of the North Pacific, and changes in the atmosphere and in plankton production and distribution during El Nino.

But many scientists cautioned that El Nino might not be the only thing responsible for the changes. Global warming might be to blame. And a major shift might be occurring in the ocean similar to the big ecosystem change in the Gulf of Alaska in the late 1970s.

In the so-called regime shift, the gulf's water warmed and the populations of shrimp, capelin and other species collapsed while those of pollock and others exploded.

While scientists were able to predict the 1997-1998 El Nino was coming, the big surprise was its intensity, said James O'Brien, director of the Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies at Florida State University.

"No one forecasted that El Nino was going to come on so strong," O'Brien told the Anchorage Daily News.

The increase in ocean temperatures was accompanied by a constant 4- to 12-inch rise in the mean sea level, said William Crawford of the Institute of Ocean Science in Sidney, British Columbia. The level dropped back to normal abruptly at the end of February.

■ No one knows at this point if the changes can be tied simply to El Nino, the weather phenomenon that warmed much of the Pacific Ocean over the past two years, or if it's the result of something even bigger.

But researchers are trying to find out.

His colleague, Mike Foreman, said the rise may be related to global warming. Some scientists link the uplifting to what are called Kelvin waves — ocean movements at the equator they believe cause a ripple that reaches as far north as Alaska and as far south as the tip of South America.

Scientists also have found that a distinct atmospheric pressure system change accompanies El Nino. The low that normally sits over the Aleutian Islands moves dramatically east and settles over the Gulf of Alaska. During La Nina, the weather pattern that usually follows El Nino, the low moves back over the Aleutians. For Alaskans, that is supposed to translate into cold, dry weather.

Scientists are finding that the production and distribution of oceanic nutrients in some cases changed with El Nino.

Some biologists think a disappearance of nutrients may have caused starvation and the die-off of thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of common murres from Prince William Sound to Bristol Bay this past year.

Frank Whitney of Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans reported a reduction of nutrients in the waters along the shores of the Gulf of Alaska. He thinks the depletion has affected Canadian salmon, which follow the coastline all the way to the Aleutians before heading out to sea.

Colleague Gordon McFarlane didn't agree.

McFarlane pointed to the massive migration of sardines, mackerel and hake from California into Canadian waters and into the Gulf of Alaska. They wouldn't be moving north if there was a food supply problem, he said.

Historically, sardines have come and gone from northern latitudes, McFarlane said. The last great peak in Canada was in the 1940s. They collapsed without warning in 1946, he said.

When they showed up in 1992, scientists related it to a minor El Nino event. "We speculated they would disappear again," he said. "But they didn't."

By 1997, they had moved up from off Vancouver Island into the Queen Charlotte Island area, and they started spawning off the Canadian shore. Their numbers became so abundant that Canada opened a limited commercial harvest. They are now the dominant species in the surface waters.

This past summer, the sardines moved into the Gulf of Alaska. "They are still there and doing quite well," he said.

Hake and mackerel have followed similar patterns. "If you add all this biomass together, it is probably well over 1 million tons of fish," he said.

El Nino may be partially responsible for the migration, McFarlane said, but he suspects there is a large-scale ecological change under way as well.

Cynthia Tynan of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Seattle reported setting out in 1997 to study whale distribution in the Bering Sea and being startled by what she found.

From the air, she saw a massive 200-mile-wide algae bloom, which reflected light and turned the normally dark ocean waters turquoise. The band of bloom was centered over the slope of undersea land off the bay's coast. She found five species of whales — fin, humpback, mike, sei and northern right — feeding in the area, which was a surprise. The whales usually prefer to feed in deeper waters near the shelf's edge.

Tynan said it is too early to tell whether the shift was caused by El Nino or whether there is some other longer-term change going on in the area and the Bering Sea ecosystem.

Scientists: Fisheries on verge of collapse

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Nations must take dramatic steps to head off a collapse of global fish populations that are being severely depleted by overfishing, a new report by a national panel of scientists warns.

"The future of fisheries depends on radically changing our attitudes, practices and policies about fishing," said panel member Jane Lubchenco, a marine ecologist at Oregon State University.

The volume of fish caught has reached or exceeded levels that can be sustained by the world's oceans, said the report, "Sustaining Marine Fisheries," released Thursday by the 25-member committee, led by biologist Harold Mooney of Stanford University.

The study was funded by Washington D.C.-based National Research Council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, a private, nonprofit institution.

"Within five years, we're going to see big changes (in fish populations) on our coast," said panel member Tom Powell, a University of California at Berkeley biologist. "We're going to be pretty sorry if we don't take action now."

Studies by federal fishery agencies have found that up to 80 percent of commercial fish species in the United States and more than a third worldwide are fully exploited or overfished.

The panel, made up of biologists, economists and fishing industry representatives, cited those findings in their report, which calls for reducing fish catches and repairing marine ecosystems.

About 84 million metric tons of fish and other seafood are caught annually in marine ecosystems worldwide, worth about $3.5 billion a year in the United States alone.

"The sea was long viewed as an inexhaustible supply of protein for human use. But recently ... it has become increasingly clear that the ocean's resources are not inexhaustible," the report said.

The once common Atlantic halibut are now rare. Orange roughy off New Zealand have declined substantially. Bluefin tuna, rockfish, herring, shrimp, sturgeon, oysters, shark, Atlantic salmon and American shad are depleted because of overfishing.

Some species have declined so seriously that once-thriving commercial fisheries have been shut down, including cod off Newfoundland, ground fish such as haddock and yellowtail flounder off New England, and some salmon in the Pacific Northwest.

Overcapacity in the fishing industry is widespread, largely because of policies that encourage unrestricted competition on the open seas, the panel said.

In Alaska, for example, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has estimated that the fishing fleet is 2 1/2 times the size necessary to catch the available resources.

The report said that assigning fishing rights or quotas that can be traded is one way of reducing overcapacity.

Ecosystem changes affect some seabird populations

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

The Exxon Valdez oil spill struck in late March 1989, as harlequin ducks were still wintering in Prince William Sound and just as seabirds and waterfowl began migrating through the area. An estimated 250,000 birds were killed by the floating oil.

Nine years later, people are just starting to talk about seeing more seabirds in Prince William Sound. The reason for the slow recovery of their numbers is still under investigation. While some scientists search for an explanation in the ecosystem, others look for contamination. But their conclusions ultimately hinge on baseline data gathered long before the oil spill.

For most species in Prince William Sound, there is little information on their populations before 1989. For seabirds, though, the story is a little different.

Counts of the birds go back to 1972, when the late Pete Isleib, a fisherman and ornithologist, traversed the Sound, counting and marking the distribution of every species. In 1984, David Irons of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, made another count.

Between those years, dramatic changes took place. Populations of fish-eating seabirds such as mergansers, pigeon guillemots, common murres, and cormorants apparently all declined by as much as half. Scientists found that the birds' diets had changed to different, less fatty fish. The change in the birds' prey corresponded with a late 1970s shift in the dominant species of fish in the Gulf of Alaska.

Irons is one of many scientists who think changes in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea decreased the abundance of several fish species, which affected the birds' food supply and spurred the decline in several seabird populations — long before the oil spill.

"[The shift] may have affected the forage fish available for the fish-eating birds, because the fish-eating birds have declined, not the invertebrate-eating birds," Irons said.

For the first three years after the oil spill, counts of the birds were done every year. There have been winter and summer counts in several years since 1993.

Ecosystem changes aside, researchers continue to see differences in seabird populations between the oiled and non-oiled areas of Prince William Sound. "The populations in the oiled area continue to be lower than before the oil spill," Irons said. "Some species are showing no signs of recovery and, in fact, the differences between populations in the oiled and unoiled areas are becoming greater."

Both invertebrate-eating and fish-eating species are fewer in number and their populations grow more slowly in the oiled part of the Sound.

For example, populations of Barrow's goldeneye are increasing, but less rapidly in the oiled areas than the unoiled areas. And harlequin ducks, which feed on snails, limpets, and other invertebrates such as mussels, have a much higher winter mortality rate in the oiled area than the unoiled area. In fact, researchers believe the winter mortality rate for harlequins in the oiled areas of the sound is too high for the ducks to maintain their populations in those areas.

Data on exposure of seabirds in the sound to crude oil or PCBs may provide some answers. Since 1996, scientists tested harlequin ducks, Barrow's goldeneye, and pigeon guillemots for elevated levels of a liver enzyme called cytochrome p450, which lasts in their blood up to two weeks following exposure to PCBs or to crude oil.

"They've looked at birds in unoiled and oiled areas and they've found that birds in the oiled areas have higher levels of P450 than in the unoiled area," Irons said.

Irons was surprised to see these results so long after the spill. It's too early to draw conclusions, but Irons said he is concerned that 7-8 years after the spill, birds may still be encountering oil.

If they are encountering oil in significant concentrations, it may affect their survival rates, he said.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Council to consider thorny issues

At a special meeting next month in Anchorage, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will deal with three complex issues crucial to the future of Gulf and Bering Sea trawl and longline fisheries.

Senate Bill 1221: The council will review the bill's provisions and their potential impacts on management of the groundfish and crab fisheries, the license limitation system, marine mammals, and National Marine Fisheries Service enforcement and monitoring capabilities. The council will then consider actions it will need to address in future meetings to implement the bill's provisions.

Steller sea lions: NMFS will report on the status of Steller sea lions and potential fisheries management implications. The council may take emergency actions affecting the 1999 groundfish fisheries to mitigate potential fisheries impacts on sea lions.

Status of short-tailed albatross bycatch: an informational report from NMFS on the status of short-tailed albatross bycatch in the longline fleet.

The council will meet Nov. 10-12, at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Anchorage.

Weir assures fish for Chignik subsistence users

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

"Out here it's natural resources, fish, or game. The stores out here aren't that good, and the way the fisheries have been going, if you're not a permit holder you're not going to make that much money. Last year a lot of guys only made $5,000 for the year, so subsistence is really important." David Owen, manager, Chignik weir.

When one of the largest sockeye runs in the state can't provide for subsistence, something's wrong.

The Chignik River is among the most productive sockeye systems on the Alaska Peninsula. Until a few years ago, subsistence and commercial fishermen peacefully coexisted, some of them harvesting in both fisheries.

Then the price of salmon dropped, reaching a 10-year low in 1993.

Commercial fishermen began to fish later and later into the season. For a few years, managers didn't realize that commercial catches were too high and that fish needed for subsistence weren't reaching the upper river.

The fisheries of the Chignik district had been managed based on the number of fish escaping past a weir on the Chignik River from June through the first week in August. After the weir was removed in August, managers continued to judge the strength of the escapement by the size of the commercial catches.

"Over the years we probably had too much of a commercial fishery," said David Owen, manager of the Chignik weir. "Because as time went on, we fished later and later and we estimated escapement based on our catches and they may or may not have been correct."

Wayne Donaldson, a Department of Fish and Game management biologist explained: "The Total escapement was met, but the later portions of the run were weak and not getting through."

Complaints started coming in. People were not getting enough fish for subsistence.

"Yeah, it was a big issue here about three to four years ago," said Johnny Lind, president of the Chignik Lake Village Council. "People were going down to the lagoon and trying to get their subsistence and they couldn't even get any kind of fish. That's when it became a really big issue."

To be able to monitor the escapement and the commercial harvest with subsistence needs in mind, they needed to keep the weir up longer.

In 1995, the Department of Fish and Game received funding from the state-administered criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez oil spill to keep the weir operating into the first week of September. Now they also use lighted underwater video cameras to illuminate the fish as they pass through the weir.

Owen says the problem has essentially been resolved. Now the department has good solid data on which to base decisions.

"When we make our decision, it's not all based on catch data," said Owen. "It's based on escapement data, a lot better escapement data than we had before."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Letter to the editor

Protect Kodiak's salmon

To the editor,

Gov. Tony Knowles' visit to Kodiak offers the island's salmon industry an opportunity to reflect on the strong harvest we had this year. While dramatic salmon declines spread north from California to British Columbia and disaster struck Bristol Bay and Cook Inlet, Kodiak broke our even-year record for pink salmon, experienced a record coho return and an impressive sockeye return.

What's more, 1998 was not a blip on the trend line, in fact the 1990s have witnessed excellent returns for Kodiak salmon, including the all time high commercial catch totaling 49 million salmon in 1995.

While theories multiply about the poor salmon returns elsewhere, we in Kodiak trust our productivity has as much if not more to do with a sound management strategy coupled with excellent habitat conditions than it does with El Niño, luck and cycles.

Sound salmon management by Alaska Department of Fish and Game requires extensive historical data, supportive user groups, and adequate in-season management tools, i.e. fish weirs. Healthy habitat for salmon production requires only that it retain its pristine quality.

With the results of 1998s salmon season in mind it's time to recognize our good fortune may be transitory.

Despite the strong record of the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council in protecting Kodiak and Afognak's salmon habitat, three of our top five salmon systems remain unprotected: the Karluk, the Ayakulik and Afognak Lake systems. The first problem is we lack permanent protection for the weir sites on all three systems. Second, the habitat on the Karluk and Afognak Lake could take dramatic turns for the worse if the Native corporations, which own them, seek economic return for their shareholders through development that will inevitably degrade salmon habitat.

The good news is that Gov. Knowles has the ability to ensure Kodiak's salmon future by completing agreements with landowners to either purchase or obtain conservation easements protecting essential habitat and the weir sites in the Karluk, Ayakulik and Afognak Lake systems. Better yet, there are ample funds available in the *Exxon Valdez* restoration reserve to complete the job. While research will receive some of these funds let's remember that the best fish studies in the world won't help if we lose our habitat and the weir sites that allow us to manage one of Alaska's best salmon success stories.

Failure to protect Kodiak's salmon invites the disaster we see elsewhere, while completing the habitat protection job will give Gov. Knowles a Kodiak legacy of enormous importance.

—Executive Committee, Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Assoc.

Oliver Holm, president
Wallace Fields, vice president
Mike Simpson, secretary
Dana Reid, treasurer
Chris Berns, member

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
OCTOBER 21, 1998
PAGE 1 of 2

ACAT's working for Kodiak

Guest opinion

By Kristin Stahl-Johnson
and
Pamela Miller

Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT) is a community advocacy organization working on environmental health issues across the state. Kodiak Community Conservation Network (KCCN) is a locally based community advocacy organization working to facilitate collaborative processes which bring regional, state-wide or national resources and expertise to bear on local conservation issues. KCCN has its origins in the "Crude Women," a group of fishing women and fishermen's wives who came together for mutual support during the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

We would like to clarify a few important issues surrounding the recent reports on toxic contamination in Kodiak. This can be terrifying information for the community to integrate and complex to understand. We believe that having all the information helps to minimize anxieties and provides options for productive action. Our experience since the report hit the front page is that many people are justifiably worried. We would like to describe the context in which our report was written and distributed.

ACAT conducted a sampling survey of landfills and potential contamination problems in Kodiak in collaboration with KCCN in October of 1997. This survey was prompted by concerns raised by a former Kodiak resident, Mr. Tim Vallianos. The entire Vallianos family was suffering from severe illnesses that Mr. Vallianos believed to be caused by environmental toxins buried in the post-World War II landfill under his home. Mr. Vallianos based his conclusions on interviews with former military personnel.

cused on the drainage passing under the massive fill along Mill Bay Road in the vicinity of the Vallianos former home. Soil samples were taken at both the north and south drainages from the fill, the yard of the former Vallianos home, the down gradient of the fill over Smokey's dump below the new ballpark, and just upstream from where the drainage from Smokey's enters Island Lake. Significant levels of heavy metals were found in some of the samples taken and action levels of total petroleum hydrocarbons were found in the sediments and leachate from Smokey's dump, but not in the one sample at the stream mouth.

Our report did not conclude that we have definitive evidence that the property at 2010 Mill Bay road is contaminated. Rather we point to potential problems that might exist within the fill area upon which the house is built.

The illnesses Tim's family is experiencing should be taken seriously, however. We don't yet know what the exact source of the problem might be. At a minimum, we recommend that air samples be taken to find out whether there might be a vaporizing source of mercury beneath the house (hair samples from Tim's family showed high levels of mercury).

the results of our research on the breadth of related issues in Kodiak, was the impetus for organizing the environmental health conference, Preventing Toxics in Alaska, which we held here Sept. 22-24. Our intentions were not only to introduce the information, but to also provide a context within which to understand and interpret some very overwhelming and complex material. We also recommend that a comprehensive sampling program be undertaken to assess the environmental and health concerns within the area of the fill along Mill Bay Road.

There are no easy solutions to these problems. The single, most important thing our community can do right now is to make sure we are asking all the right questions. We brought experts to the conference here in Kodiak who could provide the community with an understanding of what resources are available to us. Dr. Ron Scrudato works with the Superfund Basic Research Program of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. He is close to publishing a book titled "The Anatomy of a Dump." With more than 25 years of experience, he certainly can provide cogent scientific advice on a comprehensive assessment of environmental health issues in our community.

Gretchen Latowsky, project manager for the Community Technical Assistance Program of the John Snow Institute for Environmental Health Studies in Boston, has nearly 20 years of experience helping citizens investigate and address environmental health problems within their communities. Her adviCe is based on the experience at home, in Woburn, Mass., one of our nation's largest Superfund sites. She is a strong advocate for community-based solutions; for building collaborative processes that include affected citizens, community groups, local government, businesses and industry, and state and federal agencies.

Dr. Rosalie Bertell has received many prestigious international awards, including the 1986 Alternative Nobel Prize or Right Livelihood Award, for her work toward understanding environmental and community health issues around the world. She outlined a new, holistic approach to looking at community health which requires a multi-disciplinary strategy.

None of these problems are solved on an individual basis. The only way contamination problems are addressed effectively is through organized citizen participation in problem-solving. Citizen participation, enhanced with scientific and medical technical support, is the best way to determine a course of action. The answers won't come from individuals spending large amounts of money sampling their homes in the absence of a well-thought-out, community-based, sampling design.

In the face of a wide and potentially overwhelming range of issues, we strongly recommend a community-derived and directed comprehensive environmental sampling and assessment program based on models developed around the country, supervised by a broad-based citizens' oversight committee. Kodiak would also benefit from understanding the various designs and functions of community health surveys in order to develop the appropriate tool that captures meaningful information and works in coordination with an assessment.

Pamela Miller from ACAT will be returning to Kodiak on Thursday, Oct. 29, at 7 p.m. in the Borough Conference room, to discuss options and alternative approaches to dealing with all of the information the community is receiving and how we might create partnerships, solutions and citizen oversight. We invite anyone interested in creating an equitable and broad-based community process to address these critical issues to please participate.

THE CLARION PENINSULA
THE LETTER TO THE EDITOR
OCTOBER 21, 1998

Spawned-out carcasses vital link for future salmon stocks

When was the last time you really looked at the Kenai River?

Everyone looks at the river when they drive over it or fish on it, but when was the last time you scooped up a glass of it and looked at it? If you have never tried it, I recommend the experience.

Rather than being a Monday morning fisheries quarterback, go down to the Kenai River and get a glass of the stuff and set it on the shelf at room temperature. Then place a glass of regular water next to it. Let the two glasses set for a week or two and then smell the difference.

If you do the experiment, you will notice that the Kenai water really smells rancid and the regular water has no odor. This is when you suddenly discover that Kenai River water is not just water, it is also a transport medium and preserver of decomposing salmon carcasses.

These spawned-out carcasses are a vital link between generations of future salmon stocks. Without these decomposing carcasses it is impossible for nursery lakes, rivers and oceans to maintain adequate nutrient levels. Low salmon escapements force nutrient levels to decline as biogenic fertilization is removed from the cycle. Decomposing carcasses from adults have the ablity to enhance zooplankton by increasing phytoplankton production, thus allowing the same lake to feed more sockeye fry.

The term "overescapement" is a spawning and living area term which is more or less a system constant. Nutrient levels are a system variable and can expand or reduce system capacity. Many people feel overescapement or maximum escapement is calulated from spawning and living area. The truth is that area is involved but nutrient levels control maximum escapement.

If you have no idea how Kenai River nutrient levels change from year to year, you have no idea how close or far you are to or from maximum escapement. Maximum escapement thus becomes directly related to nutrient levels. The maximum number of dependent sockeye fry is more directly linked to nutrient levels and the resulting phytoplankton production than living area.

Area and nutrient levels are both necessary but nutrient levels are the expandable element within a system. If you can state as fact the maximum amount of phytoplankton a lake can carry then you can talk about maximum escapement. Pesent fisheries managers focus so tightly on living area information that they ignore nutrient level information. Area and nutrient information work together to produce maximum escapements.

Do you think we had a bad salmon run this year? We will continue to see bad things happening within our fisheries until we can get a fisheries biologist to put the graphs and charts down long enough to smell the water.

Donald Johnson
Soldotna

OPINION

. . . Letters

From Mississippi

Dear Editor,

My wife, Levonia and I served as volunteer hosts for the Alaska State Park System this past summer. First, we're grateful for Mr. Wyn Merrefee's recommendations and give special thanks to Rangers Roger MacCampbell, Wayne Biessel and Josh Duffus for guidance and promoting an excellent state wilderness park at Halibut Cove Lagoon. Mr. and Mrs. Cronin are doing good things to maintain a pristine environment on their island and around China Poot Lake three miles south of the ranger station.

We're grateful to members of your Methodist Church and the Homer Garden Club for showing us natural Alaskan perennials and beautiful colors that can be grown in spite of harsh winters.

Because we were volunteers in the park system, many gave us free or reduced rates to musicals, the Pratt Museum, and for float-plane trips. One was an interesting trip by SouthCentral Air across Kachemak Bay to the old Russian town Seldovia. This one culminated in a 30-minute flight over Halibut Cove Lagoon, the ranger station and Grewingk Lake and Glacier before returning to base in Homer. Another was given by Bald Mountain Flight Service southwest to the Katmai National Park area where we took close-up pictures of the Kodiak brown bears and eagles fishing for salmon in the shallow glacial rivers near the Coastal Outfitters yacht.

Another kindness was by Chuck Lewis at Bay View Garage in Homer. When no other rental car was available, he lent us a comfortable Mazda pick-up truck for a trip to Anchorage. After hiking one of our trails, the Swoops family gave us home-cultured oysters and mussels from their oyster boat the Chanticleer near Halibut Cove. Good Alaskan hospitality was shown by many stores and restaurants in Homer. Many friends were made by Alaskans using our public use cabins at the trail head — there should be no dearth of volunteers for state parks in the future, and we will be flattered to be included in next summer's appointees — God be willing.

Martin and Lea Harthcock,
Mississippi

JOURNAL OF ALASKA BUSINESS
OCTOBER 22, 1998
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Whales find otters tasty

Hungry killer whales in the Aleutian Islands are selecting a startling new menu item. Instead of eating big, blubbery sea lions, some are now gobbling down sea otters by the thousands.

For top-level carnivores like killer whales to choose an entirely new type of prey, and for them to turn suddenly on neighboring animals with which they have coexisted for millennia, signals that Alaska's ocean environment may be dramatically out of kilter.

The change is leading some to call for better monitoring of the seas, including a possible overhaul of how the country manages its ocean preserves.

Normally, killer whales, also called orcas, feast on sea lions and seals in Alaska waters. But the numbers of those animals have dwindled to near nothing in recent decades, likely because the fish they eat are in decline.

The reasons for the decline of fish remain hotly debated.

THE PENINSULA CLARION
OCTOBER 25, 1998

Village residents working to restore coho run

Editor's note: It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of Alaska crude oil. Time has since told quite a lot about the spill's long-term effects. To help tell the story, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is providing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region.

By JODY SEITZ

The evening sun paints Coal Cape rosy against the cobalt blue of the North Pacific ocean. Lately the sphinx-like escarpment has watched over declining returns of salmon to the Kametolook River at its base.

The tiny village of Perryville takes a close interest in the pink and coho salmon that return to the river each year — that's their winter supply of dry fish. Elders say the river used to hold enough coho salmon for villagers to take what they needed each fall for subsistence. They say as many as 3,000 cohos used to spawn in the tributaries and main branch of the braided river. A couple of years ago only 186 cohos were counted upstream.

The village is trying to change that, using incubation boxes to hold the coho eggs over winter. The project is financed through the Exxon Valdez settlement funds to help restore subsistence resources within the spill region.

One cool clear fall morning Jerry Yagie and I rode the winding four-wheeler trail up the river plain toward the snow-covered flanks of Mount Veniaminov, through alders and across streams to the spring-fed brook that now holds the incubation boxes.

It takes about an hour to reach the brook where the boxes are. We trace the paths of multiple sow and cub combinations along the gravelly plain. Jerry stops to point out the tracks where a trio of wolves gathered. We see coho, sockeye, chum and pink salmon spawning or traveling upstream all the way.

The river bed is wide and laden with silt from glaciers high in the mountains. One single flood can completely change the flow of a stream here. It's no wonder fish-spawning patterns also change.

In trying to increase the run size, the village has posted "no fishing" signs for the upper half of the river. That, along with the commercial fishery closures in the Perryville area after Aug. 20, when the coho run begins, is already helping the river's cohos recover, according to Jim McCullough of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. In 1997, the coho run was four times that of 1996.

The pond is crystal clear, fed by numerous springs at the base of a long hill covered with alder and berry bushes. The pond has been dammed and a pipe inserted in it to increase the flow over the tote-like plastic boxes downstream.

The project began in 1997. Villagers worked closely with McCullough and Lisa Scarbrough, also of Fish and Game. They came out to check the stream and monitored the stream temperature for a year. They also set up an aquarium in the school for students to participate in incubating coho salmon from eggs to fry stage, and then release them in the Kametolook River.

Yagie is one of two residents who traveled to Kodiak last fall for training in the method of incubating coho salmon. "They took us out to Saltry Cove for a week. We did some egg takes on some red salmon. That's how we learned to do that," he said.

Last year they incubated a few more salmon but were using gillnets and had a hard time rounding up ripe females.

"We took eggs from five fish, and probably about a couple thousand (fry) survived. We put them in three lakes and one creek. ... Maybe in a few years if we go ice fishing or sportfishing we'll tell if they (the fry in the lakes) survived," said Yagie.

This fall they'll round up 120 cohos in a holding pen in the river and take eggs from the 60 females when they're ripe. The fish incubated in 1998 should return in 2001 and 2002.

The goal is to have an in-river run strength of 3,000 coho.

"We believe that would be an adequate number for subsistence as well as escapement needs," said McCullough. "Hopefully, we haven't lost the genetic material to have the run spread out over time."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

THE PENINSULA CLARION
OCTOBER 26, 1998

Around the State

Study shows declining bycatch for most species

ANCHORAGE — An Alaska fisheries study shows that bycatch of groundfish in 1997 was up slightly from the previous year, while that of most other species was down.

The study stated that in 1997, fisheries in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska had groundfish bycatch totaling 644.6 million pounds. Pollock and Pacific cod comprised most of that bycatch.

While that bycatch level was up from the previous year, it was far lower than the 751.2 million pounds recorded in 1994.

The study was done by the Alaska Marine Conservation Council, an Anchorage-based nonprofit group.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council in recent years has been active in trying to reduce bycatch. Last year the council banned bottom trawling for Bering Sea pollock as a way to cut back bycatch levels.

Bycatch is defined as fish unintentionally caught by fishermen targeting other species, those too small for processing machines and those species with no economic value.

Groundfish, while the target species, also make up the vast majority of bycatch in Alaska waters. In some fisheries — notably rockfish and rock sole — more fish was thrown away than was legally kept, the study said.

Halibut bycatch was down slightly from 1996, according to the study, while herring, salmon and king crab bycatch were down considerably.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
OCTOBER 28, 1998

Scientists argue cause of underwater changes

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

FAIRBANKS — Something is changing in the North Pacific.

A wide band of algae, picked up by satellites because it has turned the normally dark water an aqua blue, is blooming in the Bering Sea. A biologist working in the area spotted a pod of five to seven right whales, an endangered species that hasn't been seen in those numbers in nearly a century. And for the first time since the 1940s, Canadian commercial fishermen are harvesting sardines.

No one knows whether the changes can be tied simply to El Nino, the phenomenon that warmed much of the Pacific Ocean over the past two years, or is the result of something even bigger. Researchers are trying to find out.

Nearly 300 scientists from countries rimming the North Pacific gathered in Fairbanks last week to discuss the changes during the seventh annual meeting of the North Pacific Marine Science Organization, also known as PICES. The group is modeled after the International Council for Exploration of the Seas, or ICES, a 100-year-old group of scientists who track changes in the Atlantic Ocean. Member nations of PICES are Japan, South Korea, Russia, Canada and the United States. They added

Please see Back Page,
UNDERWATER

Continued from Page A-1

"P" for the Pacific Ocean to get their name.

On Friday, the group, in its first Alaska meeting, talked about El Nino, the much-publicized phenomenon that changes weather patterns and causes Pacific waters to warm.

The scientists gathered in Fairbanks looked beyond the occasional tuna and yellow fin caught of the Gulf of Alaska — much farther north than where they're normally found — to systemic changes in the ocean. They have documented a 3-degree warming of the North Pacific, and changes in the atmosphere and in plankton production and distribution during El Nino.

But many scientists cautioned that El Nino might not be the only thing responsible for the changes. Global warming might be to blame. And a major shift might be occurring in the ocean similar to the big ecosystem change in the Gulf of Alaska in the late 1970s. In the so-called regime shift, the gulf's water warmed and the populations of shrimp, capelin and other species collapsed while those of pollock and some others exploded.

While scientists were able to predict the 1997-98 El Nino was coming, the big surprise was its intensity, said James O'Brien, director of the Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies at Florida State University. "No one forecasted that El Nino was going to come on so strong."

The increase in ocean temperatures was accompanied by a constant 4- to 12-inch rise in the mean sea level, said William Crawford of the Institute of Ocean Science in Sidney, British Columbia. The level dropped back to normal abruptly at the end of February. His colleague Mike Foreman said the rise may be related to global warming. Some scientists link the uplifting to what are called Kelvin waves — ocean movements at the equator they believe cause a ripple that reaches as far north as Alaska and as far south as the tip of South America.

Scientists have also found that a distinct atmospheric pressure system change accompanies El Nino. The low that normally sits over the Aleutian Islands moves dramatically east and settles over the Gulf of Alaska. During La Nina, the weather pattern that usually follows El Nino, the low moves back over the Aleutians. For Alaskans, that is supposed to translate into cold, dry weather.

Scientists are finding that the production and distribution of oceanic nutrients in some cases changed with El Nino. Some biologists think a disappearance of nutrients may have caused starvation and the die-off of thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of common murres from Prince William Sound to Bistol Bay this past year.

Frank Whitney of Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans reported a reduction of nutrients in the waters along the shores of the Gulf of Alaska. He thinks the depletion has affected Canadian salmon, which follow the coastline all the way to the Aleutians before heading to sea.

His colleague Gordon McFarlane didn't agree.

McFarlane pointed to the massive migration of sardines, mackerel and hake from California into Canadian waters and the Gulf of Alaska. They wouldn't be moving north if there were a food supply problem, he said.

Historically, sardines have come and gone from northern latitudes, McFarlane said. The last great peak in Canada was in the 1940s. They collapsed without warning in 1946, he said.

When they showed up in 1992, scientists related it to a minor El Nino event. "We speculated they would disappear again," he said. "But they didn't."

