2-26-98

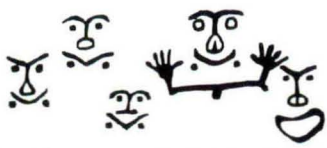
Dear Veronica -

Our heartiest thanks for all of your helping in having the Evos artifacts from Kodiak loaned to the Alutiiq museum. The boxes arrived yesterday - just in time for a board meeting. All of our directors were thrilled. Please let the trustee council know how much we appreciate their financial and logistical support.

My Best, Amy Steffian

ALUTIIQ SPIRITUALITY

The burning lamp is an ancient symbol of Alutiiq prosperity, and provided light and heat to prehistoric Alutiiq households for millennia. Hand carved from stone and filled with oil rendered from sea mammal blubber, oil lamps were lit with a wick of twisted cotton grass. The oil lamp is a technology that the Alutiiq share with coastal peoples throughout the Arctic region. In addition to providing light for daily activities, Alutiiq oil lamps were also lit during public ceremonies to reflect the enduring ties between people and animals. Each lamp had its own spirit which was prevented from escaping by storing the lamp upside down. Many of these ancient spiritual traditions were transformed by Russian colonization. Beside the lamp is Kodiak's Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Church, which is attended by many Alutiiq people who have combined the Orthodox faith with their own world view to produce a spirituality that remains uniquely Native. The light of Alutiiq culture continues to burn strongly in Kodiak's communities.



Come visit the **Alutiiq Museum & Archeological Repository** at
215 Mission Road, Suite 101, Kodiak, AK 99615
Phone: (907)486-7004 E-mail: alutiiq2@ptialaska.net

Janelle Peterson Design, ●1997 Alutiiq Museum & Archeological Repository

PHONE COMMENT LOG

Name: James Showalter Affiliation: Phone: 262-4615 Address:

Box 352 Soldotna 99699

Add to mailing list? Yes ✓ No ____ Newsletters only ✓ Technical Docs + ____

Date of call ____ Comment taker Eric Myers

Subject of comments ____

Comments

Called to ask for information about the Restration Plan + use of the settlement funds. He was specifically interested in understanding why settlement funds were being used to purchase lands on the Kenai river since it was not oiled by the spill.

He also was calling to object to the sale of Kenai Native Assoc. lands and said that the shareholders were opposed to the sale + that the former management of KNA no longer represents the shareholders

Eric explained how the settlement was structured and how land purchases on the Kenai River + elsewhere helped to restore damaged resources + services

Mr. Showalter was sent a copy of the Restoration Plan

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

Conserving Land for People

RECEIVED
FEB 23 1998
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

February 18, 1998

Dear Friend of the Homer Spit and Beluga Slough

I am writing to inform you that Governor Tony Knowles has recently approved an expenditure of nearly one million dollars for the purchase of critical intertidal habitat on the Homer Spit and Beluga Slough in Homer The funds provided through the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Small Parcel Program, together with funding from the City of Homer will be used to purchase approximately 107 acres from 5 property owners

This decision comes as the result of efforts made by you and others to let the Trustee Council and Governor Knowles know how important these lands are to Homer's quality of life, tourism industry, and the hundreds of thousands of migratory shorebirds that rely on this habitat each year After the purchase of this land is complete, the City of Homer will be responsible for its management as open space in perpetuity The City is already planning ways to enhance the public use of the area through boardwalks and viewing platforms for bird watching

Unfortunately, not all of the property submitted to the Council was approved for purchase The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is still working closely with the City of Homer and the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (KHLT) to secure approximately $300,000 to purchase six acres of land near the public fishing hole on the Spit I look forward to keeping you informed of our progress If you have any questions concerning this initiative, please don't hesitate to contact me at 206/587-2447, or Barb Seaman at KHLT (907/235-5263)

Again, thank you for your support and interest in the protection of one of south central Alaska's most well known landscapes Be sure to mark your calenders for the Kackemak Bay Shorebird Festival on May 7th - 10th in Homer Most importantly, if you have the opportunity, please thank Governor Tony Knowles and the EVOS Trustee Council for their efforts to protect this important resource

Eric - FYI
congratulations again!
Sometimes hard work
pays off. Our
work towards closing
in March is still
on track.