By 1997, they had moved up from off Vancouver Island into the Queen Charlotte Island area, and they started spawning off the Canadian shore. Their numbers became abundant enough that Canada opened a limited commercial harvest and has continued to do so. They are now the dominant species in the surface waters.

This past summer, the sardines moved into the Gulf of Alaska. "They are still there and doing quite well," he said.

Hake and mackerel have followed similar patterns. "If you add all this biomass together, it is probably well over 1 million tons of fish," he said.

El Nino may be partially responsible for the migration, McFarlane said, but he suspects there is a large-scale ecological change under way as well.

Cynthia Tynan of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Seattle reported setting out in 1997 to study whale distribution in the Bering Sea and being startled by what she found.

From the air, she saw a massive 200-mile-wide algae bloom, which reflected light and turned the normally dark ocean waters turquoise. The band of coccolithophore bloom was centered over the slope of undersea land off the bay's coast. She found five species of whales — fin, humpback, mike, sei and northern right — feeding in the area, which was a surprise. The whales usually prefer to feed in the deeper water near the shelf's edge.

Tynan said it is too early to tell whether the shift was caused by El Nino or whether there is some other longer-term change going on in the area and the Bering Sea ecosystem.

❑ Reporter Natalie Phillips can be reached at nphillips@adn.com.

CORDOVA TIMES
OCTOBER 22, 1998

Pigeon guillemot research moves to SeaLife Center

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

For years biologists have been trying to assess the impact of ecosystem changes on seabird populations. Biologists know that declines within pigeon guillemot colonies preceded the Exxon Valdez oil spill by several years and seem to coincide with a decrease beginning in the late 1970s in the amount of high fat fish species (sandlance, capelin, herring) fed to their chicks.

Dr. Dan Roby of Oregon State University has been trying to see if the change in their diets explains the declines in their colonies and their slow recovery from the spill.

It's hard to do in the field. Normally, to avoid predators pigeon guillemots nest in burrows in the cliffs and among rocks of remote headlands. The dedicated biologist more often than not must spend hours in the rain and wind of the North Pacific, hanging in front of a cliff face or perched on a rock, binoculars in hand, just to observe what the adults feed their young.

Factors other than food also affect chick survival: not all parents are good at bringing back food; some nests get flooded out; parents sometimes abandon their chicks, and predators always play a role. Crows, ravens, mink and peregrine falcons all feast on seabird eggs when they're available.

To eliminate some of these threats to the chicks, Roby proposed raising them in captivity at the Alaska SeaLife Center and feeding them diets which reflected the changes in their prey in Prince William Sound.

Researcher Dr. George Divoky saw an opportunity to use the studies of chicks to create a more accessible colony for research. "I thought that if a colony could be created, the captive-raised birds could return here," he said. "That way, known-age birds would come back and breed at the SeaLife Center, which would be creating a population of birds that could be used for research."

Although the birds nest in remote rocky cliffs, their needs are really simple. Pigeon guillemots nest under docks from Monterey Bay, Calif., all the way to Dutch Harbor. "All they need," said Divoky, "is a dark place protected from predators."

He should know. Divoky spent 25 years on the North Slope using nest boxes to create the largest colony of black guillemots in Alaska, raising it from 10 breeding pairs in 1972 to 225 breeding pairs in 1989.

Divoky plans to take advantage of the guillemots' affinity for man-made sites. He built nest boxes and attached them to platforms on the shores of Resurrection Bay in front of the SeaLife Center. Decoys sit atop the platforms to attract guillemots and speakers continuously play a chorus of guillemot calls. The idea is for guillemots to be drawn in, hear familiar sounds and start investigating the cavities in the nest boxes.

Young birds begin looking for nesting areas at about two years, even though they have another year or two to go before they are ready to breed. "Two-year-olds are very restless, and begin prospecting for new areas away from their natal colonies," said Divoky. "We could get birds from as far away as Prince William Sound and Bristol Bay."

After they reach fledging weight, about 35 days after hatching, they'll release three groups of birds, each of which had diets of fish with different fat content."

A couple of years from now Roby and Divoky will be watching for this year's chicks to return. One of the most exciting things they could find, according to Divoky, is that the three groups of birds have different survival rates. "If we see the chicks raised on sandlance do well, and the chicks raised on pollock and gunnels do poorly, we have an indication that the fledging weights and fledging success may well be lowered by the shift that has occurred in nearshore fish," Divoky said.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

VALDEZ STAR
OCTOBER 22, 1998

Oil Spill Symposium In Planning Stage

CIVIC CENTER -- What's billed as a 10 Year Anniversary Symposium is being planned for March 21 & 22 next year at the Valdez Civic Center, the 10th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

But the nation's largest oil spill doesn't rate a mention in a news release issued by Prince William Sound Community College this week.

The news release makes no reference to the spill itself nor to a number of key personalities who played central roles in the spill aftermath and the two-year cleanup.

Called "Partners in Prevention: A Decade of Progress in Prince William Sound," the event revolves around videos, static displays, tours of SERVS, speeches and panel discussions.

Among those invited are city and state officials and Alyeska President Bob Malone as the keynote speaker.

Former Alaska governors Steve Cowper, Bill Sheffield, Walter Hickel and Jay Hammond, and current governor Tony Knowles (presuming he is still Governor next year) are on the list though notmyet confirmed.

Also on the list are officers of the Coast Guard and the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

The panel discussions are entitled "Valdez In The Last Decade" and "How Oil Has Affected Alaska" and "A Decade of Progress In Prince William Sound."

The two-day event is being sponsored by Prince William Sound Community College, The Regional Citizens Advisory Council, Alyeska Pipeline/SERVS, the Coast Guard, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the City of Valdez.

A similar but separate anniversary is being planned by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council but most of those events are scheduled to take place in Anchorage.

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
OCTOBER 22, 1998

Staff honors volunteers for contributing 10,000 hours

The SeaLife Scoop

Compiled by Maureen Sims

Alaska SeaLife Center volunteers were recognized for their efforts at a potluck dinner last weekend hosted by staff at the SeaLife Center. Some 142 volunteers from Seward, Moose Pass, Homer, Kenai, Soldotna, Girdwood and Anchorage have contributed more than 10,000 hours to the SeaLife Center and its mission.

The following volunteers were honored with a volunteer service award for a full year of service during 1997 and the 1998 summer season. They are: Julie Bryant, Kay Smith, Kathy Fredrickson, Sharon Stevens-Ganser, Lani Lockwood, Katy Turnbull, Lynda Martin, Julie Renwick, Barbara Fleming, Leesa Sorber, Chad Lockwood, Craig Turnbull, Kelly Martin, April Tuthill and Brittany Swanson.

Volunteers who served over 250 hours at the center received certificates of appreciation. They are: David Cooper, 307 hours; Bryan Jipping, 396 hours; Chad Lockwood, 285 hours; Lani Lockwood, 362 hours; and Lynda Martin, 266 hours.

The SeaLife Center's rehabilitation and husbandry staff is pleased to announce that Ili, the injured harbor seal, has recovered and was released Oct. 9. The already weaned baby seal was found in the harbor at Lake Iliamna July 7 when she was an estimated three weeks old. She had a badly infected lacerated eye and weighed only 19 pounds. At release she weighed about 59 pounds.

Ili is wearing a telemetry device on her back and has a SeaLife Center flipper identification tag. Her transportation to Seward and back to her home in Lake Iliamna was donated by Iliamna Air Taxi and ERA Aviation. Ili was released on an island in the lake where there are other harbor seals.

Thanks to Cindy Haralson and Stephanie Breske for their support and help in this project. It was another job well done by Susan Inglis and all the husbandry and veterinary staff.

Maureen Sims is coordinator of external affairs at the Alaska SeaLife Center.

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
OCTOBER 22, 1998

SewardOpinion

Volunteers appreciated

The Alaska SeaLife Center would like to thank the many volunteers both within and outside the Seward area who have volunteered at the center since its grand opening May 2. Without the many hours of service by these dedicated people, our first season of operation would not have been so successful.

As a private, nonprofit organization, the Alaska SeaLife Center relies heavily on volunteers to help carry out its mission of research, rehabilitation and public education. Since opening, a total of 142 volunteers have devoted more than 10,000 hours toward this effort. This is quite impressive for a new facility in a town of 3,000.

The majority of volunteers are residents of Seward and Moose Pass, although a significant number have come from Kenai, Soldotna, Sterling, the greater Anchorage area including Eagle River and Girdwood and the Mat-Su Valley. In addition, 12 interns from various regions throughout the United States traveled to Seward to volunteer at the center.

Although the peak tourist season has ended and the center is on its winter schedule of 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, there is still a need for volunteers, especially on weekends. Anyone interested in becoming a SeaLife Center volunteer should call Jim Fredrickson at 224-6343 ext. 343. Volunteering is a great way to become involved in the center's research and education activities this winter.

Hats off to the SeaLife Center volunteers — we couldn't have done it without you!

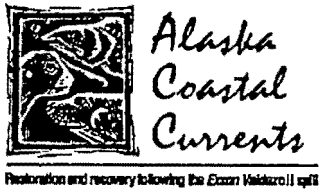
Kimbal Sundberg
Executive director
Alaska SeaLife Center

PE ULA CLARION
Oc r 18, 1998

Ecosystem changes affect some seabird populations

Editor's note: It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of Alaska crude oil. Time has since told quite a lot about the spill's long-term effects. To help tell the story, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is providing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region.

By JODY SEITZ



The Exxon Valdez oil spill struck in late March 1989, as harlequin ducks were still wintering in Prince William Sound and just as seabirds and waterfowl began migrating through the area. An estimated 250,000 birds were killed by the floating oil.

Nine years later, people are just starting to talk about seeing more seabirds in Prince William Sound. The reason for the slow recovery of their numbers is still under investigation. While some scientists search for an explanation in the ecosystem, others look for contamination. But their conclusions ultimately hinge on baseline data gathered long before the oil spill.

For most species in Prince William Sound, there is little information on their populations before 1989. For seabirds, though, the story is a little different.

Counts of the birds go back to 1972, when the late Pete Isleib, a fisher and ornithologist, traversed the sound, counting and marking the distribution of every species. In 1984, David Irons of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, made another count.

Between those years, dramatic changes took place. Populations of fish-eating seabirds such as mergansers, pigeon guillemots, common murres and cormorants apparently all declined by as much as half. Scientists found that the birds' diets had changed to different, less fatty fish. The change in the birds' prey corresponded with a late 1970s shift in the dominant species of fish in the Gulf of Alaska.

Irons is one of many scientists who think changes in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea decreased the abundance of several fish species, which affected the birds' food supply and spurred the decline in several seabird populations — long before the oil spill.

"(The shift) may have affected the forage fish available for the fish-eating birds, because the fish-eating birds have declined, not the invertebrate-eating birds," Irons said.

For the first three years after the oil spill, counts of the birds were done every year. There have been winter and summer counts in several years since 1993.

Ecosystem changes aside, researchers continue to see differences in seabird populations between the oiled and non-oiled areas of Prince William Sound.

"The populations in the oiled area continue to be lower than before the oil spill," Irons said. "Some species are showing no signs of recovery and, in fact, the differences between populations in the oiled and unoiled areas are becoming greater."

Both invertebrate-eating and fish-eating species are fewer in number and their populations grow more slowly in the oiled part of the sound. For example, populations of Barrow's Goldeneye are increasing, but less rapidly in the oiled areas than the unoiled areas. And harlequin ducks, which feed on snails, limpets and other invertebrates such as mussels, have a much higher winter mortality rate in the oiled area than the unoiled area. In fact, researchers believe the winter mortality rate for harlequins in the oiled areas of the sound is too high for the ducks to maintain their populations in those areas.

Data on exposure of seabirds in the sound to crude oil or PCBs may provide some answers. Since 1996, scientists tested harlequin ducks, Barrow's Goldeneye, and pigeon guillemots for elevated levels of a liver enzyme called cytochrome p450, which lasts in their blood up to two weeks following exposure to PCBs or to crude oil.

"They've looked at birds in unoiled and oiled areas and they've found that birds in the oiled areas have higher levels of P450 than in the unoiled area," Irons said.

Irons was surprised to see these results so long after the spill. It's too early to draw conclusions, but Irons said he is concerned that seven to eight years after the spill, birds may still be encountering oil. If they are encountering oil in significant concentrations, it may affect their survival rates, he said.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

Cordova Times
October 15, 1998

Sea otters not returning to northern Knight Island

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

On a calm cloudy day in early August, nine years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, I caught a ride with local Cordova pilot Pat Kearney out to the R/V Kittiwake, anchored just off the northern end of Knight Island. Researchers Jim Bodkin and Brenda Ballachey of the U.S. Geological Survey were winding up their final field work for the Nearshore Vertebrate Predator project.

The NVP project seeks to find out why some animals which live in the nearshore environment, where most of the crude oil was stranded in 1989, are not recovering. Is it a lack of food or is oil pollution continuing to cause problems for sea otters in the spill area?

Ballachey and Bodkin were there to capture and release 25 sea otters from northern Knight Island. To assess the health of the animals, researchers measure, weigh and take blood samples. They compare the results of animals from oiled areas with those from unoiled areas to help build a picture of recovery.

Sea otters tested last year had elevated levels of cytochrome P450-1A, a sign of recent exposure (within two weeks) to crude oil or to organochlorines such as PCB's. "We're finding that animals in this area around northern Knight Island have higher levels of this enzyme than animals in a non-oiled reference area down around Montague," Ballachey said.

This year, Ballachey and Bodkin tested specifically for evidence of PCB exposure.

No one has yet posed a plausible explanation of why animals in the oiled western Sound might show higher levels of PCB exposure than animals elsewhere in PWS. In recommendations to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, however, scientific peer reviewers have repeatedly emphasized the importance of settling the question.

Kearney arrived back at the Kittiwake and we loaded up a Boston Whaler with the dive gear and headed to Herring Bay, where he had spied a sleeping otter. This area was one of the hardest hit by the spill. In 1989, workers took out a total of 33 dead sea otters. The most otters Bodkin has counted here in the last four years is 17; the average is 7.

Sea otters are masters of elusion. To capture them, divers sneak up on them while they're sleeping. The divers are propelled through the water (James Bond-like) holding a motorized basket-shaped trap with an open top, called a Wilson trap. They surprise the sleeping sea otters from below as the trap engulfs them.

As the dive crew left in a Zodiac, Brenda and I settled in for a long wait. It was flat calm and quiet. We could hear the trickle of water gently lapping against fucus, an eagle's occasional cry and the slight splash of small fish flipping on the water. We must have sounded like an invasion. Through all our whispers and efforts to move quietly, there was still the occasional clunk and radio call.

The first otter must have heard us coming and successfully evaded the dive team. However, about an hour later a loud shout echoed off the mountainsides. They'd found and captured a large male otter.

The entire sampling effort took about half an hour with the sea otter anesthetized and sleeping. The otter awakened within 30 seconds after being given an antidote for the anesthesia and was immediately dropped back in the water. Seven pairs of eyes watched until he broke the surface, periscoped and laid back, otter fashion, as though nothing had happened.

Bodkin's first-hand impression of the otter populations in the southwestern sound is that they're increasing, but he has no explanation for why they've not returned to northern Knight Island.

Food doesn't appear to be a problem. Scientists with the NVP project say there are plenty of clams and mussels to support a larger population in Herring Bay. The long-term effect of chronic pollution on the animals and their population remains unknown.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
October 19, 1998

$15.6 million Kodiak Fisheries Research Center meets timetable for completion

By the Journal Staff

CONSTRUCTION

McCarthy construction is nearing completion of the $15.6 million Kodiak Fisheries Research Center on Kodiak Island, within budget and on schedule. Construction began in March 1997 and will be complete this month.

Arctic weather conditions and the project's remote location required precise scheduling to ensure materials and equipment arrived on time, according to Chris Lynch, director of engineering and facilities for the Kodiak Island Borough, owner of the project.

Roof, exterior walls and the concrete seawater tower were designed and constructed to withstand two inches of rainfall per hour and wind velocities of 135 miles per hour. McCarthy also used high-strength concrete in all of the walls and reinforced the stud-framing in exterior walls. The facility's exterior and roof are a metal panel system.

The contractor's toughest challenge was constructing the facility's pump house, to pump 500 gallons of seawater per minute into the facility's reservoirs.

"The pump house site was confined by an archaeological dig on one side, the ocean on another and a steep hillside where we preserved trees of significant size in order to prevent disturbing the natural setting," said McCarthy project manager Derek Jane. A 40-foot-deep shaft was excavated through rock 10 feet away from the ocean to construct the pump house.

"To do this, we created a coffer dam to block out incoming water and utilized a hydraulic hammer so that we could chip away at the rock," he said.

The facility comprises a 51,000-square-foot laboratory and office building; a 60,000-gallon, cast-in-place water tower; a pump house; a 6,000-square-foot housing facility for visiting scientists; and an interpretive center with a touch tank and fiber optic displays.

The lab's primary purpose will be to house experiments being conducted on crustaceans and other sea creatures; to study their habits; and to determine what impact changes in the environment are making.

The borough has leased the center to the National Marine Fisheries, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the University of Alaska and the National Park Service.

ECI Hyer of Anchorage was the project architect.

BULLETIN BOARD

Kudos

The **Alaska SeaLife Center** has become a Coastal America Ecosystem Leaning Center. The designation makes the SeaLife Center one of only nine such facilities in the country and highlights the center's educational achievements and support of the marine environment. Coastal America is a partnership of federal agencies working to protect coastal resources in America.

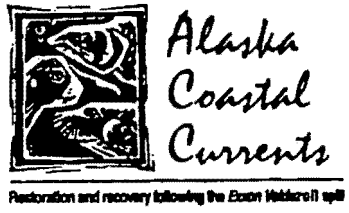
Seal Population Is On The Rebound...

Prince William Sound Harbor Seal Pups Looking Good

By Jody Seitz
Alaska Coastal Currents

There may not be many of them, but harbor seals in Prince William Sound are looking fat and healthy, according to Alaska Department of Fish and Game Biologist Kathy Frost. One theory about the seal decline is that there isn't enough food of the right species and age for the pups to survive the most difficult year of life - the first year. However, right now year-old seals are about twice as fat as yearlings in Canada or the west coast of the United States.

"Prince William Sound right now has some of the biggest, fattest healthiest seal pups in the entire world.



We've had biologists coming out with us the last two years who work on harbor seals in eastern Canada, Oregon, and California, and they are astounded at how big and fat Prince William Sound seals are," Frost said.

Frost travels to Prince William Sound twice a year to collect data and count harbor seals. In June they catch seal pups to put satellite transmitters on them, and do a variety of measurements. Researchers had been focused on adults, but when several years of work showed no apparent reason for the population decline, they began to concentrate on pups. Between this year and last year they've tagged a total of 20 pups. They'll also tag pups next year. The transmitters fall off once the seals molt.

In August the seals shed their coats and spend hours hauled out on rocks, soaking up whatever sunshine there is, and growing their new pelts. This makes it easier to count them. Survey flights go from Cordova across the southern end of the sound, up through the islands in the middle, across the northern sound, and back to Cordova, about a three-hour circle. On August 25, she counted 799. "I tried awful hard for 800th seal, but I didn't see it," said Frost.

Telling the difference in seal numbers from east to west is difficult, said Frost, but in general, the eastern side of the sound, including the Port Gravina area, has fewer seals than the southern sound. "Some parts of the sound just seem to have more seals. The southern part of the sound is big seal country. There are a lot of the things seals like to eat, such as herring and capelin, in that area. And the biggest rocky haulouts are around Channel Island, Port Chalmers, and Stockdale Harbor. Port Gravina has some pretty big haulouts, but in total, fewer seals than the southern sound," said Frost.

The satellite tags have shown that most of the pups born in Prince William Sound stay there the first year of their life. Some go into the Gulf of Alaska to feed. The fact that the pups are big and fat when they are weaned shows that the mother was also in good health.

The technique to measure the seals' body fat was developed only recently. There is no information about harbor seal pup condition early in the decline, or the years immediately after the oil spill. Eventually Frost hopes to use the information from satellite tags to better understand feeding behavior and seal movements and compare their activities here with those in southeast Alaska, where their populations are thriving.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Key Interior department assistant calls it quits

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE – Deborah Williams, the Interior Department's high-profile special assistant for Alaska issues, is calling it quits after five years.

Williams didn't cite a reason for her resignation. But her timing suggests a connection to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt's announcement earlier this week that a moratorium has been extended on a federal takeover of subsistence fisheries management in Alaska.

"For many reasons, the time has come for me to resign and let someone else have the privilege of being special assistant for Alaska," Williams said in her Oct. 6 letter of resignation, released Thursday.

Babbitt, in a prepared statement, said he regretted Williams' departure.

"Deborah has worked tirelessly to fight for the protection of Alaska's natural resources and wildlife and on behalf of Alaska Natives and all Americans who enjoy or depend upon Alaska's federal lands," Babbitt said.

Williams is the former head of the environmental law firm Trustees for Alaska. She was often at odds with the Alaska congressional delegation over land-use and development issues.

The most recent confrontation with the delegation came last summer because of her adamant opposition to a road through wilderness portions of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge on the Alaska Peninsula.

U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, an Alaska Republican, inserted a provision into a spending bill that would have eliminated three special assistant positions. About the same time, Stevens was making public statements in Alaska about his difficult working relationship with Williams.

In her letter to Babbitt, Williams insisted no one from "outside the department" threatened or intimidated her into resigning.

The timing of her resignation suggests Williams was disturbed she had not been kept fully informed by Babbitt about his negotiations with Stevens to extend the subsistence moratorium.

At a press conference Oct. 1, Babbitt told reporters he had been working with Stevens on such an extension and was hopeful of reaching an agreement.

The following day, Williams complained media accounts of the press conference inaccurately reported discussions were underway on another moratorium. She claimed the only thing discussed between Babbitt and Stevens was implementation of a federal takeover.

When the moratorium finally became public, Williams refused to talk about it with reporters, even though she usually serves as the secretary's main voice on Alaska matters.

Williams' resignation was dated on the day she learned Babbitt had been talking about the moratorium extension and didn't tell her.

Asked by the Anchorage Daily News whether any of the events leading to the moratorium led to her decision, Williams replied: "My statement speaks for itself."

Williams said she will stay on the job while Babbitt finds someone to replace her – a process that could take four to six weeks.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
October 16, 1998

Whales prey on Aleutian sea otters

By PAUL RECER
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Killer whales that normally hunt seals and sea lions are now feeding on sea otters and creating an ecological crisis along the entire Aleutian island chain of western Alaska.

Researchers say that the sudden loss of thousands of sea otters is allowing a boom in the population of sea urchins and these animals, in turn, are stripping the undersea kelp forest, laying bare vast areas that once were lush with the marine plant.

The whole coastal ecosystem in western Alaska is now affected, says James Estes, a marine ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Estes said the research demonstrates how disrupting just one link in a food chain can threaten an entire ecological system.

"A wide array of species will be affected," he said. "Coastal fish, mussels, marine birds and other predators in the system could all be impacted."

Estes is co-author of a study appearing Friday in the journal Science.

"The otters are down about 90 percent in the areas that we studied, while the sea urchins have increased by about tenfold," said Estes.

Undersea beds of kelp, a sea plant that towers from the ocean floor and can grow in dense groves, has been reduced by 90 percent in some areas. This, said Estes, could have a serious effect on fish and other animals.

"The kelp beds serve as a nursery for small fish and other animals," said Estes. "A lot of species depend on the kelp beds for their survival."

Normally, there is a delicate balance of life in the western Alaskan waters, with sea lions and seals feeding on fish and the killer whales preying on the sea lions and seals. Independent of that, sea urchins graze on the kelp beds while sea otters feed on the urchins. This keeps the urchin population in check and allows the kelp beds to thrive, providing a home to hundreds of species.

But Estes said that starting in the late 1980s, the sea lion and seal population crashed and is now about a 10th of normal.

Deprived of their normal food, killer whales turned to the sea otter.

The otter is much smaller than the sea lions and seals so the killer whales must eat more to get the same nourishment.

Estes said he and his colleagues estimate that a single killer whale will have to eat 1,825 otters a year to get its required nourishment. At that rate, said Estes, it would take just four killer whales feeding only on sea otters to cause a crash of the sea otter population throughout most of the Aleutian Island chain.

The researchers said the killer whale predation is the only explanation for the sudden drop in sea otter population.

If the otters were being affected by disease, said Estes, there would be many bodies washed ashore. This has not happened.

Also, he said that sea otter populations protected from killer whales continue to thrive.

Research on the toxicity of weathered oil considered in the permitting process

Very small amounts of oil, as low as four parts per billion, are all that is needed to damage herring and salmon larvae.

That finding, by scientists at the National Marine Fisheries Service Auke Bay Lab, may explain why more pink salmon eggs died in oiled than unoiled streams of Prince William Sound as late as 1993, four years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Until these studies, most research on the effects of crude oil focused on the light aromatic fraction, which dissipates rapidly after a spill. Unfortunately, the heavier multi-ringed compounds are actually more toxic unit-per-unit.

The level of the state water quality standard, 10 parts per billion, also causes effects and is too low to see or taste, according to Dr. Stanley Rice, of NMFS Auke Bay Lab. It doesn't cause immediate mortality, but causes effects later in life. The adults come back smaller and they are fewer in number.

The PAHs (polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons) are attracted to the yolk of the fish eggs.

"The [salmon] eggs are large, as fish eggs go and they're in the gravel a long time," said Rice.

"The significance of the yolk is that it's lipid rich and so when a tiny particle of oil comes along and bumps into the egg, it's absorbed and it's trapped. It sequesters it and eventually the dose builds up within the eggs and you get these long-term effects," said Rice.

These findings have sent a red flag to biologists who review permits for development projects. They are more concerned about everything from parking lots to piers, according Linda Shaw, of the National Marine Fisheries Service. She reviews development proposals as part of the Army Corps of Engineers' permitting process.

She was surprised by the very low levels which could affect herring and salmon. But, she says, now that they know, they're responsible for bringing this up to those proposing development projects which could potentially impact fisheries.

"Knowing that these very low levels could be detrimental tells us that we have to be more mindful of how we design these structures and think of ways to try to minimize the detrimental impacts that the oil could be having on streams the oil could be draining into," said Shaw.

Shaw recently reviewed a proposal to build a pier in an area where herring spawn. The concern was over leakage of oil.

"Our concern was that the vessel activity associated with that pier could introduce fuel spills, and granted they would be at very low levels, but what this research has shown is that it only takes very low levels to have a negative impact on herring larvae. "

Diesel oil, crankcase oil, refined oil and bunker oil can all cause the same type of problems because they contain the same type of toxic compounds found in crude oil, according to Jeff Short of NMFS Auke Bay Lab. These spills happen all the time.

This concern goes beyond new development projects. Everyone contributes to the problem, Shaw said.

"It's very prevalent on Juneau parking lots to see oil slicks and see them going in the drain. That's from everyone of us driving our cars and not maintaining our cars, and so everyone of us is contributing to the problem."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

Students help scientists assess the damage in Prince William Sound

MARCH 24, 1989

spill logy

MARCH 24, 1989, MAY NOT BE A DATE that will live in infamy, but it is the date that the oil tanker *Exxon Valdez* ran aground in Prince William Sound (located in south central Alaska), spilling around 41 million liters of crude oil into the clear waters. Many people remember the striking pictures of the devastation, but a lot has happened in the years since the spill. Since the civil settlement, the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council has been administering the 900 million dollars that was earmarked for research and restoration, and a tremendous amount of knowledge has been gained in the areas of damage assessment, recovery rates, and the ecosystem of Prince William Sound as a whole.

One of the projects funded by the Trustee Council is called Youth Area Watch (YAW). Youth Area Watch is a program designed to allow the middle and high school students of Prince William Sound to work directly with scientists in the research and restoration that is being conducted in the area. The program, now in its fourth year, involves students from four different school districts and three to seven students from each of six communities around Prince William Sound that were affected by the oil spill. The grant includes funding for a full-time program coordinator and is administered by the Chugach School District.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The students involved in YAW are trained by scientists to collect data for various projects. Once or twice a year students accompany scientists aboard research vessels. Other projects require the students to regularly collect data in their towns or villages for later use by scientists. Some projects in which students participate include biosampling of harbor seals; gathering meteorologic and oceanographic data; measuring herring age, weight, and length; and collecting blue mussels.

One of the most beneficial aspects of this program to students is the opportunity to experience science in an environment where plans are subject to many uncontrollable variables, teaching them lessons that they cannot learn in a controlled laboratory setting. The students in YAW experience the same difficulties, disappointments, and triumphs as do the project scientists. YAW students have experienced broken-down boats, problems in finding study subjects, and weather delays. One example of an unexpected finding was the discovery that the spring bloom of the important copepod Neocalanus begins in February rather than March. This occurred as a result of a training exercise held in February for YAW students. Project scientists were not expecting to find evidence of copepods in the water column until early March. Since this finding, scientists and students have started sampling copepods in February, rather than waiting until March.

JENNIFER CHILDRESS AND JOSHUA HALL

COLLECTING SAMPLES, MAKING MEASUREMENTS

Youth Area Watch is an extracurricular activity; however, many teachers involved with YAW incorporate information gained from the projects and activities into their classrooms. This allows a large number of students to benefit from the program. Often, Youth Area Watch projects correspond with science projects and curricula already being used in the classroom.

A good example of information that can be used in the classroom is meteorologic and oceanographic data. For the past three years, students have been collecting oceanographic and meteorologic data in their communities in cooperation with scientists conducting projects in the area. The students are all from coastal communities, and they collect weekly or biweekly ocean water samples from the surface and at 5- and 10-meter depths. Students measure the temperature and salinity of the water and track variations in the measurements over time. They also track weather data, including daily temperature, wind direction and speed, barometric pressure, and precipitation.

Using skills learned in oceanography or other science classes, students create charts and graphs to interpret the data. They also compare their data with data from students in other schools in the program and look for changes in ocean and weather patterns across Prince William Sound. The data collected also goes to scientists who are studying different aspects of the local ecosystem and need this information from around the Sound. The students are able to help scientists; and they are also able to analyze the data that they have collected and compare their analyses with the conclusions of professionals. In this way, Youth Area Watch enhances the common school practice of collecting weather data by making a connection to current scientific research.

MUSSELING UP

Another YAW student project is the blue mussel/pristane analysis. Students sample blue mussels, the predominant intertidal mussel species in Prince William Sound. This project is unique because the species that students sample is not the species that the scientists study. Scientists are actually studying the number of copepods (the most vital link in the local food web) within Prince William Sound.

Copepods are tiny zooplankton that make up an important component of the diets of herring, juvenile salmon, and a variety of other species. As a result of the oil spill, it was discovered that copepods in Prince William Sound were producing a hydrocarbon called pristane. Scientists think that copepods use pristane to maintain proper buoyancy. Pristane is inert and maintains its structure as it passes through the food web, which means that it is found in the fat deposits of any animal (including humans) that has eaten an animal that has eaten a copepod. Because pristane is not metabolized, it seems to have little or no effect on the animals that ingest it.

With the discovery of the pristane molecule and its unique characteristics, scientists stumbled on a very easy way to study copepod populations. As the population of copepods increases or decreases, so does the amount of pristane in the water column. Mussels, by virtue of the fact that they obtain their food by filtering the water around them, maintain a constant record of the amount of pristane in the water column. Therefore, scientists can track the increases and decreases in the populations of copepods by sampling mussels from around the Sound. Students' role in the project is to assist scientists by collecting mussels twice a month during the spring and summer months.

Students see that there are people whose life work involves studying and protecting the ecosystem.

In addition to collecting mussels, once a year students travel to Auke Bay Laboratories in Juneau where the mussels are analyzed. This trip benefits students in many ways. The field trip begins with an overview of the ecosystem in Prince William Sound given by the project's principal investigator and a description of how the pristane project can monitor the Sound's health; these discussions supplement and strengthen students' understanding of ecosystems. Students also see that there are people whose life work involves studying and protecting the ecosystem. The trip to Auke Bay exposes students to a number of different career opportunities in science—many students are surprised at the number and diversity of scientists who work at the laboratory. Finally, students gain valuable experience working in a professional lab setting, which drives home the lessons of lab technique and safety taught in school.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

YAW also is connected to the classroom through research and restoration projects. Students in each participating community are required to determine an area of need in their community and to design and implement a research/restoration project that addresses that need. The project must include ways to involve other members of their school and community. Recent projects included a pond health evaluation and restoration, a harbor clean-up, and a local bird habitat study.

For the bird habitat project, students from the town of Whittier chose to study a kittiwake rookery located across a nearby bay. Cruise boats bring tourists

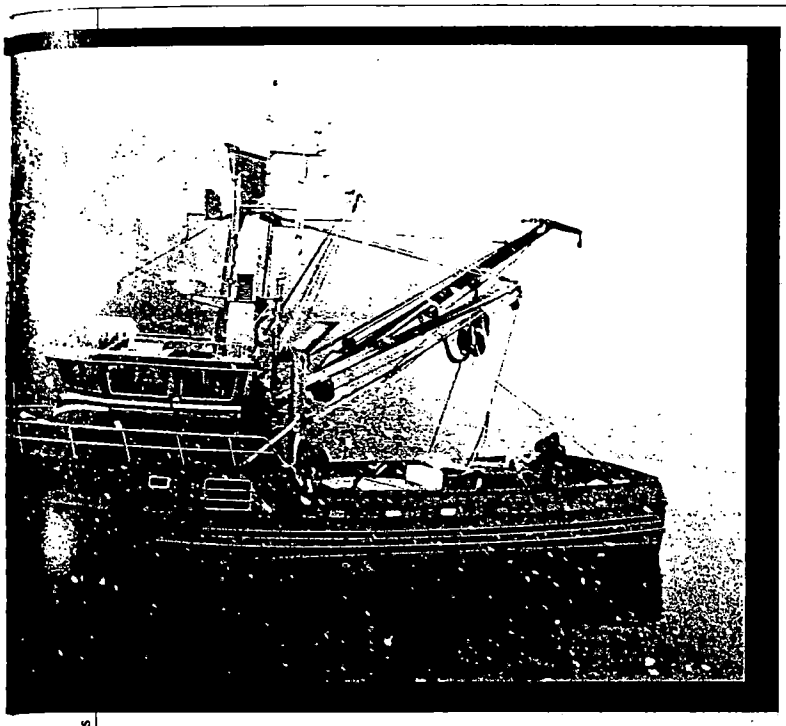

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

into the bay during the summer and often get very close to the birds. Students and community members have expressed concern that these intrusions may be detrimental to the birds. In hopes of documenting any population decline, students have decided to do a yearly population survey when the birds return to the rookery in the spring. With the help of a United States Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, students completed their first survey during the spring of 1998. In the classroom, students learn about the scientific process and its importance, but a project like this one allows them to apply their knowledge and learn the skills involved in conducting research, including accurate data collection techniques, coordination of efforts, and communication of results or problems.

To design a restoration project that will help their community, students must gather data about what their community needs, which fosters positive discussions and communication between the young people and the adults in the community and also helps adults to see how science can be a positive and useful tool in managing resources. In Alaskan villages and towns, where many people lead a subsistence lifestyle, this is especially important. Because of these projects, students and adults alike are learning how they can mesh scientific knowledge and tools with traditional ways of life to manage their resources and sustain their culture. Students in Whittier, for example, encourage community involvement in the bird habitat study by publishing their findings in the school newspaper, which is distributed throughout the community. They are also in the process of constructing an interactive display about the project to be exhibited in the community center.

Often, high school science consists of performing teacher-controlled experiments that yield specific results that teach a certain lesson. YAW projects, by contrast, allow students to employ science in an authentic setting by collecting and analyzing "real" data. No one (not even the teacher) knows what conclusions the data will yield. Through this process students gain valuable skills and experiences in designing investigations, systematically and accurately collecting data, charting and interpreting data, and preparing and presenting oral and written reports.

Although Youth Area Watch is extracurricular and grant-funded, many aspects of this program could be incorporated into any science classroom. We encourage teachers to contact scientists doing local studies to discuss ways in which students can be involved in research. Government agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or state fish and game departments are good places to locate scientists who are working in a specific region of the country.

Many science teachers encourage scientists to come into the classroom and talk with students about their projects. This is a great start, but this interaction with scientists can be taken much farther. Getting students involved in the actual data collection and, if possible, data analysis allows them to experience science on a practical level. Most of the scientists approached to be a part of YAW were intrigued by the idea of working with young people and were happy to train and teach students in exchange for the work students would do as volunteers. Just as teachers want to connect their work to the community, researchers often look for a way to make their work more meaningful to the community and public, and a partnership benefits everyone.

Being encouraged to interact meaningfully with and "do" science rather than just learn science is an important part of students' scientific education. By being allowed to work with scientists and use science to better their community, students begin to appreciate science as a useful part of their lives rather than just a series of classes they take in high school. Not only will they learn about various science concepts but they will also learn how to communicate with other members of their villages or towns and how to be responsible managers of natural resources.

For more information about Youth Area Watch, please visit our web page at: *http://www.micronet.net/users/~yaw.* ✧

Jennifer Childress and Joshua Hall are both itinerant teachers in the Chugach School District, 9312 Vanguard Drive, Suite 100, Anchorage, AK 99507.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to thank the Exxon Valdez *Trustee Council for having the vision to invest in this program, which has been of great benefit to the students and communities in the Prince William Sound area.*

NSULA CLARION

BER 11, 1998

Toxicity of weathered oil considered in permitting process

Editor's note: It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of Alaska crude oil. Time has since told quite a lot about the spill's long-term effects. To help tell the story, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is providing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region.

By JODY SEITZ

Very small amounts of oil, as low as four parts per billion, are all that's needed to damage herring and salmon larvae. That finding, by scientists at the National Marine Fisheries Service Auke Bay Lab, may explain why more pink salmon eggs died in oiled than unoiled streams of Prince William Sound as late as 1993, four years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Until these studies, most research on the effects of crude oil focused on the light aromatic fraction, which dissipates rapidly after a spill. Unfortunately, the heavier multi-ringed compounds are actually more toxic unit-per-unit. The level of the state water quality standard, 10 parts per billion, also causes effects and is too low to see or taste, according to Dr. Stanley Rice, of the NMFS lab. It doesn't cause immediate mortality, but it does cause effects later in life. The adults come back smaller and they are fewer in number.

The PAHs (polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons) are attracted to the yolk of the fish eggs.

"The (salmon) eggs are large, as fish eggs go and they're in the gravel a long time," said Rice. "The significance of the yolk is that it's lipid rich and so when a tiny particle of oil comes along and bumps into the egg, it's absorbed and it's trapped. It sequesters it and eventually the dose builds up within the eggs and you get these long-term effects," said Rice.

These findings have sent a red flag to biologists who review permits for development projects. They are more concerned about everything from parking lots to piers, according Linda Shaw of the National Marine Fisheries Service. She reviews development proposals as part of the Army Corps of Engineers' permitting process.

She was surprised by the very low levels which could affect herring and salmon. But, she says, now that they know, they're responsible for bringing this up to those proposing development projects which could potentially impact fisheries.

"Knowing that these very low levels could be detrimental tells us that we have to be more mindful of how we design these structures and think of ways to try to minimize the detrimental impacts that the oil could be having on streams the oil could be draining into," said Shaw.

Shaw recently reviewed a proposal to build a pier in an area where herring spawn. The concern was over leakage of oil. "Our concern was that the vessel activity associated with that pier could introduce fuel spills, and granted they would be at very low levels, but what this research has shown is that it only takes very low levels to have a negative impact on herring larvae."

Diesel oil, crankcase oil, refined oil and bunker oil can all cause the same type of problems because they contain the same type of toxic compounds found in crude oil, according to Jeff Short of the NMFS Auke Bay Lab. These spills happen all the time. This concern goes beyond new development projects. Everyone contributes to the problem, Shaw said.

"It's very prevalent on Juneau parking lots to see oil slicks and see them going in the drain. That's from everyone of us driving our cars and not maintaining our cars, and so everyone of us is contributing to the problem."

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ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
October 16, 1998

Orcas cited in sea otter decimation

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

The number of sea otters in the central Aleutian Islands has declined as much as 90 percent in some areas in eight years, and a group of scientists studying their disappearance has fingered the killer whale as the culprit.

Their theory is that in 1990, killer whales turned to eating the scrawny, undesirable sea otter because the fat, lumbering Steller sea lions and harbor seals in the area have nearly vanished. Nowhere else in the state have killer whales been documented eating sea otters.

The ecological chain reaction has been startling.

A team of biologists at the University of California at Santa Cruz revealed the findings from their eight years of work in an article that appears today in the journal Science.

The team found that the disappearance of sea otters has sparked an explosion in the sea urchin population, which is usually kept in check by sea otters. The lack of predators has given license to the sea urchin to take over.

The sea urchins' population has grown eightfold, and their individual size has nearly tripled from the average of an inch in diameter to 3 inches, according to Tim Tinker, one of the study's authors and a graduate student at the university.

The sea urchins have clear-cut the undersea kelp forests, which provide important habitat for hundreds of cies of small fish and other animals ng the coast. The urchins are grazing kelp as fast as it grows, Tinker said.

The kelp beds have been replaced by what looks like "virtually a solid carpet of sea urchins," he said.

Scientists familiar with the Aleutian ecosystem agree it's too early to say precisely what will be the long-term effects of the sea otter decline or whether it can be tied directly to the demise of the Steller sea lion.

The disappearance of the Steller sea lions, which were listed as an endangered species in 1997, has long been a mystery. Some researchers believe the population crashed because fishing in the Bering Sea diminished their food source. Other theories include predation by killer whales, a warming of the ocean, and extensive commercial whaling at the turn of the century, which some scientists think may have upset the balance in the Bering Sea.

Scientists studying the sea otter decline say more work needs to be done, including figuring out how many killer whales ply the area and defining the geographic boundaries of the decline.

So far, data shows that the sea otter and kelp beds are in bad shape and that the sea urchins are flourishing. But Jim Bodkin, a biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey's biology division in Anchorage, said more work needs to be done to confirm that killer whales are indeed the only culprit. Scientists need to link the killer whale's interest in sea otters to the disappearance of sea lions and harbor seals, he said.

Craig Matkin, a killer whale biologist based in Homer, said he was a skeptic

"But I've seen the data and the number of kills they actually observed. It's pretty impressive," he said. The team of scientists saw the whales kill otters about a dozen times. Statistically, that suggest they are killing sea otters frequently, he said. "To see that many (kills), it's pretty impressive."

Killer whales would have to be pretty hungry to turn to sea otters for sustenance, Matkin said

"It's like eating rats instead of cows," he said. "They must taste terrible. They have these stelidae glands. They don't have fat. They're part of the weasel family. It's crazy."

The average 70-pound sea otter has little fat. They keep warm and buoyant with a special coat of fur. Contrast that with the average 1,000-pound sea lion and 250-pound harbor seal, which are mostly fat.

Killer whales, or orcas, grow up to 26 feet long and weigh as much as 8,000 pounds. Metabolic rate studies suggest a killer whale that depended solely on a diet of sea otter would have to eat five a day. If a killer whale ate only harbor seals, it would have to eat one every five days. And if it ate only Steller sea lions, it would need one only every 16 days.

That means as few as four killer whales eating only sea otters could thin the ranks by the estimated 40,000 to 45,000 that scientists believe have disappeared in the Aleutians in the past eight years.

The team of California scientists was led by Jim Estes with the U.S. Geological Service, who has studied the role of sea otters in the Aleutians since the early 1970s.

Usually, large die-offs can be blamed on either disease, toxins or starvation. The team looked at all three. In the case of large die-offs, scientists usually find numerous carcasses washed ashore. The team found few. They set up plot studies along the coast to see if the animals' food supply was healthy. That's when they discovered that urchins were flourishing. Laboratory work eliminated the theory that a widespread toxin had poisoned the population.

So the scientists decided to look closer at killer whale predation.

They picked two sites in 1995 to study tagged sea otters. One was in Kuluk Bay on Adak Island and the other in nearby Clam Lagoon, an area inaccessible to killer whales. In Clam Lagoon. 12 percent of the sea otters disappe while 65 percent disappeared in Ku ay.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
October 16, 1998

Williams quits job at Interior

Babbitt subsistence deal likely catalyst

By DAVID WHITNEY
Daily News reporter

WASHINGTON — Deborah Williams, who has served as Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt's special assistant for Alaska issues, announced Thursday that she is resigning after nearly five years on the job.


Williams

Williams, the highest-profile federal employee based in the state, did not disclose the reasons for her resignation, although the timing suggests a connection to Babbitt's announcement Tuesday that a moratorium on a federal takeover of Alaska fish and game management has been extended.

"For many reasons, the time has come for me to resign and let someone else have the privilege of being special assistant for Alaska," Williams said in her Oct. 6 letter of resignation, released Thursday.

Babbitt, to whom Williams reported, said in a prepared statement that he regretted her departure.

"Deborah has worked tirelessly to fight for the protection of Alaska's natural resources and wildlife and on behalf of Alaska Natives and all Americans who enjoy or depend upon Alaska's federal lands," he said.

Williams, a former head of the environmental law firm Trustees for Alaska, often had been at odds with the Alaska congressional delegation over land-use and development issues.

The most recent flare-up with the delegation was last summer because of her adamant opposition to a road through wilderness areas of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge on the Alaska Peninsula.

U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, inserted a provision into a spending bill that would have eliminated three special assistant positions. About the same time, Stevens was making public statements in Alaska about his difficult working relationship with Williams.

In her letter to Babbitt, Williams insisted that no one from "outside the department" had threatened or intimidated her into resigning.

The timing of her resignation suggests that Williams was disturbed that she had not been kept fully informed by Babbitt about his negotiations with Stevens to extend a moratorium on a federal takeover of fish and game management.

At a press conference Oct. 1, Babbitt told reporters that he had been working with Stevens on such an extension and was hopeful of reaching an agreement.

The following day, Williams complained that the story inaccurately reported that discussions were under way on another moratorium and that the only thing that had been discussed between Babbitt and Stevens were ways to implement a federal takeover.

Williams specifically complained about the wording in the story that Babbitt and Stevens had been talking about, as the story said, "some arrangement to forestall such a takeover."

It became clear earlier this week that Babbitt had been keeping information from Williams when Stevens issued a statement explaining how he and Babbitt had been working on the extension and repeated the words of the newspaper story that Williams had insisted were wrong.

Stevens said that he had been under pressure from Sen. Frank Murkowski and Rep. Don Young to extend the moratorium and that when he first met with Babbitt, "I sat down to explore with the secretary the options Alaska could pursue to forestall a takeover."

When the moratorium became public, Williams refused to talk about it with reporters even though she usually has served as the secretary's main voice on Alaska matters.

Asked whether any of the events leading to the moratorium led to her decision, Williams replied: "My statement speaks for itself."

Asked about her resignation Thursday, Stevens said it's the only tool some government officials have to express their views on an issue.

"People who live in that relationship with a Cabinet officer often submit resignations," he said. "It's the only tool you have to impress a boss that you think he's not right."

Williams' resignation was dated on the day that she learned that Babbitt had been talking about the moratorium extension and she hadn't been informed.

"Circle this date," she told a reporter on that day. "Ask me about it in two weeks."

Williams said Thursday that she will remain on the job while Babbitt finds someone to replace her.

"This has been the most extraordinary position," Williams said. "I feel really positive about the last five years. It was incredible. I do care so deeply about the Interior Department and the issues."

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
OCTOBER 12, 1998
HOW OUR LAWMAKERS VOTED

PUBLIC LANDS: Voting 123-302, the House defeated a catchall, end-of-session bill (HR 4570) making hundreds of major changes in federal policies for national parks, wilderness areas, forests and other public lands in 36 states. Most of the changes were popular, such as ones to expand the National Trails System and reauthorize the Historic Preservation Fund. Others, such as measures to increase logging in national forests and remove certain wilderness protections, were disputed.

Jim Gibbons, R-Nev., said, "This bill brings benefits to our public lands. ... Some in this body will demagogue it ... say it destroys our environment, that it bodes ill will to our national parks and public lands. But I assure you it does not. ... I know the benefits it brings to my constituents ... and to America."

Sherwood Boehlert, R-N.Y., said the bill was opposed by environmental groups because it would "weaken protections for wilderness areas ... waive normal environmental review for a controversial road in Alaska ... create new incentives to cut trees in national forests."

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Voting yes: Young

KO[illegible] DAILY MIRROR

Oc[illegible] 9, 1998

Environmentalists protest pollock reallocation

By MARK BUCKLEY
Mirror Writer

Members of the environmental community are weighing in against U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens' move to reallocate the Bering Sea pollock harvest.

Their chief concerns are the new agreement will further threaten endangered Steller sea lions while doing nothing to reduce bycatch.

"This is one of the most anti-environmental initiatives produced by Congress in this, the 'Year of the Ocean,'" said Michael Barnette, marine wildlife project leader for the American Oceans Campaign in Washington, D.C.

"The Western Alaska population of the Steller sea lion is on the brink of extinction due in large part to current fishing practices. Reallocating the pollock, currently the sea lions' main prey, would imperil the remaining few sea lions as landings from inshore areas around sea lion critical habitat would increase."

Trevor McCabe, the Stevens' fisheries aide who is working on the bill, was not available for comment.

The Stevens legislation, in the form of a rider attached to an omnibus spending bill, would reduce the number of foreign-owned, Seattle-based factory trawlers that dominate the fishery. It would also boost the take for a handful of shore-based processing plants to at least 45 percent of the million-ton annual catch.

When implemented, the new system will slow the pace of the world's largest commercial fishery, which is currently a twice-yearly race for resources. Under the proposed new system the boats will form a cooperative, deciding among themselves when they will fish.

Giving the fishermen more time to fish without mandating higher bycatch standards is the concern of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council.

"We recommend adding a provision scheduling bycatch reduction at 10 percent per year over five years," said Dorothy Childers, the council's executive director. "Successful bycatch reduction should be a primary tool to evaluate whether or not the cooperative should be renewed."

Members of the conservation group are also concerned the new system could open the door to increased bycatch. Because boats under 125 feet are not required to have 100 percent observer coverage, and because boats under the new system will be able to choose when they will fish, there are fears the fishermen will have no incentive to reduce bycatch.

Bycatch control is important to the fleet because if bycatch caps are reached, regulatory agencies automatically shut the fishery down, even if the catch quota is not met.

The potential for increased bycatch bothers Kodiak halibut fisherman and conservation council member Joe Macinko.

"There's no law that says a boat has to go fishing when an observer is aboard," Macinko said. "Boats from 60-125 feet are required to have observers on board only 30 percent of the time. What's to keep them from staying tied to the dock while the observer is there? That way they'll show no bycatch. Then, when the observer goes to another boat, the fishermen can fish as dirty as they want."

Whether the conservation groups will see their concerns addressed remains to be seen.

Congress plans to send the 1999 funding package, which may contain the Stevens rider, to the White House for President Clinton's signature as early as this weekend.

Youth program linked to world

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Each year for the last couple of years 25 to 30 high school students in the Chugach and Cordova school districts have had the rare opportunity to work with scientists as they conduct research in the field. The program, sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, is called the Youth Area Watch.

Students from remote settings get hands-on experience in some highly technical and specialized fields — such as oceanography, marine mammal ecology, physiology, biochemistry, and marine ecology. The students have collected mussels for pristane analysis, tracked ocean temperatures and salinity near their communities, monitored the weather, and received training in the biological sampling of harbor seals taken for subsistence.

Now anyone who has access to the worldwide Web can find out about the Youth Area Watch and follow the students' monitoring and stewardship efforts. Jennifer Childress and Joshua Hall lead the project for the Chugach School District. They decided that the students needed a Web page.

"We thought it'd be a cool thing to do with the students. It's a part of our standards, so it's a good way to give them the chance to do their schoolwork and be part of the extracurricular things as well," said Childress.

Last year, the Chugach School District gave up credits and grades in favor of a set of 12 standards in 10 different subject areas. The students have to demonstrate a certain level of proficiency in the skills required in each standard in order to graduate. The first students graduated under the new curriculum this past May.

This Web homepage links to pages written by the students at all the sites where the Youth Area Watch exists: from Valdez and Cordova, to Whittier, Chenega Bay and Tatitlek. Although not all the sites have access to the Internet as yet, students still receive disk updates of the page periodically through the district.

With the new road going in to Whittier, students there became concerned about possible effects on a nearby kittiwake colony. They're monitoring the colony and posting their baseline data on the Web.

The students can also now examine each other's weather data and oceanographic data to compare conditions across the Sound.

Students in Seward and Cordova conducted beach cleanups and recorded what they found. Seward students also worked with the National Park Service to study murre carcasses collected after a large die-off there earlier this year. Valdez students worked on restoring an old cemetery. Childress and Hall are proud of the students and the work they do. They see the Web as a great opportunity to share the program idea with teachers.

"It doesn't seem like anything like this (Youth Area Watch) is happening anywhere that we've heard of. So it's really neat to have this on there for people to see that this is happening. Maybe this will give people ideas of things they can do with students. Any school could do a restoration project anywhere if they wanted to, or find scientists to work with," said Childress. "

"It's neat to offer this as a way to give students the opportunity for technology training. We can bring the students in here and they can work on and publish a finished product. This is very real. People all over the world can look at it. They do some great things with the Youth Area Watch and it's a great opportunity to show the world what they do," said Hall.

Look up the Youth Area Watch at http//www.micronet.net/users/(tilde)YAW.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

SECTION C
Friday, October 9, 1998

It's only natural to fight over fish

It's reasonable to assume that people began fighting over fish shortly after the first fish was discovered, an activity that continues to this day.

And yet, every so often, someone appeals for peace among the bickering fisherfolk. These Utopians don't understand that squabbling over fish is not only natural, but is in the best interests of all concerned.

Occasionally, you'll hear some idealist proclaim that "more fish" will stop the incessant battling. "More hatcheries will solve all the problems," goes their song.

But "more fish" nearly always equates to even worse problems. Too many hatchery salmon can lead to corruption of gene pools, over-fishing on natural stocks and over-grazing of finite and fragile ocean pastures, to mention just a few things wrong with this "solution." When you hear someone say hatcheries are a cure-all, ask them to explain why Oregon and Washington have so few salmon.

LES PALMER
AN OUTDOOR VIEW

"More fish" often means lower market prices, which means fishermen have to catch more fish to earn the same amount of money. And while they're catching more sockeye salmon in their back-to-back openings, they're also catching more king and silver salmon than they would in a season like the one just past, which was considered "average."

"More fish" doesn't even eliminate sport-fishing problems. Fishery managers know all too well that "more fish" equates to crowded fisheries. Consider what happened during the Glacier Bay and Exxon Valdez oil spills, when most of the Kenai sockeyes were allowed upstream. The solid line of salmon migrating upstream attracted a solid line of anglers that trampled miles of fragile banks into oblivion. The crowds trespassed on private property, created friction between residents and non-residents, and pushed governmental agencies beyond their abilities to enforce laws and maintain facilities.

Fewer people would alleviate some problems, but "more fish" definitely wouldn't — contrary to what some political candidates would have us believe. No candidate would dare advocate fewer people, at least not one who expected to win.

You'll also hear politicians and would-be politicians say, "There are enough fish for everybody." Don't you believe it. This is one of those feel-good statements that is meant to appeal to all and offend none. It really means: "I don't understand this issue, so I'm making it a non-issue. Just vote for me, and I'll make certain everyone gets enough fish."

In Cook Inlet, the only significant fish that presently is "enough fish for everybody" is the humpback salmon. There aren't enough other salmon for the drift fleet, let alone the set-netters, the personal-use gill-netters, the personal-use dip-netters and the sport fishermen. Take one fish away from any of these groups and the other groups will feel the loss and let out a howl.

Obviously, there aren't enough king and silver salmon for Kenai River anglers, or bag limits would be more generous and regulations less onerous. And what about the numerous restrictions on guided anglers? If there are enough salmon for everybody, why can't guided anglers fish on Sundays and Mondays? Why are they restricted to fishing only between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.?

As long as greed and selfishness are part of the human condition, there can never be "enough fish for everybody."

There are those among us who suggest that we could learn a few things from the local aboriginal people, who survived by sharing with one another. I suggest that we are all aboriginals of somewhere, and we are constantly learning and teaching one another. But learning is a mistake-ridden process that never ends. And besides, are we expected to believe that the aboriginals didn't fight over fish?

Like sea gulls, human beings will fight over fish. Call it animal instinct, but it's more than that. It's also competition. And the competition isn't only between different user-groups. It exists within each group — set-netter against set-netter, dip-netter against dip-netter, angler against angler. And it's a contest that is usually nowhere near as violent as the average soccer or football game.

Let's face it. We who fish love a good fight over the object of our affections. The battle over fish, like the battle between the sexes, is eternal. May it rage on forever, unabated. If the feuding ends, it will be because there are no fish worth fighting for.

Les Palmer is a free-lance outdoor writer who lives in Sterling.

Cheering from sidelines

Dear Editor,

I want to set the record straight regarding the Cook Inlet Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC). Cook Inlet Keeper is one of the many groups and individuals with strong concerns about CIRCAC's recertification.

Years ago, Alaska Center for the Environment was one of the original supporters of establishing CIRCAC. In the wake of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, CIRCAC was established to be a watchdog to ensure that the development and transport of oil in Cook Inlet would be done in an environmentally sound manner.

We soon learned that CIRCAC was more of a lap-dog than a watchdog — and we long ago withdrew our support for its recertification. CIRCAC is too beholden to the oil industry for its day-to-day funding. The makeup of its membership has long been tilted toward those with a vested interest in doing nothing to protect the environment.

We support a balance between oil development and environmental protection. This means that certain environmentally sensitive areas where oil development cannot occur safely should be kept off limits, while in other areas it should be developed with the highest environmental safeguards and monitoring.

CIRCAC has a poor track record of supporting these important safeguards or independently monitoring oil activities.

One solution is to require the Coast Guard to do its job to enforce the Oil Pollution Control Act of 1990. Because if there is a major spill in Cook Inlet, people are ultimately going to ask: where was the Coast Guard and what did it do to protect the public interest?

As another solution, we suggest that a new organization be formed similar to the Regional Citizens Advisory Council (RCAC), the group which monitors oil activities in Prince William Sound. RCAC has made some real headway in prodding the industry to better safeguards.

Meanwhile, Cook Inlet Keeper, keep up the good work!

Kevin Harun, Executive Director
Alaska Center for the Environment

Not well enough informed

Dear Editor,

I was very disappointed in the failure of the Homer Tribune, the Homer News and the other local news media to attend the recent board meeting of the Cook Inlet Region Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC) in Homer. Approximately 50 people from all different points of view attended and participated.

CIRCAC's mission is: "... to ensure the safe operation of the oil terminals, tankers and facilities in Cook Inlet so that environmental impacts associated with the oil industry are minimized."

I have served as the Environmental Representative on CIRCAC for the last several years. There are those in the environmental community who believe they should boycott CIRCAC. However, I believe that the environmental positions should be presented, regardless of the reception. My term expires in February of 1999 and I would encourage the environmental groups to replace me with a good representative of the environmental community. Notices have been sent to environmental organizations for their input and nominations.

By way of clarification, CIRCAC is on record as supporting tanker escorts in Cook Inlet, as is the City of Homer. All of the information presented to CIRCAC concludes that preventing oil entering the water is the best policy. The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council advises the risk has been reduced by 75 percent in the sound primarily because of tanker escorts. With the tides, icing and winds in Cook Inlet, we should have equal tanker escort protection. We have already had one major spill in Cook Inlet and the Exxon Valdez spill had major adverse effects on Cook Inlet.

CIRCAC is currently funded at the rate of $600,000 per year. However, the participating companies should be funding CIRCAC at the rate of $1 million annually per the federal legislation so that CIRCAC can more adequately perform its monitoring responsibilities.

The Environmental Monitoring Committee of CIRCAC (EMC) is instructed "... to insure that the environmental quality of Cook Inlet is not compromised or degraded by the operation of oil facilities and vessels." Faced with an absence of baseline data, sites potentially carrying hydrocarbons were identified, including Kenai river sites and other locations in Cook Inlet. Numerous studies have been conducted and are in progress. Call Susan Saupe, our science advisor, at 283-7222 for more information. EMC also participated in the Cook Inlet Watershed Conference. The Prevention, Response, Operations and Safety Committee (PROPS) works to minimize risks and impacts associated with oil production and transportation.

The board of directors includes representatives of Alaska Native organizations, Municipality of Anchorage, recreational interest groups, Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak Island boroughs, cities of Kenai, Kodiak, Seldovia and Homer, aquaculture associations, State Chamber of Commerce, environmental interest groups, and commercial interest groups. More interest groups are represented on the committees.

I would encourage the media to become better informed on CIRCAC.

James C. Hornaday
Environmental Representative, CIRCAC

CEC ...

From page 1

— an eight-foot dam — that will be constructed this winter across Power Creek about two miles up from the existing road, said Fischer.

Water diverted by the dam will go into about 700 feet of seven-foot-diameter high pressure pipe, which will shoot the water down a 3,000-foot, nine-foot-diameter tunnel. The water will come out of the tunnel into 2,500 more feet of pipeline on the other side of a bridge to be built across Power Creek. Then the water will go into a powerhouse that will house two turbo impulse turbines, which will convert the water into energy. From there, the electricity will travel through two miles of transmission line buried under Power Creek Road and through five miles of cable across Lake Eyak to the CEC substation at the Eyak Power Plant.

Each turbine will create three megawatts — 3,000 kilowatts — of power per hour, for a total of 6,000 kilowatts. Cordova's peak electricity demand is currently at 5,900 kilowatts.

The power plant is designed to operate in remote conditions and is fully automatic, Fischer said, so the plant won't have to be constantly manned.

Eagle Contracting and Wilson Construction, in a joint venture, are currently building the two miles of access road through the Chugach Mountains to Surprise Valley, where the dam will be built. Another half-mile of road leading from the end of Power Creek Road to the power house site and a parking lot will also be built.

Don Sjostedt of Eagle started brushing the area last Wednesday and started clearing trees and leveling some hillside on Thursday.

"If winter doesn't set in too soon, we hope to be done by Nov. 15," Sjostedt said. "But we're doing it right and making sure we're not destroying too much."

The state Department of Transportation has agreed to improve Power Creek Road, which is currently washed out between Power Creek and Hatchery Creek. DOT commission Joe Perkins visited the site last Thursday.

The whole project will take about a year and a half to complete, Fischer said.

The turbines, which come from England, and the generators, from Wisconsin, will all take a year or so to order and build.

Jennifer L. Strange/Times photo

Jon Stavig, left, president of Cordova Electric Cooperative, breaks ground on CEC's Power Creek hydroelectric project last Thursday. Also at the event were project engineer Thom Fischer, center, and Cordova mayor Ed Zeine.

CEC breaks ground on Power Creek hydroelectric project

By Jennifer L. Strange
The Cordova Times

Calling last Thursday's clear sky and sun-speckled Chugach Mountains a "perfect backdrop" for a ground-breaking, Chugach Electric Cooperative and city officials dug their copper shovels into the dirt to commemorate the first day of construction on CEC's Power Creek hydroelectric project.

CEC hopes to decrease Cordova's dependence on diesel fuel and lower electricity costs by up to 10 cents per kilowatt by changing to hydro power.

The project, which has been in the works for a number of years, was started immediately after permits were put into place by Whitewater Engineering, the Bellingham, Wash., firm hired by CEC to manage the permitting process and design and build the facility.

Twenty-four agencies, including the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Forest Service, Eyak Corp., Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the state Department of Natural Resources had to be contacted and pleased to acquire the required Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's permit, said engineer Thom Fischer.

Whitewater was also required to create an Applicant Prepared Environmental Assessment as part of the FERC licensing. Environmental impacts of the project on fish, wildlife and birds were studied, Fischer said.

As a result of the studies, Whitewater redesigned some aspects of the project, including moving the power house and water intake as far upstream from Lake Eyak as possible.

"We moved it five times and now it's at the uppermost limit of the salmon spawning habitat of Power Creek," Fischer said. "We're balancing power, fish and the environment and because of that we had to move the intake up into Surprise Valley to make the project feasible."

The finished product will consist of a "small diversion structure"

See CEC, page 3

THE CORDOVA TIMES
OCTOBER 8, 1998

Road rider likely target of veto

By Jennifer L. Strange
The Cordova Times

The Clinton Administration has voiced its opposition to the inclusion of the Chugach road rider in a new omnibus National Parks bill and its probable inclusion in the Senate Interior Appropriations Bill. A House bill including the rider was passed July 22.

The rider would grant Chugach Alaska Corp. a 250-foot wide easement across the eastern Copper River Delta into CAC land holdings near Carbon Mountain and in the Bering River and Katalla vicinities. The easement can be used for "economic development," including CAC's planned timber harvest of 8,000 acres of old growth spruce and hemlock.

An Oct. 5 Statement of Administration Policy said President Clinton's senior advisors will recommend that the parks bill — H.R. 4570, introduced by Rep. James Hansen, R-Utah, — be vetoed because it includes many provisions that would cause "grave harm to the Nation's natural

See Veto, page 6

Veto ...

From page 1

resources."

The Carbon Mountain legislation was singled out by the administration as a provision which would "grant an irrevocable and perpetual easement over environmentally sensitive lands in the Chugach National Forest, Alaska, to the Chugach Alaska Corp., thereby overriding the provisions of the 1982 Settlement Agreement with the Corporation's predecessor organization."

The administration's opposition to the parks bill mimics its opposition to environmental riders attached to H.R. 4193 and S.B. 2237, the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

A Sept. 29 policy statement from Clinton's advisors to Senator Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, said the Administration "strongly objects" to any provision imposing a road easement across the Chugach National Forest.

The provision would be inconsistent with the 1982 existing agreement, "thereby preventing the Government from making modifications to protect the environment while authorizing environmentally damaging management practices and undermining an ongoing discussion to determine road access options based on the latest survey and environmental analysis," said the statement.

Opposition to the appropriations bill has also come from the Congressional Black Caucus, Alaskan and national environmental groups, the Copper River Salmon Producers Association, the Eyak Traditional Elders Council and a newly-formed bipartisan group of Congress members led by Congressman Sherwood Boehlert, R-N.Y.

The CAC legislation was originally initiated by Alaska Rep. Don Young, who has argued that it is necessary to guarantee CAC access to its land, which was granted by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. Young said the federal government is obligated to provide easement over National Forest land and that the 1982 CNI agreement and the 1990 memorandum of understanding with the Forest Service aren't sufficient guarantees.

"The easement has not been honored and the federal government has not committed to issuing the easement by a time-certain date," said a Committee on Natural Resources statement. Young is the chair of the committee. "This represents bad faith, and is tantamount to breaking an Indian Treaty. The legislation grants the easement and expressly requires compliance with environmental law."

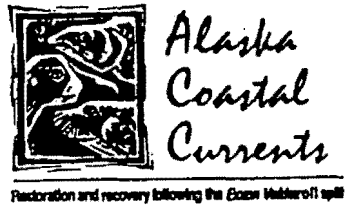
Population Declines 80 Percent In 20 Years...

Prince William Sound Harbor Seals: Where Have They Gone?

By Jody Seitz
Alaska Coastal Currents

Harbor seal populations in Prince William Sound were already doing poorly before the 1989 oil spill, which killed an estimated 300 seals outright. Ecosystem changes rank number one among theories for the decline. Through the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, hunters have become a critical link in research to determine why the harbor seal population has dropped about 80 percent over the last 20 years.

For years after the spill, harbor seal hunters reported seeing abnormalities in seal tissues and livers, but there was no formal way to collect samples from the seals and have them processed. Research on seals was also stymied by a lengthy permitting process, which non-Native biologists had to pursue in order to collect tissue samples for analysis.



Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

That began to change in 1994, with amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Congress gave the Secretary of the Interior authority to enter into agreements with Alaska Native organizations for co-management of subsistence uses of marine mammals.

The decline in seals and the potential for more regulated hunting stimulated the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to carry out research on harbor seal use throughout the seal's range in Alaska. Through a series of meetings with hunters and scientists, the ADF&G Subsistence Division led an effort for hunters and biologists to discuss human use of seals, along with current life history, distribution and abundance data. The Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission arose out of those meetings. Monica Riedel of Cordova, previously a member of the Sea Otter Commission, stepped forward to serve as its first director.

Reidel felt the need for Alaska Natives to be involved in research and management. "We need to be involved, because any decision about harbor seals directly affects us," she said.

Nineteen Alaska Native tribes belong to the statewide commission, which has representatives from the Aleutians, Bristol Bay, Cook Inlet, Chugach Region, Kodiak, and Southeastern Alaska.

Since its inception, Riedel has worked with state biologists to train hunters and young people from Ketchikan to Akutan to collect samples from their subsistence hunts for science. High school students accompany their elders on their hunts, and when a seal is taken, collect the samples and record data about the seal. Seal meat is widely distributed in the traditional way, but now tissues are sent to scientists all over the world.

In June, the commission met in Fairbanks. Hunters were invited to tour the mammology collection at the University of Alaska Museum to see samples they helped create.

Founding member Mitch Simeonoff of Akhiok, was there. "We went to the museum and then to the university where they keep our samples. That was fantastic," he said.

The most interesting part of the Fairbanks trip for Simeonoff was the mammology museum. "I didn't realize they had that many animals," Simeonoff said. "They had skeletons of all the mammals we have - walrus, seals, whales - and some of them were really old."

Harbor seals have also declined around Akhiok. "The people have noticed it," he said.

The commission and the National Marine Fisheries Service signed an umbrella agreement in August of 1997, describing how the co-management agreement process will take place. "It's looking more and more like a partnership," said Riedel.

Steve Zimmerman, NMFS Regional Director, agreed that harbor seal management changes are occurring relatively smoothly. "We have a common goal of doing the best thing for harbor seals and allowing subsistence to continue," he said.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
OCTOBER 6, 1998

Jury clears Veco in suit tied to spill

Native corporation sued over looting of ancient site

By RACHEL D'ORO
Daily News reporter

Veco Inc. is not liable for workers who vandalized and looted ancient archaeological sites in a secluded bay during cleanup of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, a federal court jury said Monday.

Fishermen hired by Veco were soley responsible for the damage done to three Koniag archaeological sites on Afognak Island, the jury said. The landowner, Afognak Native Corp., had sued Veco Inc. for $1.1 million to cover damages and lost artifacts.

After deliberating for half a day, jurors sided with Veco, saying the company didn't have enough control over the fishermen to be held accountable. The fishermen worked on the 38-foot Shearwater, one of five fishing vessels chartered by Veco to scoop up clumps of oil with dipnets.

"We're very pleased," Jack Miller, an attorney representing Veco, said in a phone interview. "Veco had no responsibility for protecting Native cultural resources, and clearly, the jury believed that."

Russell Winner, an attorney for the Native corporation, said his client was disappointed in the verdict and is considering an appeal.

The case was among many leftovers still in court nearly a decade after the 11 million-gallon oil spill in Prince William Sound. Some of the oil from the March 24, 1989, spill was carried by currents to Afognak Island, which is just north of Kodiak.

Initially, Exxon was listed as a defendant with Veco. But it settled the claim in 1995.

Veco had a contract with

Please see Page B-2, VECO

VECO: Jury clears company in suit stemming from Exxon Valdez cleanup

Continued from Page B-1

Exxon to hire five fish seiners out of Kodiak, Winner told jurors at the start of the trial last week. In a phone interview Monday, he said Veco had full authority over the fleets and was aware of the archaeological richness of the area.

"They knew from the beginning of the cleanup that workers might be tempted to loot the archaeological sites," Winner said.

Veco had contended that no one saw anyone vandalize the sites. No one saw anyone take any artifacts and no artifacts were ever found. No one ever admitted taking anything, and no criminal charges were ever filed.

Winner said the Shearwater was the only vessel in the bay when someone took shovels to the sites in late July 1989. Deep holes were dug, causing extensive damage, according to Winner.

No one knows what was taken. During the trial, Winner said the looted sites were once homes inhabited 500 to 700 years ago by the Koniag, who left behind sophisticated tools, pottery and artwork.

"These were unexplored archaeological sites," he said Monday. "They were sleeping museums."

"These were unexplored archaeological sites. They were sleeping museums."

— Russell Winner, attorney

Reporter Rachel D'Oro can be reached at rd'oro@adn.com.

Scientists use drifting buoys to ath of herring larvae

THE CORDOVA TIMES
OCTOBER 8, 1998

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

The mysterious currents of Prince William Sound are beginning to come into focus. Data from drifting buoys released in 1996 and 1997 have helped identify the major currents that would carry plankton or, perhaps, spilled oil around the Sound. Now a new group of nine drifter buoys released in May is showing the more subtle complexities of currents within some bays. Scientists are hoping to learn more about the Sound's circulation, especially how tiny herring larvae end up in bays and stay there.

Dr. Shari Vaughan, oceanographer with the Prince William Sound Science Center, is the principal investigator for the project, which is part of an ecosystem study of pink salmon and herring production in Prince William Sound.

Buoys have several advantages over a standard oceanographic cruise. They are objective, unbiased tracers of ocean currents. They transmit data continuously for weeks or months. And they are cost-effective. The buoys cost $2,200 each. Most dedicated oceanographic research vessels cost $12,000 to $15,000 per day to charter.

The buoys also produce results promptly. The buoys released in May quickly confirmed some previously suspected circulation patterns. The release of all nine buoys was timed to coincide with the hatching of herring spawn and the emergence of billions of larvae.

Each buoy is attached to a large canvas sack, or drogue, that measures the currents 13 to 17 meters down. The buoys transmit their position and the water temperature every two hours to a satellite which then sends the data to a processing center in France called ARGOS, which relays it to the Science Center in Cordova by e-mail.

The buoys were released between Hell's Hole and St. Matthew's Bay in Port Gravina, historically one of the areas where spawn is the thickest. As of Aug. 11, seven buoys were still transmitting their positions. Two were in the central part of the Sound, one exited Hinchinbrook Entrance and made it all the way to Cook Inlet, and four were still within the grip of Port Gravina.

"What these things have told us so far is that there is something retaining them in at least Port Gravina in the springtime," said Vaughan.

In addition to testing circulation models of Prince William Sound, these buoys also may help scientists compare herring stocks in the Sound to herring stocks along the southern Kenai Peninsula. "The fact that these drifters, especially from northeast Prince William Sound, could escape (the Sound) and stop at every little bay along the southern Kenai until they reach Cook Inlet might have some implications for herring stock relationships."

Vaughan will let the buoys drift until they no longer transmit their position, which could be as long as six months.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

THE SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
OCTOBER 8, 1998

SeaLife Center gets coastal learning center designation

The Alaska SeaLife Center has been named a Coastal America Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center, one of nine such facilities in the country, a press release from the SeaLife Center said. Coastal America is a partnership of federal agencies working to protect America's coastal resources.

On hand at the SeaLife Center to commemorate the designation were Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere in the Department of Commerce Terry Garcia, Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Mike Navarre, Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Executive Director Molly McCammon and many other federal, state and local dignitaries. Also among the more than 100 people at the ceremony were representatives from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Interior and Transportation, Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, the Environmental Protection Agency and the state Division of Governmental Coordination.

As part of its designation as a Learning Center and its cooperation with Coastal America federal partners, the SeaLife Center will receive educational videos, CDs, printed material, seminar exchange programs, links with agency web sites, database access, and marine research reports and publications, the release said.

Leslie Peart, the SeaLife Center's education director said, "This designation highlights our educational achievements while reinforcing our commitment to public education and support of the marine environment."

According to the SeaLife Center, Coastal America is an action-oriented partnership that includes many federal agencies. By combining the resources of federal, regional and local agencies it enables national policy issues to be identified and resolved, regional plans to be developed and local projects implemented.

"The Coastal America designation of the Alaska SeaLife Center can only be described as a landmark public/private partnership for environmental education," said Virginia Tippie, director of Coastal America. "This new partnership will provide national prominence to the center's already important role in educating the public on the value of the coastal environment."

THE HOMER NEWS
OCTOBER 8, 1998

Editorial

Oil industry watchdog needs a looking at

Allegations that the 7-year-old Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council is failing to do its job overseeing the Inlet's oil industry are unsettling.

The organization was mandated by Congress after the Exxon Valdez oil spill as a way to prevent spills and prepare for new ones. It comprises industry and community representatives, including one seat appointed by Homer.

Paul McCollum, a biologist who was Homer's most recent representative, resigned earlier this year after he encountered resistance to his effort to raise concerns he said were important to the Homer area, such as exploring the idea of emergency standby tugs to assist oil tankers if needed in the Inlet's treacherous waters.

The allegations of ineffectiveness were raised by Bob Shavelson, head of the Homer-based Cook Inlet Keeper, whose mandate is to oversee the health of the Inlet. He based his allegations in part of an unsent letter penned by Bryan Mac Lean, the former executive director of CIRCAC who also resigned earlier this year. The letter was highly critical of the organization, saying it had failed to set goals, avoided long-term planning and was driven by personal agendas.

Jim Carter, interim director of CIRCAC, has called Mac Lean's allegations "absolutely false." The charge that CIRCAC is undermined by oil industry interests is hard to support, he indicated, given the fact that the CIRCAC board includes members representing not just the oil industry but municipalities, the fishing industry, recreation, tourism and the environment. Those interests are diverse and aren't about to roll over to the oil industry, he said.

Possibly at stake is whether CIRCAC will remain in its present form. If the U.S. Coast Guard fails to renew CIRCAC's charter annually, the Coast Guard itself might take over direct oversight in its place.

The Coast Guard is looking into the allegations. For the sake of proponents and opponents of CIRCAC, that is a good thing. And it is a good thing for those communities that could suffer greatly if a preventable spill occurred in the Inlet because of problems within CIRCAC.

The Exxon Valdez oil spill traumatized much of Alaska, including residents and communities on or near the Inlet, which saw some of the spilt oil despite the distance it had to travel. If there is division within the ranks of CIRCAC, the underlying problems need to be aired and explored and discussed and subjected to scrutiny, particularly public scrutiny.

It would also behoove Jim Carter to stop complaining about how the Mac Lean letter saw the light of day and start looking at why his organization has the problems it has. The fact that a former executive director of CIRCAC penned such a letter, whether it was ever sent or not, is astounding. And if a stamp of "confidential" is all it takes to keep such a letter hidden from public view, then the use of such a stamp needs to be addressed.

If we want to put this into some kind of legal analogy, there is probable cause that something is wrong with CIRCAC. The organization may eventually be exonerated, but there's enough reason now to take a hard look at how it's doing its job. Cook Inlet Keeper and the letter-leaker should not be condemned for bringing such an important concern to public light.

THE KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
OCTOBER 6, 1998

Veco cleared in looting suit

ANCHORAGE (AP) — A federal jury here has cleared Veco Inc. of any responsibility for workers accused of vandalizing and looting some archaeological sites during cleanup of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The jury said Monday that fishermen hired by Veco were wholly responsible for the damage done to three Koniag archaeological sites on Afognak Island.

Afognak Native Corp., the landowner, had sued Veco for $1.1 million to cover damages and lost artifacts.

But jurors sided with Veco after deliberating for half a day, saying the oil field service company didn't have enough control over the fishermen to be held accountable.

The fishermen allegedly had worked on one of five fishing vessels chartered by Anchorage-based Veco to scoop up clumps of oil with dipnets.

"We're very pleased," Jack Miller, an attorney representing Veco, told the Anchorage Daily News. "Veco had no responsibility for protecting Native cultural resources, and clearly, the jury believed that."

Russell Winner, an attorney for the Native corporation, said his client was disappointed in the verdict and was considering an appeal.

The case was among many leftovers still in court nearly a decade after the 11-million-gallon oil spill in Prince William Sound. Some of the oil from the March 24, 1989, spill was carried by currents to Afognak Island, which is just north of Kodiak.

Initially, Exxon was listed as a defendant with Veco. But it settled the claim in 1995.

THE KODIAK DAILY MIRROR

VOL. 58 NO. 195 MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1998 KODIAK, ALASKA

Kristi Langenbacher photo

Rock scientists

Kodiak High School earth science students give information to Jonathan Sanchez, seated, to enter into the computer as instructor Eric Linscheid, left, looks on. The class took a field trip to Marine Hill near Women's Bay Friday to work on a project using field data to study rock formations and plate tectonic activity in Alaska.

ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
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Exxon Valdez claims program earns approval

From staff and wire reports

SEATTLE — District Judge H. Russel Holland has approved a new claims program for certain recoveries obtained by plaintiffs in litigation arising from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The Supplemental Claims program will disburse about $25 million in settlement funds and serve as a basis for eventually distributing amounts recovered in connection with the $5 billion punitive damages verdict reached in the 1994 federal court trial. Exxon is currently appealing that judgment.

The court initially approved claim forms for 11 of 51 claim categories. The approved claim categories are the class Native (subsistence) category and oiled salmon fisheries, which include: Prince William Sound salmon seine (S01E), Prince William Sound salmon drift (S03E), Prince William Sound salmon setnet (S04E), Cook Inlet salmon seine (S01H), Cook Inlet salmon drift (SO3H), Cook Inlet salmon setnet (SO4H), Kodiak salmon seine (S01K), Kodiak salmon beach seine (S02K), Kodiak salmon setnet (S04K), and Chignik salmon seine (S01L) claim categories.

Claim forms were mailed to known claimants by late September.

Any claimants in the 11 claim categories can call 1-800-EXSPILL for updated information or to request additional claim forms. All claimants who wish to assert a claim against the Exxon Qualified Settlement Fund in any of the 11 approved claim categories must submit a completed claim form to the EQSF, postmarked on or before Feb. 1, 1999, or will be forever barred from asserting a claim in the above referenced claim categories. Late claims will not be accepted.

The claims programs for the remaining claim categories will start after Holland approves them. The next group of claim categories to be submitted is expected to include oiled herring fisheries, cannery workers (those employed or would have been employed in a cannery in 1989), and real property owners.

The administrator can be contacted by writing: Lynn Lincoln Sarko, Exxon Qualified Settlement Fund, P.O. Box 21945, Seattle 94111.

PLAYING WITH DOLLIES

Biologists' study tracks wanderings of radio-tagged Kenai Dolly Varden

By CRAIG MEDRED
Daily News outdoor editor

KENAI PENINSULA — A cold rain knocks yellow willow leaves into a tiny clear-water tributary to Quartz Creek as yet another Dolly Varden char inhales the orange egg fly at the end of Shane Nicholson's line.

Several fat, multicolored Dollies 14 to 18 inches long are already finning in a live box on the stream bank. After a half-dozen runs and a couple of jumps, this fish will be gently netted and brought to join them.

This is catch-and-release fly-fishing of a unique sort.

Before these fish go back in the water, they will be implanted with radio transmitters making it possible to track them for a year or two, maybe three, as they drop out of this stream into Quartz Creek and from there Kenai Lake.

Nobody knows for sure where they'll go after that. One fish fitted with a radio a year ago has already made a remarkable journey.

It left Quartz Creek, traveled dozens of miles through Kenai Lake and upper Kenai River to Skilak Lake, crossed the lake, dropped 50 miles down the Kenai River to Cook Inlet, swam 15 to 20 miles through the Inlet to the Kasilof River, went dozens of miles up the Kasilof into 25-mile-long Tustumena Lake, spent some time there and then retraced its journey back into the Kenai watershed.

So far, said research biologist Doug Palmer of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, no other radio-tagged Dolly from the Kenai drainage has traveled farther. But other fish have moved considerable distances.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Doug Palmer and Alaska Department of Fish and Game technician Rob Massengill work on a Dolly Varden.

Palmer slips an eight-gram transmitter into the belly of a Dolly Varden.

Working with biologist Larry Larson of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Palmer is in the middle of a three-year study aimed at learning the life history of Kenai Dollies. The biologists hope to one day get an estimate of how many Dollies inhabit Alaska's most-popular river system.

Downstream from Nicholson and a couple of other Fish and Game technicians armed with fly-rods on this day, Palmer plays fish surgeon.

Spread out in a container of antiseptic next to the river are his scalpels, forceps, radios and suture. Another live box holds water laced with a fish-numbing anesthetic.

Larson — assisting along with technician Rob Massengill — nets a feisty Dolly from the live box and slips it into the anesthetic. It fins there quietly for a moment before growing sluggish and rolling on its side.

Palmer measures its length, records it in a rainproof notebook and then clips off a fin for DNA studies.

That piece of fin will one day help geneticists determine whether Kenai Dollies are part of one, huge, interbreeding population or whether the population is made up of several small, independent populations linked to their natal streams.

With the fin slice safely in a plastic bag, Palmer scoops out the fish and slips it into a fish-holding cradle. As he bends over the char's abdomen, Massengill sits near its head, using a turkey baster to keep water flowing over the fish's gills so it won't suffocate.

Now and then, he shoots in a squirt of

DOLLIES: Biologists track wanderings of Dolly Varden

Continued from Page F-1

anesthetic-laced water to keep the Dolly calm.

Working quickly but carefully, Palmer carves an inch-long opening in the char's belly. A trickle of blood runs down its sides.

Palmer inserts a flat, feeler blade into the opening and then pokes a long, hollow needle into the char's belly farther back between the anal fin and the pelvic fins.

Feeling gently with the flat blade inside the fish, he finds the point of the needle and guides it out through the opening in the abdomen.

Larson, standing by nervously, glances at his watch. Several minutes have passed. Palmer slides the long, plastic antennae of the radio into the hollow needle, and then slides both needle and antenna out behind the fish.

The antenna is left hanging behind, looking like a heavy piece of monofilament line. Palmer slips the 2-inch radio into the char's belly and nudges it into a comfortable position.

He closes the opening with three quick sutures, smears them over with a blue glue to prevent water from getting into the char's abdomen before the wound heals, blows on the quick-drying glue to further speed the drying process, and then slides the fish out of the cradle into the recovery box.

"6:38," Larson says, jotting the time in a rainproof notebook.

Inside the recovery box, the radio-fitted Dolly is already shaking off the effects of the anesthetic as Palmer begins work on another fish. By the time he is done with Dolly No. 2, the first fish will be finning about the recovery box as if nothing had happened.

Larson will net it, ease it into an eddy and watch it swim away to assume its role in this wide-ranging science experiment.

Already, a few interesting discoveries have been made about Kenai Dollies.

Most of them, for instance, winter beneath the Skilak Lake ice.

In June, many head down the Kenai River to meet the first king salmon returning from the sea. The Dollies follow those fish far up into the Killey River drainage and Benjamin Creek in the heart of the Kenai Mountains.

Eggs of king and red salmon, which enter the Kenai over the course of the summer, are a mainstay of the Dollies' diet, biologists have concluded.

But they don't know everything about what these fish eat.

Do Dollies feed heavily on the flesh of decaying salmon, like the Kenai's rainbow trout?

Based on stomach samples biologists have examined so far, Larson doesn't think so. But he's not sure.

Biologists also don't know if the Dollies feed on something in Skilak Lake through the winter or struggle along on fat reserves. Scientists aren't sure how many of the fish are truly anadromous, either.

So far only the one of 80 radio-tagged fish ventured into Cook Inlet, leading Palmer to suspect the number of sea-run char is small.

"Largely these fish in the upper watershed appear to be resident," Palmer said. "There's no need for the Kenai Dollies to go to sea. There's so much food available" in fresh water.

But the Dollies appear to range widely in the search for that food. Fish previously radio-tagged moved almost constantly each summer between the Killey and Kenai rivers, and Kenai and Skilak lakes, the largest lakes in the

Kenai River drainage.

"That area between the two lakes is a major transportation corridor," Palmer said. "The population is always in flux."

Or, more specifically, radio-tagged fish at least 14 inches long are constantly in flux there. Less clear is where the smaller fish concentrate, how they move or how many are in the Kenai. The biologists say it is too dangerous to fish smaller than 14 inches to try to implant them with the two-inch radio transmitters.

Thus, they are forced to depend on mature fish for all of their data.

So far, those fish have helped identify the Dollies' major spawning areas and key feeding areas. But less important spawning grounds and feeding spots are still being discovered across the huge range of the Kenai Dolly population.

Not counting the char that went to sea and called Tustumena Lake home for a time, these fish appear to range all the way from the Snow River near Seward to Beaver Creek near Soldotna.

The fish spend much of their summer roaming the big, rolling Kenai River, but they spend some time in tiny streams, too — particularly as spawning approaches in the fall.

"They can travel through Skilak Lake in a day easily if they want," Palmer said. "I think they swim up (tributaries) as far as they want. In Copper Creek; (spawners) swim up until they run out of water."

"It seems like they have a destination," Larson said, "but they don't necessarily stay."

Populations that anglers consider stable based on good fishing at certain times of year may not be stable at all. From the work done by Palmer and Larson, it appears those populations are made up of a constantly shifting mix of fish.

Food, not surprisingly, appears to motivate many moves.

"They're opportunistic creatures," Palmer said. "A lot of these upper-river fish we find go to the lower river below Skilak Lake" to feed.

Gathering downstream from the lake, they gorge on the eggs of spawning red salmon in late summer and early fall. Some of the Dollies may feed there until winter, but others start to move toward spawning grounds by late August.

"They definitely don't spawn ever year," Palmer said, but how often they spawn and how many times they can spawn before dying remains unknown.

The fish are thought to mature at age 4 or 5 and live another six or seven years at most.

Their main predator appears to be eagles, said Palmer, who has recovered a few radio transmitters from trees in the Kenai watershed.

Palmer, who studied the movements of Kenai rainbow trout earlier in the decade, said Dollies are far more complicated creatures.

But these colorful, polka-dotted relics of the Ice Ages share one thing with the salmonids of the West Coast: They usually return to the streams of their birth to spawn.

On a tiny Quartz Creek tributary, a 20-inch male — his spots glowing pink on a dark green body — can be seen moving toward a spawning bed. He will spill his milt over the eggs of a hen and then drop back to Kenai Lake and probably farther down to Skilak Lake for the winter.

No one will see him go, but Palmer and Larson will be tracking his every move.

Photo by Bill Roth / Anchorage Daily News

[illegible] radio-tracking [illegible] Wildlife Service [illegible]

BILL ROTH

The transmitter antenna can be seen extending from the lower portion of this Dolly Varden.

Kachemak Bay designated NOAA research reserve

THE PENINSULA CLARION
OCTOBER 2-3, 1998

By SHANA LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

The Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is easier to explain than to pronounce. It's a project to send more federal science and education funding toward the southern Kenai Peninsula.

The rich bay is about to join 22 other areas in a national network of study areas, organized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and managed cooperatively by federal and state agencies. It will be the network's largest reserve.

Private and governmental organizations have worked on the project for several years. On Saturday they will mark their success with "A Community Celebration for Wildlife of Sea and Shore" in Homer.

Activities begin Friday evening from 5 to 7 with a reception for artists at the Alaska Maritime Refuge Visitor Center, at 451 Sterling Highway. Works on display will include murals and banners by Homer artists Conrad Field, Carla Stanley and Barbara Meyers, and the first Alaska exhibit of original seabird paintings by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service artist Bob Hines. Refreshments will be served.

More activities are planned for Saturday.

The 220-foot survey vessel Rainier, used for NOAA research voyages, will visit the port of Homer and be open for public tours from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the ferry dock on the Homer Spit.

The refuge visitor center will be open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for family fun celebrating National Wildlife Refuge Week. Kids can make bird feeders, play bird

See HOMER, back page

...Homer

Continued from page A-1

guessing games, become junior rangers or be photographed with Paul Puffin. All items in the center's gift shop will be on sale.

A new boardwalk for interpretive nature walks at the Beluga Slough estuary also will be dedicated. The boardwalk belongs to the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge which plans to build a new visitors center on adjacent property. At 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. naturalists will lead walks along the slough trail and at Bishop's Beach Park. The boardwalk dedication is set for 4 p.m. at the park.

The official ceremony dedicating the research reserve begins at 5 p.m. at the Homer Elks Lodge at 215 W. Jenny Lane. A community potluck and celebration immediately follows. Visitors are encouraged to bring side dishes or salads to share.

Julia Parrish, a University of Washington researcher, will give a keynote speech titled "Muddy Waters and Rosy Futures: Science, People and Resource Management." The Paul Banks Elementary School choir will provide entertainment. Other guests include Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Frank Rue, Homer author Nancy Lord and Jay Nelson, a special assistant to Gov. Tony Knowles.

Kachemak Bay becomes largest U.S. estuarine research reserve

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — People who live near Kachemak Bay long have relished its abundant wildlife, from mussel-munching sea otters to tidepool starfish. After six years, a mixed bag of conservationists, politicians and business people have convinced federal and state leaders that the bay really is something special.

Today it will become Alaska's first — and the nation's largest — estuarine research reserve.

The designation means at least three, and possibly more, state researchers will set up shop around Homer to catalog what's known about the complicated ecosystem and to study it further.

"It's probably one of the best things to happen here in years," said Will Files, past president of the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies. "When we started the process, we didn't know what the heck it was, but it's turning into a wonderful thing."

At 365,000 acres, the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve starts at the bay's mouth near Anchor Point and includes all of its waters, as well as Kachemak Bay State Park.

It will be the 23rd such reserve established in the United States since the 1972 passage of the Coastal Zone Management Act.

"I'm not sure, but I think this (reserve) contains more land-water mass than all the others put together," Files said. "I think the next biggest one is 170,000 acres somewhere."

An estuary begins where freshwater streams meet tidal saltwater from the sea.

Such places typically are loaded with wildlife, and Kachemak Bay is no exception, said Betsy Parry, a state habitat biologist involved in the creation of the reserve.

"It is extremely biologically rich because it's got all those different

Please see Page D-3, KACHEMAK

KACHEMAK: Bay is designated as research reserve

Continued from Page D-1

subsets of habitat types," Parry said. "It's got glacial rivers, it's got clear-water rivers, it's got an extensive salt marsh (at Fox River), it's got wonderful rocky intertidal habitat, it's got deep-water kelp."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration administers the national estuarine research reserve system, but state agencies operate each reserve.

In this case, the state Department of Fish and Game will hire a reserve manager, research coordinator and education coordinator and base them out of Homer.

No new regulations are involved in the designation. Rather, the goal is to learn as much as possible about the estuaries and make that information available to the public, Parry said.

The reserve's first project, already under way, is the compilation of all the existing data on Kachemak Bay. Researchers from all over the world have studied the place, but often they take their results home with them, Parry said. The reserve hopes to have the resulting data base on CD-ROM, available via the Internet, by April 2000.

A dedication ceremony at 5 p.m. today will cap a day-long combined celebration of National Wildlife Refuge week and National Estuary Day in Homer.

The dedication ceremony will be held at the Elks Club, 215 W. Jenny Lane. It will be followed by a potluck.

Reporter Jon Little can be reached at jlittle@adn.com.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
OCTOBER 2, 1998

Alaska science forum

By Carla Helfferich

This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Carla Helfferich is a science writer at the Institute.

There I was, tagging along with the Arctic Research Commission on a tour behind the scenes of the new Seward Sea Life Center, when I encountered an unexpected chance to follow up on an earlier column.

The center has handsome, informative displays and spectacular deep tanks that give observers a stunning view of some of Alaska's marine creatures. Puffins and other seabirds paddle about and dive deep in one huge tank while sea lions and harbor seals perform underwater ballet in others, all — from surface to bottom — in full sight of enthralled spectators. It's wonderful.

But the Sea Life Center is a bit like the tundra swans that float elsewhere on Alaska's waters: The movement you can see above the surface looks effortless, but there's a lot of hard work going on beneath. Underlying the public portion of the Sea Life Center is a spaceship's worth of life-support systems and a college's worth of laboratories. And in one of those labs, we found new Ph.D. George Divoky, hard at work.

Divoky's research in the Arctic on providing housing for black guillemots and checking their home-turf loyalty, mentioned in a column early this year, earned him a doctorate from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Now he's in Seward, constructing a new home for some relatives of his former subjects and checking on how different diets affect young seabirds' growth and health.

Pigeon guillemots, his present study subjects, were apparently hit hard by the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Their slow and only partial recovery worries biologists; one explanation suggests that some seabirds and mammals, such as sea lions, are suffering because they are eating less nutritious foods. Good food — that is, high-energy, fatty marine organisms — may be less readily available than it was some years ago, for reasons still being debated. As this hypothesis has it, a lot of Alaska sea life is being forced to subsist on the oceanic equivalent of popcorn and soft drinks.

So, to investigate this, Divoky has a flock of young pigeon guillemots growing up on controlled diets. The guillemots live in food-shipping buckets recycled from the Spring Creek prison on the other side of Resurrection Bay (a very economical ploy). We tourists watched while Divoky's student assistants proferred arrays of small fishes, sorted by species, to the birdlets. The food fishes are all imported from Outside (not so economical). Seward's local fisherfolk have not yet caught on to the income possible from supplying specific baitfish to the denizens of the Sea Life Center.

The young guillemots could earn someone a profit all by

themselves, since they seem to be always hungry. Divoky showed us a guillemot chick, an indignant ball of black fluff that spent the whole time out of its bucket trying to ingest his thumb. He showed us an older bird, a fully feathered juvenile nearly ready to leave the nest; it tried to gape its bill around his whole hand, and protested its failure to do so by pooping mightily on his shoes.

These pigeon guillemots are being observed and measured while they grow, and perhaps their reactions will help answer some of the questions now afloat in Alaska's seas. In autumn, the last one will leave its laboratory home.

Some may return to found a new colony. The other part of Divoky's project was to build another residential development for guillemots, this one a kind of condominium. A multi-family nest box now stands atop part of an old seaway just offshore of the center. Thanks to Fairbanks' natural-sound recordist Kathy Turco, it sounds like home: a CD playing what Divoky calls "Greatest Hits of the Pigeon Guillemots" provides the right background babble. It has decoy pigeon guillemots standing guard; their fiberglass feathers and black-and-white paint jobs were realistic enough to confuse a few hungry ravens, though briefly, and a distinguished ornithologist from California, for a bit longer. Maybe by spring, the manmade rookery will fool some real guillemots into moving in.

All In A Days Work...

Sea Otters Corralled, Tested

By Jody Seitz
Alaska Coastal Currents

On a calm cloudy day in early August, nine years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, I caught a ride with local Cordova pilot, Pat Kearney, out to the R/V Kittiwake, anchored just off the northern end of Knight Island. Researchers Jim Bodkin and Brenda Ballachey, of the U.S. Geological Survey, were winding up their final fieldwork for the Nearshore Vertebrate Predator (NVP) project.

The NVP project seeks to find out why some animals which live in the nearshore environment, where most of the crude oil was stranded in 1989, are not recovering. Is it a lack of food or is oil pollution continuing to cause problems for sea otters in the spill area?

Ballachey and Bodkin were there to capture and release 25 sea otters from northern Knight Island. To assess the health of the animals, researchers measure, weigh, and take blood samples. They compare the results of animals from oiled areas with those from unoiled areas to help build a picture of recovery.

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

and quiet. We could hear the trickle of water gently lapping against fucus, an eagle's occasional cry and the slight splash of small fish flipping on the water. We must have sounded like an invasion. Through all our whispers and efforts to move quietly, there was still the occasional clunk and radio call.

The first otter must have heard us coming and successfully evaded the dive team. However, about an hour later a loud shout echoed off the mountainsides. They'd found and captured a large male otter.

The entire sampling effort took about half an hour with the sea otter anesthetized and sleeping. The otter awakened within 30 seconds after being given an antidote for the anesthesia and was immediately dropped back in the water. Seven pairs of eyes watched until he broke the surface, periscoped and laid back, otter fashion, as though nothing had happened.

Bodkin's first-hand imp-ression of the otter populations in the southwestern sound is that they're increasing, but he has no explanation for why they've not returned to northern Knight Island.

Food doesn't appear to be a problem. Scientists with the NVP project say there are plenty of clams and mussels to support a larger population in Herring Bay. The long-term effect of chronic pollution on the animals and their population remains unknown.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

Sea otters tested last year had elevated levels of cytochrome P450-1A, a sign of recent exposure (within two weeks) to crude oil or to organochlorines such as PCB's. "We're finding that animals in this area around northern Knight Island have higher levels of this enzyme than animals in a non-oiled reference area down around Montague," Ballachey said.

This year, Ballachey and Bodkin tested specifically for evidence of PCB exposure.

No one has yet posed a plausible explanation of why animals in the oiled western sound might show higher levels of PCB exposure than animals elsewhere in PWS. In recommendations to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, however, scientific peer reviewers have repeatedly emphasized the importance of settling the question.

Kearney arrived back at the Kittiwake and we loaded up a Boston Whaler with the dive gear and headed to Herring Bay, where he had spied a sleeping otter. This area was one of the hardest hit by the spill. In 1989, workers took out a total of 33 dead sea otters. The most otters Bodkin has counted here in the last four years is 17; the average is 7.

Sea otters are masters of elusion. To capture them, divers sneak up on them while they're sleeping. The divers are propelled through the water (James Bond-like) holding a motorized basket-shaped trap with an open top, called a Wilson trap. They surprise the sleeping sea otters from below as the trap engulfs them.

As the dive crew left in a Zodiac, Brenda and I settled in for a long wait. It was flat calm

THE KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 29, 1998

Afognak Corp. sues Veco for site looting during spill cleanup

ANCHORAGE (AP) — The Afognak Native Corp. has filed a federal lawsuit against Veco Inc. over some archaeological sites that were looted during the Exxon Valdez oil spill cleanup.

The Native corporation said someone dug up three ancient Koniag dwellings in a secluded bay on Afognak Island in the summer of 1989.

The corporation contends the offender was a commercial fisherman hired by Veco to mop up oil in the area, so it is suing the Anchorage-based oil field services company for $1.1 million to cover damage done to the sites and for lost artifacts.

"(Veco) had a contract that required them to supervise the fleet," Afognak's attorney, Russell Winner, told a federal court jury Monday. "They had full responsibility and authority."

Veco, however, contends that nobody saw anyone take any artifacts, nobody has admitted taking artifacts, no artifacts have been found and no criminal theft charges were filed.

The only evidence linking the commercial fisherman to the looting is that the fisherman's boat was in the area at the time the vandalism was discovered, according to Jack Miller, an attorney representing Veco.

"The case is based on innuendo," Miller said. "It doesn't even rise to circumstantial. Someone did some digging. Who did the digging? Nobody knows."

Winner told the jury that Veco had a contract with Exxon to hire five fish seiners out of Kodiak to use dipnets to scoop up oil, which had formed into globs. One of the boats was the Shearwater, owned by Joe M. Allen of Kodiak.

On July 27, the Shearwater separated from the other four boats to work in a secluded bay. On the next day, Exxon inspectors arrived at the bay and found "extensive looting" at three sites on the shore. Crew members on the Shearwater were questioned and said they didn't know anything and hadn't seen anything. The Shearwater left abruptly when an Exxon archaeologist arrived at the site by helicopter, Winner said.

Four days later, Exxon staff stopped the boat and asked to board for an inspection. "Joe Allen said, 'No you can't. Talk to my attorney,'" Winner said.

Veco had a contract that required the company to supervise its subcontractors, Winner said.

The artifacts lost were priceless, Winner said. An archaeologist hired by the Native corporation to assess the damage and loss placed

See AFOGNAK, Page 2

Afognak

Continued from Page 1

it at $1.1 million, he said.

The looted sites once were homes inhabited 500- to 700 years ago by the Koniag people. Their homes were large structures built with logs and dug into the ground. The Koniag left behind sophisticated tools, artwork and pottery, he said.

Veco attorney Miller said it's impossible to know who dug up the artifacts or when. However, Allen and his first mate will testify under oath that it was not them, Miller said.

"Boats were in and out of this area all the time," Miller said.

Also, archaeological literature shows that two of the three sites were discovered after the Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964 and were found to be eroding. "Whatever was done here, it was not the first time these sites had been hunted," he said.

Even if the damage were pinned on one of the five seine boats, Veco should not be liable for damage done to the sites because the boats Veco hired were subcontractors and Veco was not directly responsible for all their actions, Miller said.

Six jurors and two alternates were picked Monday to decide if Veco should pay. All eight will 10 years after the Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of North Slope crude oil in Prince William Sound on March 24, 1989.

Afognak Island is just north of Kodiak Island. Some of the oil was carried to its beaches by ocean currents after the tanker piled up on a charted reef.

Exxon initially was listed as a defendant in the case, but it settled the claim in 1995.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 29, 1998

What's needed to rein them in is some management and enforcement.

The Cook Inlet Marine Mammal Council is a Native nonprofit formed to represent Native hunters who live in area villages or who migrated to Anchorage from elsewhere. Project coordinator Dan Alex would like to see more hard facts about the beluga population. For instance, is it really being overharvested? (Even federal biologists admit it's hard to get an accurate population estimate.)

If the worst is true, then he and other Natives want to work with federal officials on co-management of the resource — and to set up and enforce harvest levels among hunters through the council. As he envisions it, area villages could turn to a renegade hunter's tribal court to discipline him or set up a tribal court like that found in Sitka, where local Natives regulate Native taking of sea otters.

Among council members and in federal offices, several ideas about how to better protect Cook Inlet beluga whales are floating about. Now is the time for the main players to put their heads together and to come up with a management plan that gives the federal government, Native hunters and the general public a better idea of what's happening to Cook Inlet beluga whales — and how they can best be protected in the future.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 29, 1998

Belugas

Action must accompany concern

If beluga whales are to keep plying Cook Inlet waters, then more people will have to show more concern for them — and to act on it. As it is, federal biologists and responsible Native hunters are growing increasingly uneasy about the future of Inlet belugas.

If federal estimates are correct, then it appears that the Inlet's beluga population has declined approximately 20 percent in the last five years. If that's true and if the decline continues at its present rate, then belugas can't sustain themselves.

That is unacceptable.

Right now, two groups that have expressed the most concern about the belugas' health — federal biologists and Native groups — have a golden chance to work together. What's needed from them is a cooperative plan to better manage the resource.

While turning a subsistence hunt into an illegal commercial endeavor is anathema to most hunters, it takes only a few rogues doing their dirty work to blacken everyone's name.

"We are on a fast track" to come up with such a plan, says biologist Barbara Mahoney with the National Marine Fisheries Service. To that end, a joint meeting was held last month. Those efforts should stay on track or even intensify, if need be.

Congress requires the service to monitor and ensure the health of marine mammals. Federal law also recognizes the importance of marine mammals to Native culture. To that end, lawmakers made room in the law for Native hunters to harvest mammals like belugas with few restrictions.

One big problem with hunts in Cook Inlet is that a handful of hunters are irresponsible to the point of recklessness. Since their primary aim is to kill the cetaceans and sell the meat commercially, these are the ones who have turned beluga hunting into a job of sorts.

While turning a subsistence hunt into an illegal commercial endeavor is anathema to most hunters, it takes only a few rogues doing their dirty work to blacken everyone's name.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 29, 1998

Veco faces lawsuit tied to oil spill

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

During the summer of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, someone apparently looted three ancient Koniag archaeological sites in a secluded bay on Afognak Island.

Afognak Native Corp., which owns the land, thinks the culprit was a commercial fisherman who had been hired by Veco to mop up oil in the area. So the Native corporation is suing Veco Inc. for $1.1 million to cover damage done to the sites and for lost artifacts.

"(Veco) had a contract that required them to supervise the fleet," Afognak's attorney, Russell Winner, told a federal court jury Monday. "They had full responsibility and authority."

Veco contends that nobody saw anybody take any artifacts, nobody has admitted taking artifacts, no artifacts have been located, and no criminal theft charges were filed against anyone.

The only evidence linking the commercial fisherman to the looting is that the fisher-

Please see Page B-3, VECO

VECO: Company faces lawsuit stemming from Exxon Valdez oil spill

Continued from Page B-1

man's boat was in the area at the time the vandalism was discovered, according to Jack Miller, an attorney representing Veco.

"The case is based on innuendo," Miller said. "It doesn't even rise to circumstantial."

"Someone did some digging," he added. "Who did the digging? Nobody knows."

Six jurors and two alternates were picked Monday to decide if Veco should pay. All eight will deliberate if no one is excused before the close of trial, which is expected to last a week. The case is one of many remnants still lingering in court nearly 10 years after the Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of oil in Prince William Sound on March 24, 1989. Some of that oil was carried by currents to Afognak Island, which is just north of Kodiak Island.

Exxon was initially listed as a defendant in the case. However, it settled the claim in 1995.

Winner told the jury that Veco had a contract with Exxon to hire five fish seiners out of Kodiak to use dipnets to scoop up oil, which had formed into globs. One of the boats was the Shearwater, owned by Joe M. Allen of Kodiak.

On July 27, the Shearwater separated from the other four boats to work in a secluded bay. On the next day, Exxon inspectors arrived at the bay and found "extensive looting" at three sites on the shore. Crew members on the Shearwater were questioned and said they didn't know anything and hadn't seen anything. The Shearwater left abruptly when an Exxon archaeologist arrived at the site by helicopter, Winner said.

Four days later, Exxon staff stopped the boat and asked to board for an inspection. "Joe Allen said, 'No you can't. Talk to my attorney,' " Winner said.

Veco had a contract that required the company to supervise its subcontractors, Winner said.

The artifacts lost were "priceless," Winner said. An archaeologist hired by the Native corporation to assess the damage and loss placed it at $1.1 million, Winner said. The looted sites were once homes inhabited 500 to 700 years ago by the Koniag people. Their homes were large structures built with logs and dug into the ground. The Koniag left behind "sophisticated tools, artwork and pottery," he said.

Veco attorney Miller said it's impossible to know who dug up the artifacts or when. However, Allen and his first mate will testify under oath that it was not them, Miller said. Allen couldn't be reached for comment Monday.

"Boats were in and out of this area all the time," Miller said.

Also, archaeological literature shows that two of the three sites were discovered after the 1964 earthquake and were found to be eroding. "Whatever was done here, it was not the first time these sites had been hunted," he said.

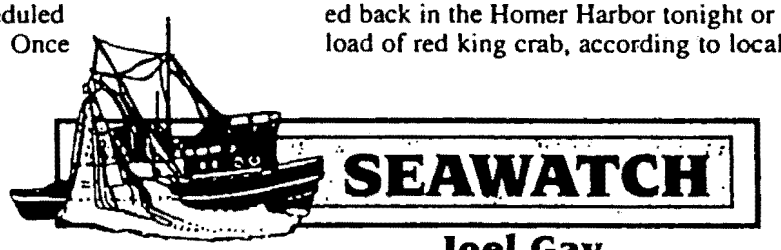
Even if the damage were pinned on one of the five seine boats, Miller said, Veco should not be liable for damage done to the sites because the boats Veco hired were subcontractors and Veco was not directly responsible for all their actions.

Miller said it would be similar, for example, if his law firm sent its secretary to the courthouse to file something and she stopped and robbed a bank on the way. The law firm wouldn't be at fault because it didn't benefit from the robbery.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 29, 1998

Court dates set for opening rounds in Exxon appeal

THE EXXON APPEAL takes another step toward resolution this month when briefings begin in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. Exxon Corp. has asked for a new trial, and will present its opening briefs Tuesday, Oct. 13, according to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Litigation office. Plaintiffs' attorneys will give their reply Nov. 13, with Exxon's rebuttal set for Nov. 27. Oral arguments will be scheduled after the last set of briefings. Once oral arguments are complete, the justices typically issue a decision within three weeks, a court clerk told the Homer News earlier this year. The appeal on creation of the halibut and blackcod IFQ fisheries took nearly a year, however.



Joel Gay

THE POTENTIAL $5 BILLION SETTLEMENT is also closer after U.S. District Court Judge H. Russel Holland gave final approval to the distribution plan for 10 affected commercial salmon fisheries and for Native subsistence fishermen. Holland earlier had given preliminary approval to the plans for all commercial salmon fisheries in Chignik, Kodiak, Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound. Fishermen with a claim should have received claim forms in the mail. The forms must be returned, and postmarked no later than Feb. 1, 1999, to be eligible for a claim. For more information call (800) 397-7455.

CRABBING CLOSED IN THE PRIBILOFS at noon Monday, with the fleet of 58 expected to take the full 1.2 million pound quota of red and blue king crab. Fishing was about as expected, according to the Department of Fish and Game in Unalaska, whereas it was slow in the St. Matthews Island blue king crab fishery. There, 128 boats caught just 2.8 million pounds, far below the 3.9 million pound quota. That fishery was whistled to a close last Saturday at noon, just five days after it opened. The fleet struck for one day after processors offered prices 60 to 90 cents less per pound than last year, according to the Dutch Harbor Fisherman. Fishermen agreed to fish again when the price of Pribilof red king crab rose to $2.40, up from the first offers of $2.15.

THE HOMER CRABBER KUSTATAN is expected back in the Homer Harbor tonight or tomorrow with a load of red king crab, according to local processor Doug Stuart, owner of His Catch. The crab will be available either live and kicking or cooked. No price had been set as of yesterday afternoon, but Stuart said it would be a good deal for king crab connoisseurs. For information, call His Catch at 235-7101.

HALIBUT FISHERMEN ARE LOOKING AHEAD, hoping to be prepared when halibut farms start putting the same pressure on the longline business that salmon farms have exerted on wild salmon fishermen. Monday marks the first meeting of the Pacific Halibut Council, a group of fishermen from the United States and Canada. On the agenda are presentations by Bruce Leaman, executive director of the International Pacific Halibut Commission, and John Forster, the consultant hired by the state of Alaska to prepare a report on the status of halibut farming. Though Forster's report is not yet final, he is expected to reveal some of his findings, according to the Pacific Halibut Council. Also on tap for the meeting are panel discussions on marketing and organization. "The outcome of the day will be a clearer vision of how to fund and sustain a campaign to get Americans asking for wild, all-natural Pacific halibut by name," the group said. The meeting runs all day at SeaTac Doubletree Hotel.

THE MEETING COINCIDES WITH the annual joint meeting of the International Pacific Halibut Commission and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, which is scheduled for Tuesday at the Doubletree Hotel. On the agenda are reviews of numerous programs — bycatch reduction, charterboat management, subsistence, and IFQ and CDQ fisheries.

HOMER PROCESSOR MIKE BROOKS helped round up 60,000 pounds of salmon as part of a relief effort for Interior dog mushers. Due to the disastrously low chum returns on the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, many dog team operators were nervous about having enough food for their teams to get through the winter. Brooks, working in concert with the Valdez Fisheries Development Association in "Operation Salmon Run," got donations of salmon that were not fit for human consumption and arranged for their transportation to Fort Wainwright. A group called People for the Emergency Preparedness Planning for Animals in Alaska will make sure the fish get into the dogs' bowls.

A GROUP OF GERMAN TOURISTS nervous about missing their flight from Kodiak to Anchorage back home set off their EPIRB, apparently figuring the Coast Guard would take them back to town. Wrong. According to the Kodiak Daily Mirror, the Coast Guard picked up the signal last week from a beach on Afognak Island and dispatched at H-60 helicopter. When the chopper lowered a rescue swimmer to the three men on Danger Bay, the tourists said their charter airplane had failed to come on time so they set off the locator beacon. The helicopter crew left them there. "That was an inappropriate use of the EPIRB," Petty Officer George Keaney told the paper. "When one of those things goes off, it really gets us scrambling, but we can't pick someone up if they're not in trouble."

THE CLARION PENINSULA
THURSDAY OCTOBER 1, 1998

SeaLife Center hires external affairs coordinator

The Alaska SeaLife Center has hired Maureen Sims as external affairs coordinator. She'll oversee marketing, development and public relations. She'll serve as lead grant writer, and as liaison between the center and its board of governors.

Sims prepared the environmental impact statement for the SeaLife Center when she worked as project manager for Leif-Selkregg Associates. She has also worked as consultant on the $148 million New Seattle Aquarium, and project coordinator for a $200 million pipeline project in Washington. She provided analysis and assessment of environmental issues for the $28 million Kodiak launch complex.

THE PENINSULA CLARION
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 1998

SeaLife grants available for fourth-grade classes

By MATTHEW PETERS
Peninsula Clarion

Jerry S. Dixon, a Quest teacher for Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, has received an M.R. Robinson grant which will allow the district's fourth-graders to visit the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward.

In 1997, Dixon, who teaches gifted and talented youth, was named Alaska's Christa McAuliffe Fellow award, an honor given to teachers for innovative projects. The program is in memory of the teacher who perished in the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster.

Dixon received the award for creating a series of links to the ASLC's Web page. The Christa McAuliffe Fellowship rewarded Dixon by sending him to aquariums across the country.

"On my trip I learned that each aquarium was targeted at a specific grade," Dixon said.

His travels led him to identify the peninsula's fourth-graders as the group that could benefit the most from the ASLC.

Now Dixon was faced with the question of how to get the fourth-graders to the aquarium. It was then that he developed the North Pacific Project. Dixon began writing a series of grants that would fund the project.

Dixon's hard work paid off when he received a grant from the M.R. Robinson Foundation. The grant will pay $200 per class for up to 20 district fourth-grade classes. There are currently 40 eligible classes for the money and Dixon says funds will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

"This will be something of an incentive to the borough's teachers," he said. "It's not the full amount, but it's a start."

Dixon said he hopes the money will motivate classes to do some fund-raising of their own.

According to Dixon, fund-raisers such as bake sales and car washes could effectively generate the difference.

"The important thing is that people know every penny is going to the students," Dixon said.

He said established procedures had been laid out for classes wishing to attain the grant money. Reservations need to be made for field trips that would occur between Oct. 12 and Dec. 11.

Teachers also will be expected to assign students pre- and post-visit tests or write a one-page review of what was learned and experienced during their visit.

"There's more money out there," Dixon said. "All we have to do is meet certain guidelines to get it."

THE KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 1998

Environmentalists accuse watchdog group of favoring oil industry

KENAI (AP) — A Homer-based environmental group has asked the federal government to end its contract with an organization that monitors Cook Inlet's oil tankers.

Cook Inlet Keeper says the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council has close ties with the oil industry and hasn't challenged it on environmental issues. It also claims the council has discouraged the public from getting involved in council matters.

For those reasons, Cook Inlet Keeper has asked the U.S. Coast Guard to deny the council's annual recertification, expected in November.

"CIRCAC calls itself a watchdog, but I can't remember a time in recent history where it stood up to industry and took a different position," said Bob Shavelson, executive director of Cook Inlet Keeper.

The council, based in Kenai, is the sister to the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council. Both groups were established by Congress in the months following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The councils are charged with gauging the oil industry's environmental legacy and helping the industry develop oil spill response strategies. Each council is funded by oil companies that operate in Alaska.

Cook Inlet Keeper based its appeal on leaked drafts of a letter from the Cook Inlet council's previous director, Bryan Mac Lean, to the Coast Guard. The letter was written in May, just after Mac Lean was asked to resign.

In the letter, Mac Lean called for an independent audit of the council and said nothing less than a major restructuring would cure the council's woes.

That version of Mac Lean's letter was not sent to the Coast Guard. Instead, his signature is on a letter dated April 27 that says the council is on track and seeks recertification.

Advisory council staffers say the possibility of legal action prevents them from discussing the letter and Mac Lean's rocky five-month tenure.

But council staffers did respond to some of Cook Inlet Keeper's charges. For example, the Cook Inlet council's role is one of close, constant engagement with industry, not public bomb-throwing, according to Jim Carter, interim director of the council.

Carter also said Shavelson may be missing an important point. CIRCAC isn't an environmental group. Rather, it's designed to bring together diverse opinions, in an effort to reach compromise.

Environmentalists long have been frustrated by the council, and some have called for a boycott, said James Hornaday, a Homer attorney nominated by the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies to represent environmental interests.

Hornaday is among those trying to convince the Coast Guard, the oil industry and other board members that tanker escort vessels are needed in Cook Inlet.

Cook Inlet belugas declining

Hunters may be killing too many, experts say

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

The Cook Inlet beluga whale population has dropped dramatically in the past five years and might be headed for protection as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

The population has declined about 20 percent, from an estimated 1,000 whales to 800 — perhaps fewer. The biggest toll has been the 50 to 70 whales harvested or shot but lost each summer by Native hunters, the numbers they've gathered show.

Biologists and some Native hunters are alarmed for three reasons: Belugas are slow to reproduce; no hunting management plan is in place; and an unknown number of whales are shot but then disappear into the Inlet's murky water.

Other hunters acknowledge that the number of belugas is declining, but say the government's census numbers are suspect and emergency measures aren't necessary.

Please see Back Page, WHALES

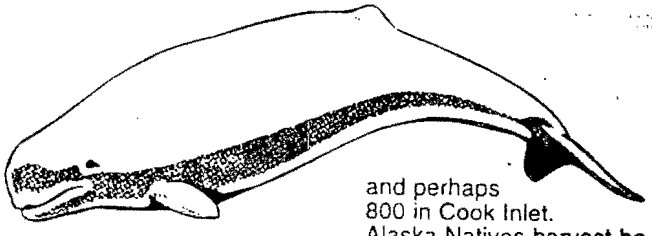
ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 27, 1998

WHALES: Hunters may be killing too many Cook Inlet belugas

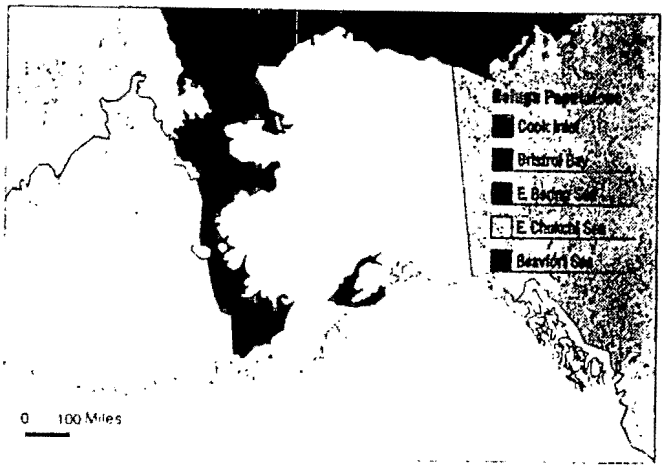
ERIK HILL Daily News file photo

Native hunters from Anchorage squeeze off a shot at a beluga whale that they separated from a pod at the mouth of the Susitna River in May 1994.

Alaska's belugas



- **Size:** Adults average 12-13 feet and about 3,000 pounds. At birth they're 5 feet long and 100 pounds.
- **Body:** Stocky with small rounded head and more than 40 ivory teeth.
- **Color:** Dark gray at birth, turning completely white by 5 to 6 years old.
- **Dorsal fin:** No dorsal fin but a narrow dorsal ridge along its back.
- **Behavior:** Gregarious. Pods of more than 1,000 whales have been reported, although groups of several dozen or fewer are more common. Slow swimmers, they often roll casually at the surface. They dive up to 100 feet and stay under up to five minutes.
- **Food:** Prey includes fish, crabs and clams.
- **Life span:** Sexually mature at 5 to 8 years. Live 35 years or longer.
- **Population:** An estimated 70,000 worldwide, with 25,000 in the Bering Sea and perhaps 800 in Cook Inlet. Alaska Natives harvest between 200 and 300 annually. Coastal and river development, pollution and fishing pose threats.
- **Natural enemies:** Polar bears and killer whales.



Source Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Continued from Page A-1

Alaska is home to an estimated 45,000 belugas. Only the Cook Inlet population, which is genetically different from the belugas found in Western Alaska and on the Arctic coast, is declining.

In mid-November, both the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee, which promotes responsible hunting of belugas, and the Alaska Regional Scientific Review Group, which provides scientific advice to federal wildlife and fisheries officials, will hold back-to-back meetings in Anchorage to discuss a management plan to save Cook Inlet's whales.

"We are on a fast track," said Barbara Mahoney, a biologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Alaska.

Something has to change before the start of next year's hunting season in June, said Ross Schaeffer, chairman of the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee.

The worst-case scenario would be if the whales end up designated "depleted" under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Schaeffer said. "We wouldn't be able to hunt them and it would affect development and industry in the Inlet."

Instead, the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee plans to draft a co-management plan in the hope that the government will list the Inlet whales as a "threatened species," allowing limited hunts. While such a management plan would have "teeth," he said, industry and development in the Inlet would not be effected.

As the committee develops a management plan, NMFS biologists are working to determine whether the Marine Mammal Protection Act or the Endangered Species Act should be used to regulate the harvest of Cook Inlet belugas.

The Alaska Regional Scientific Review Group also finds the census numbers alarming.

"It is critical ... that the number of belugas being killed by hunters in Cook Inlet is reduced substantially, and soon," Lloyd Lowery, chairman of review group, wrote in a letter outlining the group's concerns.

"The Cook Inlet beluga situation is one of the most pressing conservation issues facing Alaska marine mammals at this time," he added. "We think that the population may soon qualify for a protective listing under Endangered Species Act or Marine Mammal Protection Act provisions. If this happens it will be the first instance we are aware of in which Alaska Natives have overharvested a marine mammal stock."

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
COOK INLET BELUGAS DECLINING CON'T
SEPTEMBER 27, 1998

Lee Stephan, chairman of Cook Inlet Marine Mammal Council, disagrees. The council was recently formed to represent Cook Inlet Natives on marine-mammal issues.

"We are in trouble with them, but nobody needs to get as excited as they are," Stephan said. He opposes listing the beluga as a threatened species. Stephan said the local hunters can take care of the problem.

"We're talking to people in the Bethel and Kotzebue areas trying to find an alternative source for beluga and get it shipped here for people who need it," he said.

Local hunters have also identified a few hunters who are taking more than they need and selling the meat, he said. "We're working on them. We're trying to get ahold of their families."

The 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act allows Alaska Natives living in coastal areas to hunt a variety of sea mammals, including belugas, so long as the mammals are not taken in a wasteful manner. There are no limits, quotas, guidelines or requirement that Natives live in the area they hunt. Under the law, the hunters may sell a portion of their meat to other Natives.

That same act requires the National Marine Fisheries Service to come up with population estimates for most species of sea mammals and to determine if they are healthy.

Mahoney said the draft 1997 stock assessment report, which will be released in this fall, estimates the 1997 population at 834.

Population figures collected this summer are still being analyzed. However, preliminary numbers in a NMFS report suggests that the numbers may have dipped lower this year.

Five years ago, little was known about Cook Inlet's beluga population. Through intensive surveying and interviews with hunters over the past few years, the declining trend was documented.

Although belugas are still somewhat a mystery, scientists have discovered many things about the playful whales. They believe they have the most advanced sonar of any sea mammal.

They also are the only whales that shed their outer layer of skin each summer. They have jaws filled with ivory teeth and travel in large groups. While they often live to be 35 years old, they don't start reproducing until they are 5 to 8 years old and produce only one calf every two years or so.

Five distinct groups of belugas are found off Alaska's coasts, with the Cook Inlet belugas believed to be unique. Some scientists think they stayed behind at the end of the last Ice Age 10,000 years ago when other belugas left for the Arctic. The nearest other belugas appear to be in Bristol Bay.

Dena'ina villagers along Cook Inlet have a long history of hunting belugas. But it's not just the Dena'ina anymore.

Native hunters now include Yupik and Inupiat Eskimos who grew up in coastal villages hunting belugas and other marine mammals. Some have relocated to Anchorage over the years; others hunt when they are in town.

"We have too many guys saying, 'Come on over,' then taking them out," said Schaeffer, who said he recently stopped hunting the Cook Inlet belugas because he wanted to set an example. "We need to get the word out to just take one beluga for their own use."

Magnifying the problem, Schaeffer said, are a few hunters who take whales and then sell them for income.

"It happens," Schaeffer said. "But most people don't overdo it. They sell only what they need for some gas money for their boat."

Designing a management plan and enforcing it will be difficult, Schaeffer conceded. There is no one organization that all Cook Inlet hunters belong to.

"One of the things I realized very quickly is that tribes and IRA governments need to be involved," Schaeffer said. But not just the tribes in the Cook Inlet area, it will take a consensus of tribes across the state.

The plan Schaeffer envisions would set a quota at 20 Cook Inlet belugas a year, prohibit killing females with young, and prohibit hunting in late June and early July when the whales are calving.

Native hunters with rifles typically use small skiffs to hunt belugas along upper Cook Inlet's shores. Once a whale has been shot, hunters follow it and harpoon it. Empty plastic jugs or buoys are roped to the harpoon as floats. After a whale has been harpooned, the hunter follows the jugs to keep from losing the animal.

The whales are butchered at camps along the banks, and slabs of meat, blubber and muktuk, a combination of fat and skin, are taken home in coolers.

In 1996, the Cook Inlet Marine Mammals Council reported that for every beluga landed, one or two were shot but not retrieved. Some Native hunters say those estimates are high.

Restricting hunting to shallow waters might help reduce the loss rate, Schaeffer said. It is easy to follow an injured whale in shallow water because the whale creates a wave, called a kuvluniq, he said.

Schaeffer said there is also talk of hiring one or two hunters as monitors and the best monitors might be the hunters suspected of taking the whales for income.

"That way they will have a job rather than use the belugas for money," Schaeffer said.

❑ Reporter Natalie Phillips can be reached at nphillips@adn.com.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 27, 1998

Inlet watchdogs accused of bias

Monitors favor industry, group says

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

KENAI — A Homer-based environmental group has asked the federal government to break its contract with an organization that monitors Cook Inlet's oil tankers.

Cook Inlet Keeper says the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council has close ties with the oil industry and hasn't challenged it on environmental issues. It also claims the council has discouraged the public from getting involved in council matters.

For those reasons, Keeper officials have formally asked the U.S. Coast Guard to deny the council's annual recertification, expected in November.

CIRCAC, based in Kenai, is the sister to the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council. Both groups were established by Congress in the months following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Each council is funded by oil companies that operate in Alaska. CIRCAC operates on a budget of $600,000 a year, about a quarter of the $2.1 million budget of the Prince William Sound council.

Cook Inlet Keeper based its appeal on leaked drafts of a scathing letter from the council's previous director, Bryan Mac Lean, written in May — just after Mac Lean was asked to resign.

"The general public has little or no conception of what the Cook Inlet RCAC is, does, or how it operates," Mac Lean wrote in a typo-

Please see Page B-2,
COOK INLET

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 27, 1998

COOK INLET: Watchdog group claims monitor is biased

Continued from Page B-1

filled draft to the U.S. Coast Guard. "Regualtory [sic] agencies view the Cook Inlet RCAC as a potential player whose lack of consistency compromises its credibility. Industry genreally [sic] views the Cook Inlet RCAC as a social a tax [sic] that must be paid in order to conduct business in the Cook Inlet."

Nothing less than major restructuring will cure the council's woes, he concluded, calling for an independent audit. That version of Mac Lean's letter was not sent to the Coast Guard. Instead, his signature is on a letter dated April 27 that says the council is on track and seeks recertification.

Advisory council staffers say the possibility of legal action prevents them from discussing the letter and Mac Lean's rocky five-month tenure. Mac Lean did not return telephone requests for an interview.

But council staffers did respond to some of Keeper's charges. For example, CIRCAC's role is one of close, constant engagement with industry, not public bomb-throwing, according to council interim director, Jim Carter of Kenai, and others.

Council officials say the organization has quietly amassed several successes during the 1990s. Among them: A computerized oil-spill trajectory model that predicts the effects of tides and winds; research into oil's effect on the ecosystem; the establishment of winter safety rules for tankers entering the Inlet; and ongoing studies about winter oil spills.

The Cook Inlet council has a full-time staff of four that supports a volunteer panel of 13.

The volunteers are supposed to represent groups that have a stake in the Inlet's health, such as fishermen, villages, environmentalists and the oil industry. Its twofold charge is to gauge the oil industry's environmental legacy and to help the industry develop oil spill response strategies.

"CIRCAC calls itself a watchdog, but I can't remember a time in recent history where it stood up to industry and took a different position," said Bob Shavelson, the Keeper's executive director. "Right now you've got the Prince William Sound RCAC taking a visible stand on dispersants that's contrary to industry. You never see that from CIRCAC. It's disheartening."

The council's interim director, Jim Carter of Kenai, dismisses Shavelson as a voice in the wilderness. A score of letters supporting recertification have arrived from cities, villages and corporations, he said.

"I don't know of any other group that we're being criticized by, not a single other group," Carter said.

Council members and Carter also said Shavelson may be missing an important point. CIRCAC isn't an environmental group, they say. It's designed to bring a lot of opinions together, in the hope that some kind of compromise will emerge.

"Boy, I'd have to say there's lots of viewpoints there," said Phil Squires, a Cook Inlet commercial fisherman who leads CIRCAC's environmental monitoring subcommittee. "The organization works rather well. It's rather slow at times."

Squires also is president of United Cook Inlet Drift Association, which advocates for the Inlet drift gillnet fishing fleet. He compared Cook Inlet Keeper to UCIDA, saying both groups are agenda-based. "You have to realize it's only one perspective and the Regional Citizens Advisory Council, by design, represents all viewpoints," he said.

Environmentalists long have been frustrated by the council, and some have called for a boycott, said James Hornaday, a Homer attorney nominated by the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies to represent environmental interests.

Hornaday is the latest environmental representative trying to convince the Coast Guard, the oil industry and other board members that tanker escort vessels are needed in Cook Inlet. Environmental groups should keep plugging away and not back off, he said.

Carter acknowledged Shavelson may have a point that CIRCAC has fallen out of the public's mind. He said he's seeking money from the industry to create a new public relations position. "A lot of people don't know what's happening," he said. "It's a true statement. We have to get the villages up to speed on what's being done by CIRCAC."

College, museum join to study local history

BY AMY STEFFIAN
Special to the Mirror

Years ago, Debbie Staggs made a list of the adventures she hoped to complete in her lifetime. One of her dreams was to participate in an archaeological dig. But opportunities to unearth the past proved hard to find. Once, she tried to volunteer on a dig, but the project wouldn't accept her without previous archaeological experience. She wondered if she would ever get the chance to dig.

Through the Alutiiq Museum Community Archaeology Program, Debbie found her opportunity over the summer. For six weeks she and four other Kodiak College students helped to complete a sizable excavation at Zaimka Mound. A short bumpy drive from Kodiak, this prehistoric camp site lies in a meadow on the shore of Womens Bay. The project was unusual in that students and volunteers outnumbered archaeologists

The goal of the program is to provide the community with hands on experience in archaeology. The museum believes this increases awareness of Alutiiq culture and helps to preserve Kodiak's remarkable sites. People who have the opportunity to do scientific archaeology seldom vandalize sites. They also gain an appreciation for what it takes to live a subsistence lifestyle in an environment like Kodiak.

With help from Kodiak College, students received one hour of college credit for every 40 hours of field work participation. The course requirements were simple — participate cheerfully in every aspect of the excavation, from bucket hauling to three dimensional mapping, and keep a detailed field journal.

With shovels in hand, Rick Langfitt, Tim LeDoux, Debbie Staggs, Sarah Waddell, and Bill Watson broke through the grassy sod to reveal layer upon layer of ancient garbage. In the first two hours, they progressed back nearly 3,000 years, exposing a black soil rich with charcoal from ancient camp fires. Substituting trowels and dust pans for shovels, the students learned to carefully scrape away each prehistoric layer and identify artifacts. In just nineteen days, their hand-dug hole was nineteen feet square and over five feet deep.

Any glamorous image of archaeology evaporated quickly. Students in muddy rain gear washed every scoop of dirt through 1/4 inch screens to pick out small chips of stone led by Native tool makers. Others kneeled in their excavation squares meticulously uncovering the rocks used to weigh down a tent, or worked with tape measures to record the positions of post holes. Some day finds were sparse. On others, "points and cool artifacts of all kinds seem to come out everywhere," noted Tim LeDoux. In the end, the students learned that archaeology is more than finding artifacts. It's back breaking work that involves careful documentation and lots of debate. In his field notebook, Bill Watson wrote, "Despite the sore muscles and stiff joints . . . this dig was a lot of fun and I learned so much that I want to learn more."

Kodiak College and the Alutiiq Museum hope to continue the Community Archaeology Program in 1999. In the spring, Steffian will offer *Fundamentals of Archaeology*, a three credit college course and plans are underway for a summer excavation It will be open to everyone who would like to fulfill that secret dream, college credit, or just for fun.

Youth Area Watch shows work to world via the web

Editor's note: It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of Alaska crude oil. Time has since told quite a lot about the spill's long-term effects. To help tell the story, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is providing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region.

By JODY SEITZ

Each year for the last couple of years, 25 to 30 high school students in the Chugach and Cordova school districts have had the rare opportunity to work with scientists as they conduct research in the field. The program, sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, is called the Youth Area Watch.

Students from remote settings get hands-on experience in some highly technical and specialized fields — such as oceanography, marine mammal ecology, physiology, biochemistry and marine ecology. The students have collected mussels for pristane analysis, tracked ocean temperatures and salinity near their communities, monitored the weather, and received training in the biological sampling of harbor seals taken for subsistence.

Now anyone who has access to the worldwide web can find out about the Youth Area Watch and follow the students' monitoring and stewardship efforts. Jennifer Childress and Joshua Hall lead the project for the Chugach School District. They decided that the students needed a web page.

"We thought it'd be a cool thing to do with the students. It's a part of our standards, so it's a good way to give them the chance to do their schoolwork and be part of the extracurricular things as well," said Childress.

Last year, the Chugach School District gave up credits and grades in favor of a set of 12 standards in 10 different subject areas. The students have to demonstrate a certain level of proficiency in the skills required in each standard in order to graduate. The first students graduated under the new curriculum this past May.

This web homepage links to pages written by the students at all the sites where the Youth Area Watch exists: from Valdez and Cordova, to Whittier, Chenega Bay, and Tatitlek. Although not all the sites have access to the internet as yet, students still receive disk updates of the page periodically through the district.

With the new road going in to Whittier, students there became concerned about possible effects on a nearby kittiwake colony. They're monitoring the colony and posting their baseline data on the web. The students can also now examine each other's weather data and oceanographic data to compare conditions across the sound.

Students in Seward and Cordova conducted beach cleanups and recorded what they found. Seward students also worked with the National Park Service to study murre carcasses collected after a large die-off there earlier this year. Valdez students worked on restoring an old cemetery.

Childress and Hall are proud of the students and the work they do. They see the web as a great opportunity to share the program idea with teachers.

"It doesn't seem like anything like this (Youth Area Watch) is happening anywhere that we've heard of. So it's really neat to have this on there for people to see that this is happening. Maybe this will give people ideas of things they can do with students. Any school could do a restoration project anywhere if they wanted to, or find scientists to work with," said Childress."

"It's neat to offer this as a way to give students the opportunity for technology training. We can bring the students in here and they can work on and publish a finished product.

"This is very real. People all over the world can look at it. They do some great things with the youth area watch and it's a great opportunity to show the world what they do," said Hall.

Look up the youth area watch at:
HTTP//WWW.MICRONET.NET/USERS/~YAW.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program.

THE PENINSULA CLARION
SEPTEMBER 27, 1998

Trustee Council meets Tuesday in Anchorage

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council will meet Tuesday in Juneau to discuss potential uses for the $140 million Restoration Reserve. The Trustee Council is expected to name new members to the 17-member Public Advisory Group.

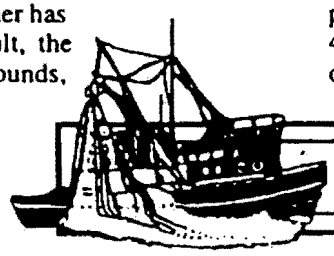
The Restoration Reserve is the savings account set aside by the Trustee Council to fund restoration activities in the spill region. Public comment on the issue has been solicited for the past year. While considering the issue, the council is not expected to take action on the reserve in Tuesday's meeting.

The Public Advisory Group advises the Trustee Council on decisions related to planning, allocation of funds, evaluation of programs, injury assessment and restoration. Members are named to two-year terms.

The meeting will be held in the Juneau Federal Building and will be teleconferenced in Anchorage at 645 G Street in the fourth floor conference room. Public comment will begin at 10:30 a.m. For more information, call Rebecca at 278-8012.

HOMER NEWS
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 1998

State cod quotas filling fast everywhere but here



SEAWATCH

Joel Gay

PACIFIC COD SEASON CONTINUES in state waters, and while the fishery is going great guns in Kodiak and the quotas for both pot and jig fishermen already are filled in Chignik and along the Alaska Peninsula, hardly anyone is fishing in lower Cook Inlet. Cod fishermen in Homer say the fish haven't schooled up or they're too scattered, the markets are too soft because of ongoing problems in Asia, and the weather has been uncooperative. As a result, the catch to date is just 410,000 pounds, far below the quota of 2.4 million, said Charlie Trowbridge, who manages the fishery for the Department of Fish and Game in Homer. He said the catch likely would be higher if there were no automatic closure for the pot fishery from April to June. Assuming the catch remains low, he will eliminate the pot limit and the exclusive registration requirement next month, which could boost the harvest if it draws boats from closed areas.

THE COD CATCH TO DATE on the Alaska Peninsula is nearly 9 million pounds, with another 5.6 million landed in Chignik and 6 million in Kodiak, Trowbridge said. Prince William Sound is still far from its quota, he said, and would likely see its pot limit and registration requirements be pulled at the same time as Cook Inlet.

THE FEDERAL COD FISHERY in the Central Gulf of Alaska reopens at noon Monday, Oct. 5, to clean up the remainder of the quota, according to National Marine Fisheries Service.

A PLAN TO SPLIT UP the pollock harvest of the Bering Sea and reduce the size of the factory trawler fleet has been worked out behind closed doors in Washington, D.C. by Sen. Ted Stevens and a portion of the Seattle-based bottomfish industry. Though some details are yet to be worked out, according to Stevens, the basis of the agreement is a new way to carve up the billion-dollar pollock pie. Under the plan announced last week, about nine of the 40-odd factory trawlers would retire from the U.S. portion of the Bering Sea, leaving them free to fish elsewhere in the world. The remaining factory trawlers, the shorebased processing plants and the community development quota villages of western Alaska would split the fish.

THOUGH THE AGREEMENT has the support of the big players, not everyone is happy about the deal. Icicle Seafoods President Don Giles said his company fought the backroom deal in hopes such a decision would be hashed out by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. But, he said, "We were a lone voice." The Alaska Marine Conservation Council has announced its displeasure, too. Board member and shore-based dragger Bob Storr told the Anchorage Daily News that the deal is bad for independent fishermen because it continues to consolidate control of the fishery in the hands of fewer companies, almost all of which are foreign-owned.

SEINERS PLUGGED THE VALDEZ HARBOR during a controversial one-hour opening there last week. More than a dozen boats participated in the opening, which netted some 4,000 silvers, according to the Valdez Vanguard. Department of Fish and Game biologist Dan Sharp called the opening after it became clear there were a lot of fish in the harbor that wouldn't otherwise be caught. The Coast Guard approved, even though the Valdez Harbormaster protested. The opening started at 4 p.m. on a Tuesday afternoon. Though boat traffic was congested, the harbor was never blocked, officials said. Still, neither the Coast Guard nor Sharp plan to make it an annual event.

A NAKNEK SETNETTER WILL HEAD UP the big fishermen's group in Prince William Sound, Cordova District Fishermen United. Sue Aspelund has lived in Naknek the last 20 years, according to the Cordova Times. She replaces Cheri Shaw, who held the post for two years.

STATE BIOLOGISTS ARE NOT LIABLE for management decisions based on incorrect information, the Alaska Supreme Court ruled last week. A group of Yukon River fishermen had sued the Department of Fish and Game in 1996 over a chum salmon closure, which biologists called after a sonar counter showed too few fish in the river to allow fishing. It was later discovered that the sonar was mis-aimed and fishermen wanted compensation for lost income. But the justices agreed with the attorney general's office. Biologists rely on information from a broad range of sources, the state argued, and holding them accountable for mistakes that derive from all that information would force the department to be overly restrictive. The ruling reverses a lower court decision which said the state has a duty "to exercise reasonable care in the operation of the sonar equipment," according to the Associated Press.

THE CORDOVA TIMES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 1998

CRSPA, Eyak elders voice opposition to CAC road legislation

By Jennifer L. Strange
The Cordova Times

National lobbying efforts against federal legislation that mandates that a proposed Native corporation logging road be built across the Copper River Delta were fortified this week by letters of concern and opposition to the road from Cordova commercial fishing organizations and a Native group.

Letters sent to Congress by the Copper River Salmon Producers Association and the Eyak Traditional Elders Council say the groups oppose the legislation because of its potentially harmful effects on the environment and commercial and subsistence fishing. Cordova District Fishermen United's letter states the organization wants the road to be as small and limited as possible to best protect fish habitat.

On Sept. 21, CRSPA, which represents 340 commercial fishermen who fish in the Copper River area, sent a letter to members of Congress stating the organization fears the road may irreversibly damage the fragile ecosystem of the Copper River Delta.

CRSPA cited the existing CNI Settlement Agreement of 1982 and a 1990 memorandum of understanding between CAC and the Forest Service, saying the agreement provides sufficient guarantee that the Forest Service will grant the easement by the agreed upon date of Dec. 11, 1998.

Furthermore, said CRSPA, the agreement provides for appropriate environmental and economic data collection and public involvement, provisions which would be circumvented by the legislation.

"If this road gets into law it would be more difficult to require environ-

See Road, page 8

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From page 1

mental studies and CAC would be immune to litigation," CRSPA member Thea Thomas said.

"We're commercial fishermen looking out for the viability of our lives," Thomas said. "This proposed area includes some of the most productive lake systems on the delta."

CAC's road and 10-year timber extraction plan would affect Little Martin Lake, Martin Lake, Tokun Lake, Bering Lake and Kushtaka Lake, which are all important salmon spawning areas, Thomas said.

"And especially the Bering River system — hundreds of thousands of red and coho salmon use that area," Thomas said.

The letter also said that it is unprecedented for a private company to be given a 250-foot wide easement, through a national forest and be allowed "economic development" on the easement. The organization further stated it strongly opposes the "unnecessary and excessive width of the easement and any kind of economic development thereon."

"The language leaves it really unclear — will it allow economic development on the road? They could build lodges, gas stations or a gas pipeline," Thomas said.

CDFU, Alaska's oldest fishermen's organization, also expressed the need for high environmental standards should the road be built, saying the construction, maintenance and monitoring need to be monitored by CAC, the Service, the Alaska Departme ish and Game and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Sue Aspelund, executive director of CDFU, said the organization believes the road is a given and will be built, but that restricting public use is acceptable in order to protect spawning fish and their habitat. But the organization opposes the language "irrevocable and perpetual" and requested the width of the road be limited to the minimum necessary for timber extraction.

Reiterating CRSPA's concerns about sedimentation from road building along the base of the Chugach Mountains seeping into salmon streams, CDFU stated in its letter that control of sedimentation and road maintenance are "absolutely critical for the protection of fish habitat."

Marie Smith Jones, chief of the Eyak Traditional Elders Council, wrote that the council opposes resource extraction on the Copper River Delta, as it disrupts the Eyak lifestyle of subsistence. Jones's letter also states that Congress might be misled by claims that the Carbon Mountain area is traditionally Chugach/Aleut.

Eyak, Tlingit and Chugach/Aleut tribes were all combined into one Native regional corporation, Chugach Natives Inc., later changed to CAC, with the passage of ANCSA, the letter said. There are 1,900 CAC shareholders, 50 who are of Eyak descent.

Jones said the Eyak homelands have traditionally extended from Cordova and the Copper River Delta east along the coast to Yakutat. Every ancestral place name on the mainland east of the Copper River, including the Katalla region, is of Eyak or Tlingit origin, not Chugach/Aleut, and most of the lands titled to CAC on the delta are traditional Eyak lands, she wrote.

"Unlike Lower 48 Indian reservations, Alaska Native corporations often do not share the same interests as Alaska's Native tribes because the corporations received title to our land, not our tribal people," Jones wrote. "Money earned through resource extraction goes to pay the CAC management, consultants and operating expenses, little or none trickles down to our shareholders."

The Eyak Traditional Elders Council requested that the tribe be allowed to testify in front of Congress, because it "feels that CAC is erasing the living memory of our Eyak tribe through its land management decisions that do not include us."

Rick Rogers, lands manager of CAC, said he was disappointed to hear that fishing groups were taking positions of concern and opposition to the project.

"Other than not having a road, we've done everything possible to protect fishing areas." Rogers said. "We've added fo s of road, and decreased our str ossing to 48."

Rogers said 50-55 of the crossings will be over salmon streams.

Comments from Rep. Don Young were unavailable by deadline.

Young introduced the legislation, called the Chugach road rider, earlier this year. If passed into law, it would grant Chugach Alaska Corp. an easement for a non-public, 250-foot wide road across 27 miles of National Forest land and for other roads in the Bering River and Katalla vicinities. CAC plans to use the road to access its 73,000-acre Carbon Mountain land holding, from which it wants to clearcut 8,000 acres of old growth spruce and hemlock. CAC was granted the land holding through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

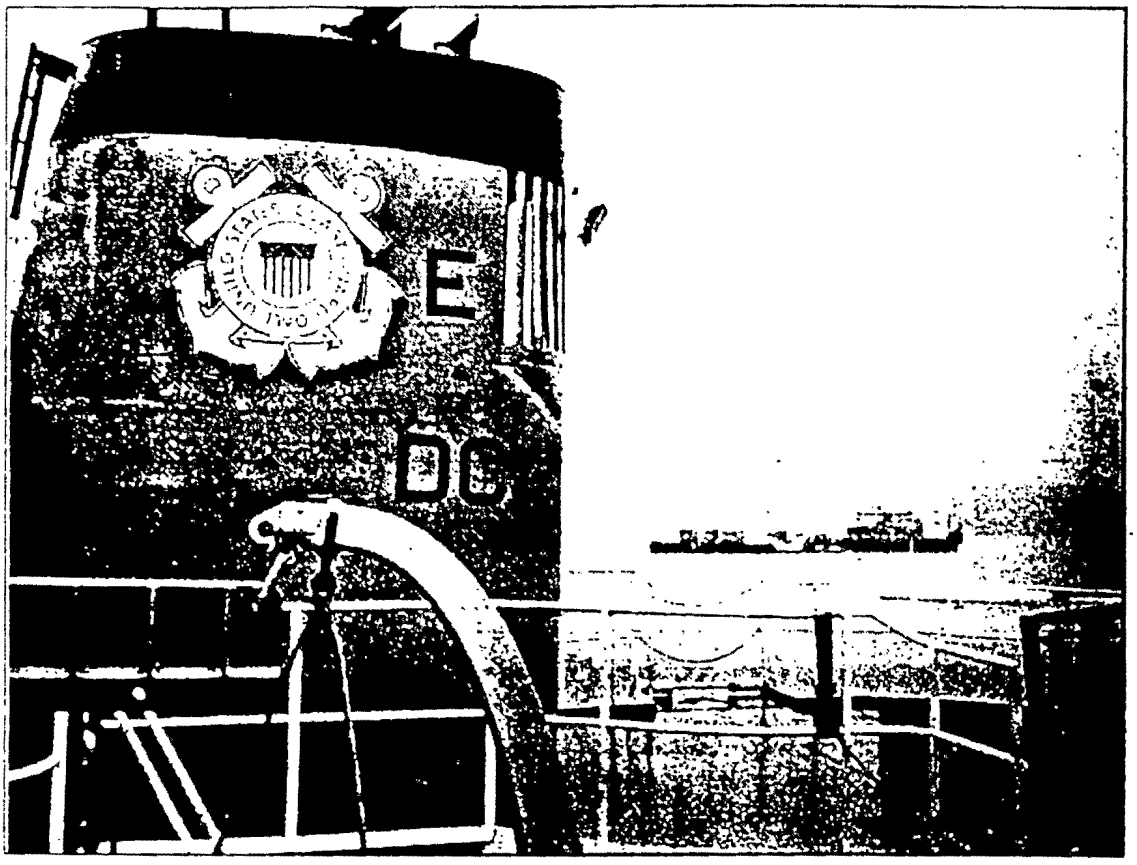
The legislation passed the House, attached to the Interior Appropriations Act, on July 23, and is now before the Senate for consideration. Native and environmental activists from Cordova are currently in Washington, D.C., lobbying against the legislation.

The rider will either pass or fail in the committee; if it is passed it will be attached to the Interior Appropriations Bill, which will then go to President Clinton's desk. The president has threatened to veto the whole bill if it contains the Chugach and other Alaskan road riders.

Dune Lankard, Alaska Native and Chugach Alaska Corp. shareholder; Doctor of Marine Toxicology Dr. Riki Ott and Copper River Wilderness guide David Grimes are also opposed to the Chugach road rider and are currently in Washington, D.C., lobbying against it.

"This will affect the whole community and upset our way of life as it is right now," Ott said. "We're trying to show them long-term options as opposed to quick shot things like this."

THE CORDOVA TIMES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 1998
Page 2 of 2



Jennifer L. Strange/Times photo

A British Petroleum barge used to transport machinery and dispersants to a simulated oil spill in Prince William Sound earlier this week was anchored off Cordova's North Fill. The United States Coast Guard cutter Sweetbrier (foreground) was also deployed for the exercise.

Use of dispersants in PWS spill drill rankles RCAC

By Jennifer L. Strange

The Cordova Times

Justification for the simulated use of dispersants in a highly sensitive area during British Petroleum's scripted Prince William Sound oil spill drill this week was based on bad weather conditions and the need to exercise the equipment, said members of the Unified Command Team at a mock press briefing Tuesday.

The spill drill simulated a Spill of National Significance or SONS, which was scripted by BP to take place in Montague Straits and which utilized equipment shipped and flown to Cordova from the Lower 48 and deployed onto fishing vessels. Seward and Valdez were also involved in the drill.

But the Regional Citizen's Advisory Council wasn't happy with the decision to use dispersants or with the process that was followed.

"I was completely dismayed to see that they have scripted in the use of dispersants beginning at 7:30 on day two in our most sensitive zone, zone 3," said Michele Hahn O'Leary. Hahn O'Leary represents Cordova District Fishermen United on RCAC's board.

Zone one, which contains deep water, is the least sensitive to dispersant use and is preapproved by the U.S. Coast Guard and other regulatory agencies

See Drill, page 9

Drill ...

From page 1

for use of the chemicals. Zone two becomes more sensitive to the dispersants and zone three is highly sensitive, with shallow waters and shorelines. Use of dispersants in this zone requires a rigorous approval process.

Hahn O'Leary and Tom Copeland, also of RCAC, said the oil industry and regulating agencies are allowing too much dependence on the chemical dispersant instead of continuing to develop machinated removal techniques.

"They like the chemical best because it gets the oil out of the TV's eyes and there aren't any oiled sea otters or oil on the shoreline," Hahn O'Leary said.

Chemical dispersants cause oil to sink to the bottom of the ocean, where the oil becomes sludge. Very little is known about the effects the dispersants and remaining oil have on the environment, marine mammals, plant life and humans, she said, and what information does exist comes from the oil industry, which produces it and wants to utilize the cheaper form of oil control.

Unified Command Team member Ron Morris of the U.S. Coast Guard said that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, local communities and the Department of Environmental Conservation would be notified about the potential use of dispersants in the case of a real drill and would be involved in the approval process, but weren't in the mock drill.

Jennifer L. Strange/Times photo

Jack Hopkins (right), captain of the F/V Raven's Child, was the leader of Group 2 in the simulated spill response. The boat was one of 11 local vessels to assist in the drill.

"We're not trying to get in the door to expand the use of dispersants, we're just exercising the equipment," said Lt. Al Echols of the District Response Advisory Team in Juneau.

"It started out that they were one tool in the tool box, now they take a bigger and bigger role," said Tim Jones who has monitoring oil spill drills for RCAC for eight years.

RCAC said its main concerns with the drill were the emphasis on dispersants, a plan to use 750 fisherman for whom no training was provided and lack of public input.

THE KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 1998

Use fund to buy habitat

To the editor,

Recent articles in the Kodiak Daily Mirror have aired competing visions over the eventual allocation of Exxon Valdez oil spill dollars from the upcoming restoration reserve. The restoration reserve is expected to have a corpus of at least $140,000,000 by the year 2002 when Exxon's annual payments end.

Two basic views have emerged about how best to spend the interest off those funds. Habitat protection is strongly supported by many, while research is favored just as strongly by others. Both sides have compelling arguments. Either decision could have direct and positive impacts on conservation and development of resources in and around Kodiak.

Unfortunately the funds, although large, are limited. From where I sit, in the Alaska Department of Fish & Game's Kodiak office, I feel serious consideration has to be given to the expanded protection of Alaska's habitat and perpetuation of ongoing basic resource monitoring programs.

In particular, I strongly believe that a high priority should be given to habitat protection of the Karluk and Sturgeon drainages, as well as the state operated fish weir sites at Karluk and the mouth of the Ayakulik River. The opportunity to protect these drainages in their current, relatively undisturbed, state will not always exist. While it is highly desirable, and even necessary, that we collect better information on complex marine systems, we must also be aware that collapses of North Atlantic, California, Oregon, Idaho and Washington wild salmon runs has occurred primarily because of the loss of freshwater habitat.

Without adequate habitat protection, history has shown that the loss of salmon populations is not only possible, but even likely, over the long haul. The Karluk and Ayakulik salmon systems are the heart of Kodiak's sockeye salmon production; they are also major producers of other salmon species as well as world class wildlife habitat for brown bears and bald eagles. These systems are also playing an important role in meeting the subsistence needs of our rural neighbors. In addition, the recreational opportunities in these drainages are unique and plentiful.

Choosing how the Exxon Valdez Restoration Reserve would best be utilized will not be an easy task. However, there are very few funding opportunities available to protect large tracts of habitat and ongoing management field camp sites. In comparison, funding avenues for marine research are more numerous and flexible. I hope that you and others will agree that protecting the Karluk drainage and weir site, the Ayakulik weir site and the Sturgeon River drainage should become the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's highest funding priority for the Kodiak Archipelago.

—Peter J. Probasco
Alaska Department of Fish & Game

THE PENINSULA CLARION
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 1998

EPA study: Inlet fine for subsistence

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Subsistence foods taken from Cook Inlet are safe, the Environmental Protection Agency has concluded in a study it conducted at the urging of Natives who rely on the inlet's bounty.

Indeed, the agency's top official in Alaska said fish and shellfish taken from the inlet appeared to be among the least-polluted in the world.

Low levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, mercury and cadmium were found in some samples, but it was in amounts far below levels the federal government has set for commercial seafood, Albright said.

Villagers from Seldovia, Tyonek, Port Graham and Nanwalek requested the study over concerns about the potential impact on their food supplies from oil and gas activities in Cook Inlet.

Jeffrey Bigler of the EPA's Office of Water in Washington D.C., met with villagers Monday to discuss the study's preliminary results.

More than 100 samples of subsistence fish, shellfish and marine plants were tested from areas near the villages.

Bigler said all were found to contain very low concentrations of contaminants. The final report will be published early next year.

The results are significant, Albright said, because it could clear the way for federal officials to issue new discharge permits to oil companies that operate platforms in the inlet.

THE CORDOVA TIMES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 1998

Exxon profits from settlement delay

While Exxon waits for the 9th Circuit Court to hear its appeal of the $5 billion punitive damage award granted to plaintiffs in the Exxon Valdez lawsuit, the sum is earning enough interest to pay for itself in just a couple more years.

The interest is adding $812,160 ad day to the $5 billion, according to an article written by Natalie Phillips of the Scripps McClatchy Western Service. At the same time, the interest is also generating about $2 million a day for Exxon.

"As it stands now," Phillips wrote, "if the appeals linger on a couple more years, Exxon will have earned enough in interest alone to pay the $5 billion plus the accrued interest."

Oystercatchers returning to Sound after 9-year hiatus

By Jody Seitz

For The Times

Along the shores of southcentral Alaska, the shrill cry of the black oystercatcher pulls a kayaker's gaze to rocky headlands and cobble beaches washed by the tides. The tidal area is home for the distinctive black shorebird with the red eye and beak.

Oystercatchers don't migrate, but defend and depend on one stretch of beach for all their needs. When they breed and build a nest, it may be on the same stretch of beach they've known their whole lives.

Nine years ago, tides of crude oil washed over the oystercatcher's home and their larder — crabs, mussels, limpets and clams. Because they rely on intertidal habitat, oystercatchers are highly vulnerable to the effects of spilled oil.

About 2,000 oystercatchers inhabit Prince William Sound, but during the summer of 1989 only about nine corpses were found.

Undoubtedly, the small black birds floating in black oil were difficult to see and many carcasses were missed. But scientists thin[illegible]t of the birds fled.

Coastal currents

According to Steve Murphy of the research firm ABR, Inc., the general consensus is that the birds have returned, but data from studies conducted as late as 1993 suggest they may have returned too soon. Their food may still be contaminated. For example, 'dense beds of blue mussels still have oil under them and in their tissues. Murphy says the main concern right now is about the lingering, sublethal effects.

"There's concern that residual oil is affecting their food supply," Murphy said. "The birds are ingesting the tainted foods and that's affecting their reproductive output. It's not lethal, but it's manifesting itself in the reproductive capacity of the birds."

Four years after the spill there were subtle differences between birds in the oiled areas and those in unoiled areas.

"The first was that egg volumes in oiled areas were less than what they were in the unoiled areas," said Murphy. "Then they noticed that a lot of nests were successful in this oiled area, but the growth rates and ultimate survival of the chicks was lower in the oiled than the unoiled zone."

This summer scientists are visiting the[illegible]ame beaches to check the [illegible]lance and distribution of the birds, see if the oiled areas are occupied, and measure the chicks and eggs to see how they're doing.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill[illegible]n.

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B8

Trustee story too glowing

Having read the General Accounting Office report on the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's management of the $900 million Exxon oil spill settlement fund, I found it amusing that the headline in your Sept. 12 story was "GAO lauds oil spill trustee council."

The GAO found that the Trustees paid 56 percent over appraised value for private lands — a fact that cannot be so easily dismissed. It is the situation you expect when a willing seller can find just one willing buyer. Overspending for land when there are a variety of beneficial uses for these funds is not reason for praise, and that's certainly not what the GAO did in their report.

The GAO also found that the settlement funds could be earning far more if the funds were held in higher-yielding accounts, as authorized by an amendment I currently have before the Senate. The GAO also cited an instance where the Trustee Council had paid over $250,000 for services that could have been obtained for a tenth of that amount. With more funds derived from the settlement, we could enhance fisheries research and development and build a more sustainable future for the Alaskans affected by the spill.

I acknowledge and appreciate the dedication of the Trustee Council in meeting the priorities as they have established them, but I do not believe their priority of acquiring more land is consistent with the views of most Alaskans who would like to see more scientific analysis of our fisheries and marine ecosystems and new economic opportunities for residents in the region.

The real issue is that millions are being spent to buy private lands, most of which were unaffected by the spill, and place them in the Department of Interior's hands. In the case of the Native lands purchased, it can be argued that Native heritage — in the form of land — is being exchanged for transitory cash. Because the Secretary has a trust responsibility to Alaska Natives, I believe this represents a conflict of interest. This GAO report did not, and was not intended to, explore that question. Your article leaves the reader with the mistaken impression that all is well with the Council's priority of land acquisition. This is clearly not the case in the opinion of the Alaskans who are contacting me. The fact that you chose to spin a technical audit into a policy blessing didn't convince many of your readers.

— Sen. Frank H. Murkowski
U.S. Senate

Planted clams help supplement subsistence harvests

By Jody Seitz

Coastal Currents

A common saying in the coastal regions of Alaska is "when the tide goes out the table is set." The tide zone holds everything from clams to chitons and provides a smorgasbord for subsistence users and recreational clammers.

After the Exxon Valdez oil spill, clam digging lost its appeal for many people living in the spill-impacted areas. Harvests of shellfish plummeted during the year of the spill and subsistence harvesting was disrupted for several years.

To help offset that loss, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council funded a project to supplement subsistence harvests by creating put-and-take clam fisheries on some beaches in the spill area.

First, though, the Quetacak Hatchery in Seward had to learn how to raise littleneck clams. It was a project never before accomplished in Alaska. Using wild clams and their own ingenuity, hatchery workers Carmen Young and Miranda Barrier, experimented until they were able to spawn the clams and keep the larvae alive. Neither of them had training in shellfish production. Three years later, the results are encouraging. Clams that have been "planted" on beaches are growing twice as fast as expected.

The Quetecak tribe began in hatchery in a small building leased from the Institute for Marine Science. They primarily raised oysters spat for area shellfish farmers.

Biologist Jon Agosti joined the team two years ago, growing another type of clam, manilus, in southeast Alaska. A ling to Agosti, shellfish hatch are more labor intensive than finfish hatcheries. The littleneck clam is also more difficult to raise than the manilus clam, especially in such high densities. "It's a lot of hands on work," said Agosti. "Good husbandry requires a lot of bacterial management. It's easy for pathogens to wipe out a group."

The tiny larvae are fed three types of plankton in specific densities. Thirty million larvae excrete a lot of waste, so the tanks have to be drained daily. Six tanks of 30,000 gallons each are drained through microscopic screens. Workers capture the larvae on the screens, and monitor their condition, health and numbers. Then they are put in a fresh tank.

In 1996, they planted the first littleneck clams in beaches around Tatitlek, Chenega Bay, and Port Graham. When they checked the clams last fall, they determined that the planted clams were growing faster than wild clams. But that is just in the first year, Agosti pointed out.

"To be really confident we would need to see that repeated in a few year classes," he said. "Then we could say with confidence that it's a three- to four-year crop versus our worst fears in the beginning that it might be a six- to eight-year crop," said Agosti.

This January the hatchery moved into brand new quarters in the Seward Mariculture Technical Center, owned by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and built with funds from the Exxon criminal settlement. The subsistence project may pay off for shellfish farmers as well, said Agosti.

"We want to produce large numbers of spat for sale to the growers. This facility was built with an eye for the future when industry will be substantially larger and they'll grow additional species, not just the oysters which dominate production today."

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

THE VALDEZ VANGUARD
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23 1998

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 1998
PAGE 1 OF 2

Environmental conference outlines military contamination and cleanup

BY DAN JESSUP
Mirror Writer

The audience participating in a conference yesterday on environmental concerns, learned that Kodiak inherited a lot more from its military legacy than Ft. Abercrombie and a far-reaching network of roads.

Unsafe elements

Several elements can cause health concerns when they are found concentrated at unsafe levels in the environment. Those which have been found on Kodiak include the following:

Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), which is primarily used in electrical components such as transformers.

Cadmium, a heavy metal used in the manufacture of munitions.

Lead, a metal found in some pipes and structures, but the main local source is from discarded batteries.

Mercury in trace amounts can be found naturally, but when contact with it occurs in contaminated areas, health problems can arise.

Aluminum, a man-made element derived from bauxite.

Cadmium, mercury, and aluminum are known neurotoxins which affect the central nervous system. These elements accumulate through exposure, and cannot be discarded by the body.

Petroleum, a known carcinogen. Old fuel tanks pose the biggest threat to the local environment.

In the first day of a three-day conference hosted by the Kodiak Community Conservation Network, a group of citizens, including about 15 high school students, heard from local, state, and federal officials about environmental issues and pollution problems stemming from old military sites.

Three visiting experts in the field of environmental health also spoke. They were Gretchen Latowsky, from John Snow Institute for Environmental Health Studies in Boston, Dr. Ron Scrudato, who works with the Superfund Research Program and is an expert in geology and PCB contamination, and Dr. Rosalie Bertell, whose expertise includes cancer and birth defects caused by environmental factors.

World War II saw a large military buildup, with sites being constructed from Pasagshak and Chiniak to Termination Point at Monashka Bay. After the war, many of these sites were no longer needed.

Don Bethel, of Federally Used Defense Sites (FUDS) and Steve Hunt, who works at the Coast Guard base with environmental safety and cleanup, spoke of problems specific to our area and their cleanup.

"There are nearly 40 cleanup sites on the base and surrounding area. Nine require no further action, nine are closed, and 20 are being monitored," Hunt said.

Bethel, whose group FUDS works around the state to investigate and clean up pollution sites caused by federal entities (military and Atomic Energy Commission) has been active on Kodiak as well.

"We have been involved in six sites," he said. "These include Ft. Tidball (Long Island), Ft. Smith (Chiniak), and Ft. Greeley (Buskin Beach area)," he said.

"On Long Island, almost 700 cubic yards of contaminated soil, 721 electrical transformers containing PCBs, and more than 20 underground fuel storage tanks were removed from the island," he continued. Bethel said the pollution found at the sites is typical of what they find at other places they investigate.

"Most of the contaminates at old military sites are from PCBs, fuel oils in the soil, and lead which comes mainly from batteries." Bethel went on to say that "Contaminated debris is hauled out, and nothing is left behind. The debris is taken to sites in Idaho and Oregon for disposal."

Bud Cassidy, borough Resource manager, spoke about the condition of the town's lakes. He was a prime mover in forming Clean Lakes of Kodiak, a grassroots organization concerned about the health of local lake systems.

"I live on Island Lake, and many of my neighbors were concerned about the water quality and condition of fish and waterfowl from the area," he said. His group; Clean Lakes of Kodiak, was formed and a general study of the lake systems was undertaken; with varying and sometimes, inconclusive results.

"We found what we thought to be slightly elevated levels of mercury in some of the lakes," he said. "But then, we aren't sure what 'normal' is for this area." He went on to relate other results from the sampling.

Pam Miller, from Alaska Community Action on Toxics

See TOXINS, Page 2

Toxins

Continued from Page 1

(ACAT), spoke of an investigation she was involved in last year on Kodiak at the request of Tim Valliano (known locally as "Mr. Pizza").

"Tim contacted me because he and his family were suffering health problems that had symptoms of being caused by environmental problems," she said. A pamphlet provided by ACAT gave the results of the investigation.

"We found elevated levels of cadmium (used in munitions) and arsenic," she said "and very elevated levels of aluminum." Miller said no pesticides or PCBs were found at Valliano's home.

"Tim has since moved back to (his native) Greece. His daughter was tested at a medical facility in Dallas, and traces of mercury were found in her hair." She went on to say that mercury vaporizes at room temperature, so if it was present in the area, it could be introduced via airborne methods, not necessarily physical contact with the ground.

Valliano's former home is in an area that was once part of a natural marsh, and was filled in during the 1950s. Miller stressed that the ACAT sampling doesn't make a definitive statement on the condition of the area, but should raise enough questions to prompt further study.

Tonight's conference begins at 6 p.m. at the Fish Tech center. The public is invited and there is no charge.

U.S. House takes Calista land deal

By DAVID WHITNEY
Daily News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The House approved legislation Wednesday throwing a financial lifesaver to Calista Corp., a Native corporation for Southwestern Yup'ik Eskimos for whom the promises of the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act have been a distant dream.

The legislation would pay the corporation, whose shareholders are among the poorest residents of the state, more than $39 million for 218,000 acres of far-flung wetlands and mineral rights that federal appraisers figure are worth maybe $5 million.

But the transaction was never really about fair value. Virtually every participant in the nearly 10 years of negotiations that led up to Wednesday's brief House action laid aside any personal reservations to give Calista another shot at self-sufficiency.

"This will give the people in Western Alaska another opportunity to make the Native claims settlement act work for them," Julie Kitka, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives, said in a telephone interview.

The bill's timing is particularly fortunate, Kitka said, because of the disastrous salmon runs that are further impoverishing the Calista region.

Calls to the Calista office in Anchorage were not returned. The Calista provision is part of a noncontroversial package of technical amendments to the ANCSA sponsored by Alaska Rep. Don Young, chairman of the House Resources Committee.

Young is one of the fiercest critics of the federal government and has preached about how he thinks the federal government shouldn't own land, much less buy more.

His legislation pays Calista nearly eight times the appraised value for lands that will become part of

Please see Page B-3, CALISTA

CALISTA: House OKs $39 million financial package

Continued from Page B-1

the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

In a speech on the House floor, Young emphasized that the purpose of the transaction was "to provide Calista with a means of economic self-sufficiency."

According to Young's committee report on the legislation, Calista is in dire need of the help.

"It is the most remote and most socially troubled and economically disadvantaged," the report said. "There are essentially no roads, little infrastructure and the living conditions there can be compared to the Third World."

"The health conditions are in many categories the worst in the nation," the report continued. "There is nowhere else in the United States that is so isolated geographically and culturally."

The legislation was approved on voice vote after less than five minutes of discussion. The only other House member to speak about the legislation was

California Rep. George Miller, the senior Democrat on the Resources Committee, who urged its approval.

Miller, too, had to put aside long-held personal beliefs. Miller has long insisted that the federal government get a fair deal in any land transaction.

Julie Kitka, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives, said the bill's timing is particularly fortunate because of the disastrous salmon runs that are further impoverishing the Calista region.

"I recognize that the Calista Native region faces difficult economic and social challenges," Miller said in a report on the bill. "But Congress should recognize this proposed acquisition for what it is: a gift to Alaska Native corporations, thinly disguised as a land acquisition of dubious merit, courtesy of the U.S. taxpayers."

Miller went on to quote from an Interior Department analysis of the legislation last year. The department said that while it couldn't support the land valuations, "we do not oppose having Congress provide Calista with an economic and social development grant."

Deborah Williams, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt's top Alaska assistant, defended the land transaction as meritorious because it permanently protects wetlands for migratory waterfowl along the Pacific flyway.

"We've spent hundreds of hours working with Calista and the state's congressional delegation, particularly Don Young, on this bill," she said.

But Williams made clear that the administration's position on the bill is something less than jubilant support.

"We are not objecting to this legislation," she said.

Calista Corp. has been lobbying for a land buyout for more than a decade. The campaign dates from at least 1989, when it released a report for congressional hearings titled "The Calista Region: A Gentle People, A Harsh Life."

The report detailed how the Calista region's people were at, or near, the bottom in every measurement of well-being — average birth rate, average death rate, rate of injury, number of suicides, unemployment, per-capita income. These conditions persist despite hope under the 1971 settlement act that investing Calista with cash and land would help it develop a sustaining economy.

"Calista has tried everything but has not even come close to succeeding in meeting shareholder needs," the report said. "It has made an attempt to operate businesses in the region such as fuel delivery, construction, fish processing and even operated an expediting and purchasing company. All these ventures failed."

The report and the corporation's near-bankrupt status became the catalyst for legislation authorizing the land exchange in 1991. But the Interior Department and Calista were unable to agree on a price for the exchange. It's the price that Young's bill established.

Miller pointed out in his comments added to the committee report that the price is dear. The Calista land deal will cost taxpayers nearly as much money as was spent in 1997 nationwide for land additions to wildlife refuges, Miller said.

The legislation now goes to the Senate for approval.

❑ Reporter David Whitney can be reached at dwhitney@adn.com.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 1998

EPA gives Cook Inlet waters high marks

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Subsistence foods taken from Cook Inlet are safe, the Environmental Protection Agency has concluded in a study it conducted at the urging of Natives who rely on the inlet's bounty.

Indeed, the agency's top official in Alaska said fish and shellfish taken from the inlet appeared to be among the least-polluted in the world.

"I think we did find very good news," Rick Albright, the EPA's Alaska director, said Tuesday. "I think it shows that Alaska has some of the cleanest waters not only in the United States but in the world."

Low levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, mercury and cadmium were found in some samples, but it was in amounts far below levels the federal government has set for commercial seafood, Albright said.

Villagers from Seldovia, Tyonek, Port Graham and Nanwalek requested the study over concerns about the potential impact on their food supplies from oil and gas activities in Cook Inlet.

Jeffrey Bigler of the EPA's Office of Water in Washington D.C., met with villagers Monday to discuss the study's preliminary results.

More than 100 samples of subsistence fish, shellfish and marine plants were tested from areas near the villages.

Bigler said all were found to contain very low concentrations of contaminants. The final report will be published early next year.

The results are significant, Albright said, because it could clear the way for federal officials to issue new discharge permits to oil companies that operate platforms in the inlet.

In 1997, Superior Court Judge Sigurd Murphy sided with Natives who said more study was needed to determine what effect, if any, the industry had on subsistence foods.

THE KODIAK MIRROR
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 1998

Debate over dispersants erupts during oil spill drill

VALDEZ (AP) — As part of an oil spill drill, British Petroleum planned to fight a simulated 12-million gallon spill in Prince William Sound with chemical dispersants.

That's raised the concern of at least one oil industry watchdog group.

"Chemical dispersants do not remove oil from the environment and instead drive the oil into the water column," Stan Stephens, president of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, told the Valdez Vanguard newspaper.

"These chemicals should only be used when all attempts at mechanical recovery have failed," Stephens said.

The spill drill, which began Friday and continues through Tuesday, simulates a tanker grounding at Middle Point on Montague Island. The "oil" will migrate through Montague Strait toward Seward before drifting into the Gulf of Alaska, BP said.

The Coast Guard, which must approve all dispersant drops, generally agrees with the advisory council that mechanical recovery — using oil skimmers, booms and barges — will always be the primary response tool and, depending on the spill scenario, sometimes the only method.

Both mechanical methods and dispersants would be used to fight the simulated spill, the Coast Guard said, adding that seawater will be dropped instead of the actual chemical dispersant.

"We're still going full speed ahead with all the mechanical recovery, but we are supplementing with dispersants to try and minimize the environmental impact," said Coast Guard Lt. Agneta Dahl.

The Coast Guard would approve use of dispersants only when conditions permit, Dahl said.

"If you leave the oil on the water, we know that mechanical is not even going to be close to 100 percent effective," Dahl said. "That means the oil is going to eventually end up on the beach, where it does a tremendous amount of damage."

Stephens said in a Sept. 4 letter to state and federal officials that more scientific proof and public input is needed before any conclusions are drawn about the effectiveness of dispersants.

"During past oil spill drills, the RCAC has noticed government is quick to give approval for the use of these chemicals," Stephens wrote. "We believe such approvals, even if simulated during practice drills, are setting a bad precedent."

The council is concerned that dispersants may cause more harm than the spilled oil itself. In addition, little is known about the long-term environmental and human health effects of dispersed oil, Stephens said.

BP spokesman John Andes said the council's input as well as public comment would be considered before the oil industry would seek government permission to use dispersants in an actual spill.

Your comment needed on oil spill plan

To the editor,

As you may know, British Petroleum (BP) is conducting a major oil spill drill out of Valdez, the community portion of the drill will happen Tuesday, Sept. 22. These drills are conducted annually to test the Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Spill Contingency Plan, affectionately known by the players as "The C-Plan."

What is significant about this particular drill is that this is the first time that the TAPS oil transportation trade is actually testing the C-Plan for response to a "Spill of National Significance" or SONS spill, where they anticipate massive amounts of oil to leave Prince William Sound, á la *Exxon Valdez*. This is a major hurdle in the battle for acknowledgment and planning in response to the continued risk we have as "downstreamers" from their transportation route.

That's the good news. Unfortunately, Kodiak is again getting the short end of the stick in many significant ways. First of all, the drill scenario happens on Day 4 of the drill, when they are, by law, supposed to have a BP response team here in the community, beginning to deploy response equipment and personnel, hypothetically derived from the local fishing fleet using our local resources. This is not part of their drill scenario. They are planning a major response from Seward but not from Kodiak. This disregard for history and the probable impact to Kodiak is not new, but it continues to be extremely disappointing.

More importantly, however, is the "Why?" behind the refusal to include Kodiak in response planning in any meaningful way.

Remember, too, that British Petroleum is the majority owner in the Alyeska pipeline and owns more than half of the oil flowing through that pipeline as well as a large amount of the international trade. In 1996, the British government and BP prided themselves in being able to disperse 48 percent of a 400+ million gallon oil spill into the water column of the southern North Sea, the *Sea Empress* spill. That would be the entire *Exxon Valdez* spill in the water column, not floating mostly on the surface. The other half, of course, still soiled the beaches. This is without a doubt the "MO" for the oil transportation industry and how they intend to operate regardless of public policy to the contrary.

As you could expect, BP has scripted the use of these chemicals in the upcoming drill. They have stockpiled mega-quantities of chemical dispersant in Anchorage and Valdez and they expect to use it, all of it, even though little is known about the long term environmental or human health effects of dispersed oil. What is known is that dispersants are toxic chemicals and the Alaskan stockpile is the most toxic of them all.

The RCAC has been dogging this issue for you, the citizen stakeholder, and has developed a strong

One consistent observation made by the PWS Regional Citizens Advisory Council (RCAC) is that during every large spill drill over the last 8-9 years the first thing the hypothetical spiller does is apply for a permit to use chemical dispersants. In every drill, that permit has been quick in coming, even though mechanical recovery is mandated by national and state policy as the primary response strategy. These two approaches are diametrically opposed to each other.

You cannot collect the oil and get it out of the water if, at the same time, you are dispersing it into the water column, spreading it ten times farther than if you did not add the toxic chemicals to it. But then, what would they do with all that emulsified oil and water mixture if the Kodiak fishing fleet was successful in recovering it? Out-of-sight, out-of-mind; except that in every case of dispersant use, the beaches still get oiled. They are gambling that it won't get this far. Do we know better?

For those of us who have spent many years as observers or participants in this process, it is clear that the priority for mechanical recovery is scoffed at by the oil industry and their friends in the Coast Guard. The major push is for the application of chemical dispersants during a response to any large spill. Currently there are even draft regulations within the Coast Guard for "capability requirements" in contingency planning for the application of dispersants.

position on dispersants after many years of study and discussion. The essence of that position is that removing the oil from the environment should be the primary goal of oil spill responses. Chemical dispersants may cause more harm to the environment than the spilled oil itself and should only be considered if absolutely necessary and all else fails. The government should not be making this kind of environmental trade-off without listening to the citizens.

Federal and state government needs to hear your individual support for RCAC's position on dispersants. On Tuesday, Sept. 22, you can call the RCAC Oil Spill International hotline at 800-478-7221 and register your views. RCAC will forward them immediately to the drill's emergency operations center. Or, you can interact directly with the drill by attending the community briefing at the Kodiak College, Rm. 127 at 3 p.m. BP drill representatives will contact the community via live satellite video and you can register your concerns there directly.

Sadly, regardless of stated public policy, the status of oil spill response in Alaska leaves Kodiak in double jeopardy. There is no serious plan or expectation to enable us to respond effectively to minimize the effects of another catastrophic oil spill on Kodiak's resources, and we can expect that the prevailing dispersant use policy will magnify the destructive influence of any spilled oil, potentially altering Kodiak fisheries as we know them for many years to come.

Whether or not you have been aware of the effort of the RCAC, and many others, on your behalf to protect the downstream communities from catastrophic PWS oil spills, if you care, please pick up the phone for two minutes Tuesday afternoon and register your concern and support for RCAC's position on chemical dispersants. This is one place your vote ready does count.

Thank you,

—Kristin Stahl-Johnson

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 20, 1998 (1)

Digging it

Amateurs help archaeologists on Afognak

AFOGNAK ISLAND — Julia Pestrikoff, 82, stretched her legs by a warm stove inside a cavernous platform tent that smelled of mildew and smoked salmon. Her hair was pageboy straight and glowed like soft, white cotton. She wore a clunky pocket book strapped across her chest, Indiana Jones-style. A cigarette dangled from her lips.

Pestrikoff, an Alutiiq elder from Port Lions, was tired. She'd been camped at an old village site called Katenai on this outlying island all week in the rain, sleeping in the "women's tent," while her husband, John, 87, camped with the men. The Pestrikoffs had come here to share their memories and stories with

Please see Page E-6, AFOGNAK

AFOGNAK: Tribal members, others join archaeologists at excavations

Continued from Page E-1

researchers, who, piece by piece, are uncovering a cultural history of this exquisitely beautiful island northeast of Kodiak.

Of 21,000 archaeological sites in Alaska, 840 are in the Kodiak archipelago. Archaeologists have excavated here since the 1930s. A cool, wet climate helps preserve bone, ivory and wooden artifacts, allowing researchers to document 7,500 years of history. Four years ago, the Afognak Native Corp. in Kodiak took the unique step of encouraging its tribal members and other volunteers to join archaeologists at excavations it sponsored. It called the program Dig Afognak.

Remote as it is, the camp at Katenai, near Settlement Point, hardly is lonely. All summer long, children, elders, tourists and renowned experts come and go from a cluster of Weatherports, perched in the spruce above Afognak Bay. At a summer camp on Native traditions, children not only caught squirrels in traps; they skinned, cooked and ate the animals, as their ancestors might have. In a series of oral history projects, elders from neighboring villages helped researchers understand Alutiiq subsistence, lifeways, craft and language.

The contributions "humanized" the work of Katharine Woodhouse-Beyer, the camp's chief archaeologist. While some in her field approach their work in sterile gloves, she said, never interacting with descendants of the cultures they study, Woodhouse-Beyer embraces community involvement. The best way to awaken people to the mission of archaeology, she said, is not to shut them out, but to usher them in.

That's why one rainy day in July, the Pestrikoffs sat in a circle of elders inside one of the big Weatherports. On a table burned a stone lamp, lit with a cottongrass wick. Above hung a 1960s aerial map of Afognak village, which lies directly across the bay from the archaeology camp. Most of the elders were born in the village and lived there until a tsunami slammed it following the Good Friday Earthquake of 1964.

From the air, the old village now appears as an eerie, coastal swamp, where gray, decaying houses are tipped on end, sinking into time. After the tidal wave, instead of scattering, the people of Afognak moved away as a group, choosing a long, shallow cove on Kodiak Island and naming it Port Lions. Even though Afognak village is a short boat ride away, the Pestrikoffs hadn't been back in 13 years.

Early in the week, camp staff ferried elders there to help unlock their memories. Prompted by Jeff Leer, a linguist at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, they tried to recall decades-old details about such things as village games, family connections, trading practices, traditional stories and their own personal histories. Julia Pestrikoff said her father was a blue-eyed, blond-haired Russian, not unusual in this region of Alaska, where Russian and Aleut cultures have mixed since the 1700s. She said her husband courted her in Afognak by inviting her for corned beef soup. Another time, it was chocolate cake. They've been married 63 years and have one son. She still recalls the view of the sea from their home in the village.

"It used to be so peaceful, so nice and quiet," she said.

And then, as a secret aside: "My heart is still in Afognak."

THE LOST ARTEL

The short stretch of beach that leads away from the Dig Afognak camp actually is not a beach at all, but a storm berm, created by the 1964 tsunami. As Woodhouse-Beyer walked it, she explained how a previous tidal wave had swept this same shoreline around 1550, destroying a thriving village. Woodhouse-Beyer, a doctoral candidate at Brown University, came to work for the Afognak Native Corp. in 1994. A specialist in cultural contact, she wanted to learn more about how Russian colonization affected Alutiiq culture.

Alutiiq peoples and their language are found from the western end of the Alaska Peninsula to Prince William Sound, including Kodiak. While the Russians recognized them as different from Aleuts, they lumped all area Natives together, and not until recently have the Alutiiq themselves made a distinction. Historians once believed the Alutiiq were nomads who settled the area 800 years before the Russian invasion. Now, archaeological evidence suggests these people may have occupied the archipelago for thousands of years.

On Afognak, Woodhouse-Beyer and colleagues are studying two important sites. The first is the village that overlooked Afognak Bay — the one destroyed in the 16th century tsunami. Patrick Saltonstall, an archaeologist from the University of Wisconsin, called it the Settlement Point Site, and dates it at 400 to 700 years old.

For 300 years, its villagers thrived in a maritime culture, jigging for salmon with bone hooks and hunting sea mammals with barbed harpoons. They lived in *ciqlluaqs* (in Russian, *barabaras*): round, subterranean houses supported by posts and covered with sod. They cooked their meals in clay-lined pits,

Please see Page E-7, AFOGNAK

AFOGNAK: Artifacts provide evidence of lost Russian-era traders' camp

Continued from Page E-6

where archaeologists have found salmon bones and charcoal remains. Some of the pits were cold storage for a variety of staples that included "stinky fish," or pickled salmon. The winter storage pits sustained these Natives of an era scientists call the Koniag Tradition, a time when Afognak's climate cooled considerably and food became scarcer, especially in winter.

The second site is much younger, but of mysterious origin. In the summer of 1994, Woodhouse-Beyer dug a test pit in a long, rectangular depression high in the spruce trees near the Settlement site. She immediately unearthed a number of items, including a Russian-style shoe and glass trading beads.

From the beginning, the site promised riches. Woodhouse-Beyer dates it at around 1800. She believes a wooden house stood here, the home of a Russian supervisor who managed an *artel*, a work camp where Alutiiq were made to harvest sea otter fur for the Russian American Co. Historic record has always been vague on the location of a work camp operating in the archipelago in the 19th century. After five summers of excavation, Woodhouse-Beyer is convinced the settlement is the lost artel.

The supervisor's house, the main structure, was built between 1819 and 1823 — during an era called the Russian American Period (1741-1867). This was a time when the Kodiak archipelago was the center of Russian expansionism in America. When the *promyshlenniki*, or Russian traders, first came here, an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Alutiiq lived [illegible]odiak — more than nov[illegible]n the entire archipela[illegible]ut 2,500 people. Many died of infectious diseases.

The supervisor's house was a single wooden structure with glass windows, a porch and hand-hewn floor boards. A Native woman probably lived in one corner of the house, where archaeologists found sinew thread, ulus and pieces of pelt. During this era, Russian men were encouraged to marry Native women and start families. Their children were called creoles and enjoyed special privilege in their communities.

The supervisor may have been far from home, but he lived a European lifestyle. The house was abundant with luxury artifacts such as trade beads, a crystal goblet, chandelier and sulphur for gun powder. Woodhouse-Beyer knows the home's floor planking ran north to south, since artifacts that fell through the cracks are found in lines. She was confused by the unusual layout of a double fireplace with a single chimney, until a visiting elder said the design reminded her of the home of a Russian family she'd once known as a girl in Afognak village.

Despite its superior placement on the hillside, the home site was an unfortunate choice, since its drainage was poor. Woodhouse-Beyer pointed out a long ditch that led away from the porch, a kind of futile storm drain. The traditional-style housing of the workers at the base of the hill probably were much cozier.

According to Woodhouse-Beyer, the artel represents the most extensive study of the Russian America period in the North Pacific cultural region. Archaeologists have taken about 60,000 Alutiiq and Russian items from it, including the largest collection of trading beads ever excavated from the archipelago — about 6,000. These artifacts are housed in the Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological

Please see Page E-10, AFOGNAK

Dispersants no cure-all, but they have role in spills

By ERNIE PIPER

COMPASS
POINTS OF VIEW FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Things are truly different today in Prince William Sound than they were in 1989, as Stan Stephens noted in his Compass piece of Wednesday. But one thing hasn't changed: Containing and removing oil from the ocean is a very inefficient process, its success dependent on weather, luck and time more than on the quantity and quality of your equipment.

That's where the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council's arguments against dispersants start to weaken considerably. In a real spill, you don't have the time to try everything else before trying dispersants. Within a few hours on the water, every technique becomes less and less effective. Oil (especially our "asphalty" North Slope crude) quickly mixes with water, forming a thick emulsion that won't skim easily, won't readily burn, and won't disperse easily with chemicals.

Meanwhile, wind, currents and seas break up compact slicks into streaks and slugs, and the longer it's out there, the more likely it is to come ashore. And once it comes ashore, you're guaranteed a long, disruptive shoreline cleanup — or years of tar left in place. Bad choices, all around.

I spent much of the seven years between March 1989 and July 1995 either working on the cleanup or measuring the residual effects of shoreline oiling, and I assure you, I hope no one has to do that again. Shoreline cleanup is little more than managing a series of unpleasant decisions, all of which produce some measure of damage. The place to stop shoreline damage is on the water, and there aren't a lot of easy choices there, either.

Skimmers are basically the same machines they were 10 years ago. They work best when seas are calm, towing vessels have properly collected oil in booms, and they are in a near-shore area where the vessel is most stable. The more emulsified the oil is, the colder the waters, the efficiency tends to go down. They've got their time and their place.

In situ burning, while desirable, depends heavily on special equipment (fire-resistant boom), good ignition, the water content of the slick, wind and sea state. You've got to keep oxygen flowing to the fire (no easy task), and you have to make sure everyone involved in the process is safe. It will work under the right conditions, but not everywhere, and not much after the volatile gases that burn best have evaporated.

There are technical and regulatory guidelines for dispersant use, but they come down to this. Don't use chemicals in near-shore areas or sensitive habitats, and don't depend on chemicals alone.

Which brings us to dispersants. They have limitations, too, some of which Stephens discussed. But the one not mentioned is one of the most important: Dispersants have roughly the same small window of maximum effectiveness that other techniques do. If you can't use them quickly, don't bother.

One of the most appropriate uses of dispersant is as a defensive technique used on the leading edge of slicks that threaten to get out of control and head ashore. This strategy has a legitimate place in our spill-response strategy, and dispersants should be, as responders say, "in the toolbox."

Here in Alaska, the strategy for a major spill response is multifaceted: Burn where you can, skim where you can, use dispersants on the leading edge of shoreline-threatening slicks. This strategy has evolved over time and has been demonstrated at several spill drills.

There are technical and regulatory guidelines for dispersant use, but they come down to this. Don't use chemicals in near-shore areas or sensitive habitats, and don't depend on chemicals alone. The responsible party must be held to the highest standards of successful application, i.e., they've got to prove the oiling conditions are right, that they've got the right dispersant-to-oil ratio, and that they can safely deliver the dispersant where it's supposed to be dropped. But in a big spill, it's got to be in the toolbox right from the start.

I understand, to some degree, the advisory council's concern that dispersants should not work their way to the top of the list in U.S. spill response. However, there's a big difference between 1989 and now that makes me less skeptical of dispersant strategies than I was back then.

In 1989, we were all caught with our pants down, the industry especially. They had no trained crews, minimal and outdated equipment, and no clue how to converse with the public and public agencies on tough options in spill response. Without an ability to conduct a major on-the-water response, they reached right for the dispersants. It was the wrong choice, and we were right to make them back up and get equipment here, not just chemicals.

Today, that's not the case. The command system is rational and team-oriented. The regulators are better informed. The public has an active role in decision-making. The industry has made huge strides and can make a strong on-the-water effort under the right conditions.

Much of the current strategy is built around keeping oil off the shorelines. That makes sense, and dispersants can be both effective and useful as part of an overall on-the-water strategy. It's up to us to make sure they're used right.

❑ Ernie Piper was on-scene coordinator for the state of Alaska's response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill. He is a consultant whose company provides emergency communications support for BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc., although Piper does not work on BP issues. His views are his own.

THE PENINSULA CLARION
SEPTEMBER 21, 1998

Kodiak haul puts harvest in the 'pink'

KETCHIKAN — Commercial fishermen around Alaska are expected to beat the pre-season harvest forecast of 85.6 million pink salmon largely because of the unexpected catch of 21 million fish near Kodiak, biologists say.

The state had forecast a Kodiak harvest of about 6 million pinks.

The commercial seine harvest of pink salmon in Southeast Alaska improved slightly this year, but the overall pink catch for the region is not expected to reach pre-season estimates.

The surprisingly large pink harvest at Kodiak worked to keep prices paid fishermen at about the same levels as a year ago.

Prices have averaged about 15 cents per pound for seine-caught pinks around the state, Savikko said.

Associated Press reports

THE PENINSULA CLARION
SEPTEMBER 21, 1998

Wake study proposed for Kenai River

Army Corps of Engineers to research effect of boat traffic on shoreline erosion

By DOUG LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has $100,000 in its budget for work on the Kenai River watershed. It's spending part of the money planning a study to help pinpoint how much erosion on the Kenai River results from boat wakes.

"We're excited about this, because it's accepted that a lot of erosion on the nation's rivers is caused by boat wakes, but people don't want to admit it," said Ken Eisses, Alaska hydraulics and hydrology section chief for the Corps in Alaska. "This is a good chance to get the data."

Corps study manager Brenda Kerr said that after meetings with Soldotna residents and Ben Ellis — then executive director of Kenai River Sportfishing Association Inc. and a member of the Kenai River Special Management Area advisory board — the Corps decided to spend some of its watershed money to help Alaska State Parks implement the new KRSMA management plan.

What struck the Corps was a recommendation for additional study of the effects of boat wakes, she said. The Corps met with U.S. Geological Survey hydrologist Joe Dorava, who compared boat traffic and rates of erosion at several sites on the Kenai River in 1995 and 1996.

Dorava found the greatest erosion at Big Eddy, where boat traffic was heaviest. He measured bigger wakes from boats with deeper hulls, boats with heavier loads and boats operating nearer to shore, and suggested regulating those factors could reduce erosion. The KRSMA plan recommends further studies before any changes in the present 35-horsepower limit that covers much of the Kenai River.

Kerr said the Corps concluded the next step should be a study under controlled conditions to isolate the effects of hull type, loading, speed and distance from shore. At

See WAKES, back page

...Wakes

Continued from page A-1

Thursday's meeting of the KRSMA board, she proposed Phase I — testing on an Alaska lake to determine how those variables affect wake heights, periods and angle to the shore.

In Phase I, the Corps also proposes bringing a geo-technical expert who would spray jets of water at the banks and compare rates of erosion on different parts of the river. Kerr said the Corps would provide the technical data. The tentative plan is that Dorava would translate it into a readable report.

The lake trials and the water jets on the riverbank would cost $111,000, the Corps estimates. Kerr said the Corps will pay half the cost, and a local sponsor, such as the state, would pay the rest. The local sponsor can contribute up to a quarter of the total cost in-kind.

Chris Degernes, Kenai area superintendent for Alaska State Parks, said the Department of Fish and Game has $120,000 to contribute to the wake study and a study of overcrowding that might be used to justify limiting the number of guides on the river. What the state hasn't decided is how to split that money between the two studies.

In a subsequent interview, Eisses said Phase I wouldn't directly address the effects of wakes on the banks. But the lake work and the erosion tests would provide the foundation a second phase that would.

"The next step is to take it to a flume, put in a bunch of different bank sections and see how they erode," he said. "You can put in bank protections and see if they're effective."

Members of the KRSMA board questioned conducting the study in a lake. The river flows at 6 or 8 knots, said board member Brannon Ames. Boats traveling upstream might produce different wakes than those traveling downstream.

"To have this study be meaningful to anybody, there's going to have to be some work done in the river," said board member Peggy Mullen.

Eisses said Dorava already has good data from boats on the river, including wave heights produced by particular kinds of boats. But on the river, you can't always separate the effects of changes in the variables you're testing from the effects of changes in the current, or the wakes from passing boats.

"If you want a good comparison of the effects of different boats, horsepower and loading, you'd better take all the other stuff out," he said.

That's the reason for a controlled study on a lake.

Eisses said researchers already understand the effects of current. It's easier to do a controlled study and add those back than to work on the river and separate them out. On the river, he said, flow and current can change dramatically from day to day.

Soldotna Mayor Ken Lancaster, also a KRSMA board member, questioned the $12,500 allocated to spray jets of water at the banks. Soils vary so much from place to place that it would be difficult to gather enough information on erosion to be meaningful, he suggested.

But Eisses said the whole idea is to determine erosion rates in different parts of the river. Then, if there's a flume study, researchers can make sure it reflects what happens on the river. It also makes sense to bring experts from several fields at the same time, he said, because then, everyone gets a better idea of what's going on and what to test.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 19, 1998

The Anchorage Times

Publisher: BILL J. ALLEN
"Believing in Alaskans, putting Alaska first"
Editors DENNIS FRADLEY, PAUL JENKINS, WILLIAM J. TOBIN
The Anchorage Times Commentary in this segment of the *Anchorage Daily News* does not represent the views of the *Daily News*. It is written and published under an agreement with former owners of *The Times*, in the interests of preserving a diversity of viewpoints in the community.

Faulty review

TRUSTEES AND staff members of the joint federal-state Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council were understandably thrilled with what amounted to an "attaboy" from the General Accounting Office.

At the request of Sen. Frank Murkowski, the GAO reviewed the records covering the first $600 million, spent through 1997. The report concluded that the council generally is appropriately disbursing money to help restore damaged resources in Prince William Sound.

The GAO noted only a few areas for mild criticism. For instance, it said the council may have spent a little more than necessary to acquire some land from Native corporations.

Murkowski highlighted this particular criticism when he announced the release of the GAO report last week. The secretary of Interior's representative in Alaska, Deborah Williams, responded by saying the higher prices were justified to obtain what the council considers valuable wildlife habitat.

Not that we wish to be a spoilsport, but let's ask: Why quibble over the price paid for an acre of land? How did this relatively minor point come to be the principle matter for discussion?

It would be like investigating a bank robbery and issuing a report that discusses the gas mileage of the getaway car. Would that lead to a public debate over whether a Chevy or Ford was the better choice? Wouldn't the public demand the attention be focused on the bigger picture — the bank robbery, itself?

It is the bigger picture that the GAO missed in its review of the council's activities. Rather than nitpicking a few extra nickels spent to acquire Native-owned parcels, the agency should have questioned the policy of grabbing up the lands to begin with.

The lion's share of the nearly $1 billion Exxon settlement is being used by the council to buy Native land in Prince William Sound. These are lands Uncle Sam distributed under the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act — lands intended to be an ongoing source of revenue for Native generations still to come.

Land purchases completed so far have made some middle men and lobbyists very rich and provided certain Native groups with a short-term financial windfall.

The question the GAO should have addressed is what happens years from now when that windfall is long spent? How will Uncle Sam explain to young Natives that their land endowment was sold decades ago — bought with oil spill money?

The trustees may have done a good job in the eyes of the GAO But it's time for the council to be disbanded — and time for the remaining funds to be turned over to the University of Alaska and used to advance teaching and learning.

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Prince William Sound seal pups big and fat

There may not be many of them, but harbor seals in Prince William Sound are looking fat and healthy, according to Alaska Department of Fish & Game Biologist Kathy Frost.

One theory about the seal decline is that there isn't enough food of the right species and age for the pups to survive the most difficult year of life — the first year. However, right now year-old seals are about twice as fat as yearlings in Canada or the west coast of the United States.

"Prince William Sound right now has some of the biggest, fattest healthiest seal pups in the entire world. We've had biologists coming out with us the last two years who work on harbor seals in eastern Canada, Oregon, and California, and they are astounded at how big and fat Prince William Sound seals are," Frost said.

Frost travels to Prince William Sound twice a year to collect data and count harbor seals. In June they catch seal pups to put satellite transmitters on them, and do a variety of measurements. Researchers had been focused on adults, but when several years of work showed no apparent reason for the population decline, they began to concentrate on pups. Between this year and last year they've tagged a total of 20 pups. They'll also tag pups next year.

The transmitters fall off once the seals molt.

In August the seals shed their coats and spend hours hauled out on rocks, soaking up whatever sunshine there is, and growing their new pelts. This makes it easier to count them. Survey flights go from Cordova across the southern end of the sound, up through the islands in the middle, across the northern sound, and back to Cordova, about a three-hour circle. On August 25, she counted 799. "I tried awful hard for 800th seal, but I didn't see it," said Frost.

Telling the difference in seal numbers from east to west is difficult, said Frost, but in general, the eastern side of the sound, including the Port Gravina area, has fewer seals than the southern sound. "Some parts of the sound just seem to have more seals. The southern part of the sound is big seal country. There are a lot of the things seals like to eat, such as herring and capelin, in that area. And the biggest rocky haulouts are around Channel Island, Port Chalmers, and Stockdale Harbor. Port Gravina has some pretty big haulouts, but in total, fewer seals than the southern sound," said Frost.

The satellite tags have shown that most of the pups born in Prince William Sound stay there the first year of their life. Some go into the Gulf of Alaska to feed. The fact that the pups are big and fat when they are weaned shows that the mother was also in good health.

The technique to measure the seals' body fat was developed only recently.

There is no information about harbor seal pup condition early in the decline, or the years immediately after the oil spill. Eventually Frost hopes to use the information from satellite tags to better understand feeding behavior and seal movements and compare their activities here with those in southeast Alaska, where their populations are thriving.

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio program. The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide information about restoration activities within the spill region.

THE PHOENIX SEWARD LOG
SEPTEMBER 17, 1998

Fish board to consider area proposals next month

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game's 1998-99 Board of Fisheries regulatory proposals have been compiled and the board will meet to consider them beginning Oct. 20 and running through March 26.

Those relevant to the Resurrection Bay drainage will be addressed Nov. 13-18 at Lands End Hotel on the Homer Spit.

While there are about a dozen proposals that would affect waterways near Seward, not many of them are expected to gain board approval.

Proposition 40, which proposes a two-fish yearly king salmon bag limit is designed to cover all waters in the Lower Cook Inlet regulatory area, but Fish and Game management biologist Barry Stratton in Anchorage said he will advise the board not to enforce the limit for Resurrection Bay.

Stratton said the limit is designed to protect king salmon stocks in Homer.

The Alaska SeaLife Center has written two proposals, Nos. 42 and 55. Proposal 42 asks the board to close fishing near the SeaLife Center's fish pass to protect returning fish from anglers.

The center proposes to close about an acre (600-by-100 feet) of fishable water "during the time when salmon are returning."

Maureen Sims, the SeaLife Center's coordinator of external affairs, said, "This is not a provision we asked for, this was one put upon us."

She said the fish pass was proposed by the Department of Fish and Game and subsequently falls under Fish and Game regulations, which state that: "Waters within 300 feet of a fish weir or fish ladder are closed to sport fishing, unless a lesser distance is indicated by department markers."

The approximate acre the SeaLife Center proposal would close is a similar-sized area of water to that from a 300-foot radius closure, but its 100-by-600 rectangular reconfiguration would be less likely to interfere with fishermen.

Stratton said prohibiting fishing near the fish pass amounts to a sport fishing closure but said the board would most likely approve the closure if it were to begin after Seward's annual Silver Salmon Derby.

Proposal 55 is related to the dietary needs of the SeaLife Center's pinniped and seabird population and asks that the board approve the center's desire to catch 14,000 pounds of capelin and 3,000 pounds of sand lance annually to use as food.

Stratton said "tons and tons of fish is a commercial fishery" and the SeaLife Center would need to follow restrictions on gear, areas and seasons for the board to grant approval.

Proposal 47, which "has an outstanding chance" of gaining the board's blessings, would make dip netting herring legal in Resurrection Bay, Stratton said.

As it is now, regulations allow the use of hook and line and gillnets to catch herring, but prohibit dip nets.

The proposal was drafted by William T. Jones, because if nothing is done, "it takes too long to catch herring with a hook and line," the proposal states.

Jones was not available for comment on the proposal.

Some of the proposals that don't stand much chance of passing board muster include No. 45, which would open the Resurrection Bay sockeye salmon fishery to gillnet fishermen.

Stratton said the only way to pass such a regulation would be to modify the entire state's management plan concerning salmon. And that's not something he sees happening.

He said the gillnetters kill fish indiscriminately and there would be no way to prevent pi lvers and king salmon, as w othe: fish and wildlife, from getting caught in the nets.

THE PHOENIX LOG
SEPTEMBER 17, 1998

Visit SeaLife Center without leaving home

LOG Staff

Quest teacher Jerry Dixon in Seward and some of his students are creating a "virtual tour" of the Alaska SeaLife Center that will be available in a couple of weeks to people worldwide who log on to the SeaLife Center's website at www.alaskasealife.org

The students used the school system's digital camera to shoot photos of two of the SeaLife Center's Steller sea lions, the flags at the outdoor entrance of the center and Mount Alice across Resurrection Bay. By splicing together 18 of the photos, the school's computer guru, Tom Twigg, was able to create a 360-degree panoramic view of the SeaLife Center, inside and out, Dixon said.

Three of the Quest students share their thoughts on the project:

SeaLife Center

I really liked watching Kiska and Sugar, the two Steller sea lions, playing around with a fish in their pool. They can swim around their enclosure with powerful strokes of their flippers, doing loops. We sat down and watched them for a long time. We watched them play and swim.

I also enjoyed watching the male octopus. One of the Alaska SeaLife Center staff told us about this interesting animal.

Mr. Twigg (i.e., Tom Twigg) took panoramic pictures and put them on his laptop computer. Later we got to look at them. We could view different parts of the building by moving the mouse. We are going to make a "virtual tour" and put it on the worldwide web. Mr. Dixon, Janessa Anderson, John Rugusa, Carly Locke and I took pictures of outside of the building to put them on the worldwide web.

Kipp Dixon

The best thing

The best thing about the Alaska SeaLife Center was the sea lions because they were like big, furry, playful giants. They were playing tag like little kids in a playground full of water.

They would look at us strangely like they were there to see the people. The names of the two playful giants are Kiska and Sugar. The SeaLife Center staff dropped a fish into the sea lions' tank.

At first Sugar was tossing the fish around the tank and then Kiska joined in. Before you could say "Sugar and Kiska," they were chasing each other. But after the long run, or shall I say long swim, Sugar got the fish. I even thought I saw Sugar smile when she got the fish, through the 7-inch glass wall of her tank.

Our Quest class went to the SeaLife Center to take photos that will be a part of the SeaLife Center web page. We used a digital camera so the pictures can be edited on the computer. People signing in onto the website will be able to see our pictures of the SeaLife Center building and a 360-degree photo of the underwater viewing tanks. We picked a sunny day to go on the SeaLife Center field trip so our outdoor photo should be great.

I really enjoyed my visit to the SeaLife Center. The digital photos that we took will be seen by many people on our web page. The sea lions entertained us with their antics. I hope that people who visit our web page will enjoy our pictures.

Carly Locke

Quest trip

I went on a field trip with my Quest class to the Alaska SeaLife Center. We were taking pictures for an Internet web page. The SeaLife Center is different from other aquariums because the public and scientists are in the same building. It is neat that people can see scientists at work at the SeaLife Center.

My favorite part of the SeaLife Center was when we took pictures of the exhibits. I thought it was fun to use the different kinds of cameras. I liked the thought that what I took pictures of might be on the Internet where thousands of people could see it every month. The SeaLife Center is cool because you can see the animals in their habitat. With our web page, many other people can see them too.

Another part of the SeaLife Center that I enjoyed was watching the Steller sea lions swim around their tank. I liked watching Sugar and Kiska, the two female sea lions, playing with their frozen fish.

It was fun to go to the SeaLife Center. I hope lots of students can come here for field trips in the future.

Janessa Anderson

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
SEPTEMBER 17, 1998

Oil spill response company buys portable otter cleaning stations

KENAI (AP) — The next time a big oil spill threatens otters, Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response Inc. will be ready.

The spill contractor said last week it has hired Peak Oilfield Service Co. to build portable sea otter cleaning and rehabilitation modules made from shipping containers.

The otter-cleaning facility will include eight modules that can be moved by boat or cargo plane. They will include a veterinary clinic, food preparation area and rooms for washing and drying oiled animals.

Floating pens to house cleaned animals during their recovery also are included, said Doug Lentsch, Cook Inlet's general manager.

As it's planned, the center would have a capacity of 40 otters in treatment and another 80 in holding pens.

After an oil spill, the sea otters would pass through an assembly line of treatments before being released.

The animals are particularly vulnerable to oil contamination and thousands are thought to have died after the Exxon Valdez Spill in March 1989.

Cook Inlet has a contract with the Wildlife Rapid Response Team, based in Longbranch, Wash., to treat sea otters. Jim Styers, head of the response team, was director of the Seward Otter Rehabilitation Center in 1989.

Cook Inlet and Peak expect to complete the otter center before year's end. Initially it will be stored at Nikiski, but Cook Inlet may move it to Homer later so it will be closer to likely spill areas, Lentsch said.

Styers has spent time in the Homer area scouting out bays on the south side of Kachemak Bay suitable for floating pens to house captive sea otters in the later stages of rehabilitation, Lentsch said.

During the 1989 spill, Exxon spent about $80,000 per animal to rehabilitate several hundred otters. Hastily built centers at Valdez, Seward and Jakalof Bay near Homer cared for the animals.

Alyeska has built a sea otter facility in Valdez that would be set up in a warehouse at Valdez when needed

Letters to the editor

Sharks have always been around PWS

I am continually surprised at what I read in the papers. The August 31 edition of the Anchorage News had an article about sharks. Lee Hulbert, a research biologist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, apparently said he had fished the Prince William Sound for years and had never seen a wiggle of a shark until 1995.

If this is truly the case he had to have never talked to a fisherman during those years and must have been the most unobservant biologist who ever drew a paycheck.

From the first year I fished Coghill in 1967, I caught shark. Almost every year after that I caught shark either in my gillnet or siene.

In 1968, fishing on the Krisel with Bob and Dolly Sherman we saw no less than 10 thresher sharks in Fidalgo and Knowles Head. Around 1977, I caught a 3,000 pound basking shark off Wingham Island.

I saw a leopard shark jump clear out of the water off of Kinikallik, coming up through a school of salmon in 1985. In Gravina in the 80s I saw 20 or 30 shark finning. So I don't know about Mr. Hulbert's expertise.

For Fish and Game to prohibit commercial shark fishing all together and then compound the error by only allowing two shark a year sportsman catch is totally stupid. (But all in all and as par for the course, this is only in my opinion.)

If how to see a shark is a big mystery, I can solve it. The hatchery has been having a big shark feed every year since 1990. What was it — 9 million salmon wasted in 1990? Or was it 1989? This year probably close to it by the reports I've heard.

The very real danger to all of this as I see it is the threat to the red salmon and king salmon runs off the Copper River Delta next year. If 10,000 sharks eat 10 salmon a day, it will take 10 days for them to consume a million reds and kings. Is anybody reading this?

Who knows — maybe that's where the Bristol Bay run went. To unleash unlimited predator pressure on any species is to invite disaster on that species.

So now it would appear as though all the predators on salmon are protected — sea lions, seals, killer whales, and now sharks. Then add unlimited sportsman pressure.

Now guess who will get the blame for the red and king salmon decline? Three guesses and the first two don't count. Why, it's your poor old 12-hour-a-week commercial fisherman. I guess we all have black hats.

I hope to live long enough to hear the Fish and Game biologist be honest enough to say: "We could have saved that salmon run if we had not been so damned stupid."

If I got that wish, I'd probably outlive Methusala.

Stan Samuelson

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
SEPTEMBER 14, 1998

Audit finds no fault in oil spill trustees' land acquisition prices

By ROSANNE PAGANO
Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Government auditors reviewing higher-than-appraised prices paid for hundreds of acres acquired by Alaska's oil spill trustees have declined to fault the payments, relying on council findings about the lands' unique values.

In a General Accounting Office audit released Friday, auditors said the council paid about 56 percent above government-appraised value for lands acquired for habitat restoration.

Nearly all of that stemmed from five purchases involving about 360,000 acres, auditors said. Those tracts — three on Kodiak Island, one in Chenega and one within Kenai Fjords National Park — were acquired between 1995 and 1997.

The audit found that prices eventually paid by the trustees were between two and almost four times more than government-appraised value. Sellers' appraisals took into account resources such as rivers, lakes, salmon and development potential, the auditors noted.

"(Government) appraisers generally determined that the highest and best use was to hold the land for speculation, and thus valued the land at a relatively low price that the sellers were unwilling to accept," auditors said.

The audit did not fault the council's decision to pay more than appraised value, citing instead the trustees' findings that parcels provided "exceptional habitat" or needed protection from possible habitat degradation.

Auditors also urged a change in federal law that requires the council to place its funds within a federal investment system only. The council, which has advocated a law change as well, said the federal system pays returns of only about 5 percent and cost $439,000 in management fees in fiscal 1997 alone.

The report questioned three scientific projects — involving Southeast pink salmon, Prince William Sound killer whales and Kenai River sockeye — which auditors said seemed within the purview of existing federal or state agencies.

But Stan Senner, the council's science coordinator, said each project would not have been undertaken without oil spill settlement funds.

"We believe in all three cases that management agencies wouldn't have had the financial resources to look at those projects," Senner said.

It was the second GAO audit aimed at the trustee council since 1993, when reviewers focused on the council's early efforts to begin a program.

The current audit was requested by U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, who has attacked the council for its purchase of Native lands.

The accounting office is a nonpartisan congressional agency that audits federal programs. The Exxon Valdez oil spill trustees, a council made up of state and federal agency representatives, oversees Alaska's $900 million settlement paid by Exxon after the Prince William Sound tanker wreck in 1989.

Molly McCammon, the council's executive director, said she was gratified by the audit.

See EVOS TRUSTEES, Page 2

EVOS trustees

Continued from Page 1

"It shows this (environmental) restoration program is a model for other restoration efforts in the future," McCammon said.

But Anchorage-based marine biologist Rick Steiner, who several years ago unsuccessfully asked a federal court to review council spending, said he was disappointed.

"The audit was just a recitation of what the money had been used for, and we all knew that already," Steiner said in a telephone interview Friday. "We still have a lot of unanswered questions."

For instance, Steiner said he hoped auditors would begin by examining a consent decree, which settled Alaska's oil spill claims against Exxon, to determine if restoration goals contained there are too narrow.

"What happens with a narrow definition of restoration is that we essentially limit oil comp [illegible] abilities for natural resources in the future," Steiner said.

He also said the audit should have determined how — or if — council policies had been informed by multi-million-dollar scientific studies funded by the trustees.

Murkowski, who is pursuing a change in federal investment law at the council's request, said Friday he continued to question the council's purchase of Native lands. Some Natives have complained that they are losing their "land heritage," Murkowski said.

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Auditors find land prices reasonable

By ROSANNE PAGANO
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE – Government auditors reviewing higher-than-appraised prices paid for hundreds of acres acquired by Alaska's oil spill trustees have declined to fault the payments, relying on council findings about the lands' unique values.

In a General Accounting Office audit released Friday, auditors said the council had paid about 56 percent above government-appraised value for lands acquired for habitat restoration.

Nearly all of that stemmed from five purchases involving about 360,000 acres, auditors said. Those tracts – three on Kodiak Island, one in Chenega and one within Kenai Fjords National Park – were acquired between 1995 and 1997.

The audit found that prices eventually paid by the trustees were between two and almost four times more than government-appraised value. Sellers' appraisals took into account resources such as rivers, lakes, salmon and development potential, the auditors noted.

"(Government) appraisers generally determined that the highest and best use was to hold the land for speculation, and thus valued the land at a relatively low price that the sellers were unwilling to accept," auditors said.

The audit did not fault the council's decision to pay more than appraised value, citing instead the trustees' findings that parcels provided "exceptional habitat" or needed protection from possible habitat degradation.

Auditors also urged a change in federal law that requires the council to place its funds within a federal investment system only. The council, which has advocated a law change as well, said the federal system pays returns of only about 5 percent and cost $439,000 in management fees in fiscal 1997 alone.

The report questioned three scientific projects – involving Southeast pink salmon, Prince William Sound killer whales and Kenai River sockeye – which auditors said seemed within the purview of existing federal or state agencies.

But Stan Senner, the council's science coordinator, said each project would not have been undertaken without oil spill settlement funds.

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