Sincerely,

Chris Rogers
Project Manager

The Trust for Public Land
Northwest Region
Smith Tower Suite 1510
506 Second Avenue
Seattle WA 98104

Anchorage Daily News

50 CENTS
LII, NO 286

SATURDAY January 24 1998 ★

FINAL EDITION

Knowles funds bird sanctuary

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — Gov Tony Knowles has broken a legisla tive logjam that threatened a complex effort to set aside 107 acres on Homer Spit and nearby Beluga Slough for mi gratory birds and the small tourism boom they generate

Knowles announced late Thursday that he has ap proved a nearly $1 million purchase of the land using money paid by Exxon for damage caused by its 1989 oil spill

The deal lumped several small properties into one piece and was put together by a San Francisco based nonprofit called Trust for Public Lands which worked with the city of Homer and the Kachemak Bay Heritage Land Trust

We re thrilled with that,' Homer Mayor Jack Cushing said Friday I think the people of Homer and the tourism industry 100 years from now are going to thank the gover nor the Legislature the Trust for Public Lands and Kachemak Heritage Land Trust

Tens of thousands of birds feed along the Spit s muddy shore each May during their annual migration north Their stop has become the focal point of the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival, which in recent years has plugged area hotels weeks before the traditional Memorial Day kickoff to the sum mer tourist season

Cushing said his phone started ringing with calls

Please see Page B 3 BIRDS

BIRDS: Knowles approves funding for purchase of sanctuary land near Homer

Continued from Page B 1

from relieved supporters as soon as word of the approval spread through Homer Not only do residents enjoy the birds he said but the shore bird festival now entering its sixth y ear is quickly gaining national attention

The land purchase will put the land in Mud Bay and Bel uga Slough under control of the city which envisions boardwalks better parking and gazebos for bird watch ers Getting the land was the keystone to making a lot of this happen, Cushing said

The city had worked for more than a year with the two public interest real estate groups to forge an arrange ment that would appeal not only to the five private landowners who will sell their property but also to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, which de cides how settlement money will be spent

Only legislative approval held up the package and deadlines in the real estate agreements would have ex pired long before lawmakers took up the issue as part of the supplemental budget in February

While the Legislature is supposed to make spending decisions Knowles stepped in to prevent the deal from unraveling according to a press release issued late Thursday by the Oil Spill Trustee Council

The administration was a little vague Friday in explain ing just how Knowles did it but said he followed existing state law

We re working on ways to allow this to go forward said Annalee McConnell di rector of the Office of Man agement and Budget Obvi ously the purchase has not been consummated yet but we do believe we ll be able to make this all come together I think it ll be well received by the public

McConnell pointed out that the Homer Spit purchase en joyed approval from just about everybody including lawmakers House Speaker Gail Phillips R Homer and Sen John Torgerson R Kasilof both have said they favor the deal and expected eventual authorization

The Legislative Budget and Audit Committee rejected the Homer Spit purchase Dec 12 when it convened prior to the session At the time committee members said their decision wasn t based on the merits of the Homer purchase Rather they said spending decisions should be made by the entire Legislature

Some also echoed a theme repeatedly voiced by U S Sen Frank Murkowski who has questioned the spill trustees decision to spend millions of dollars on land rather than put money into fisheries research and economic development

Legislative Budget and Audit Committee chairman Sen Randy Phillips R Eagle River said he suspects Knowles took advantage of a law that allows the governor to authorize certain types of spending rejected by law makers as long as he does it within 45 days of their vote

We re not too crazy about this particular statute Phillips said

Phillips said Knowles has used the rule more than any governor in recent memory The senator said he hoped to call a meeting next week to see if the loophole can be closed Not because of Homer he said but because this has happened over the last year four or five times

PHONE COMMENT LOG

Name	Affiliation	Phone	Address
Jeff Pasco		567-3365	

Add to mailing list? Yes____ No____ Newsletters only____ Technical Docs +____

Date of call: 2/13/98 Comment taker: Eric Myers

Subject of comments: Small Parcel KEN 1005 - Nunilchik

Comments:

Mr. Pasco called in reference to the KEN 1005/Nunilchik small parcel purchased by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Pasco has a lot in a subdivision adjacent to the KEN 1005 property. Mr. Pasco related that he had been advised (by whom it is not clear - perhaps a real estate agent or a representative of the Nunilchik Native Assoc.? - that he had a property interest in the subject land. (He discussed this issue w/ Alex Swiderski; see attached e-mail)

Mr. Pasco was not happy that the subject property had been sold by the landowner and wanted to protest the sale. Eric Myers informed Mr. Pasco that he could make his concerns known at the next Trustee Council meeting but that no meeting was currently scheduled. Myers referred Mr. Pasco to Alex Swiderski, who negotiated the purchase, to answer further questions.

Eric Myers

From: "Alex Swiderski"
To: 'carolf@dnr.state.ak.us'; Eric Myers
Subject: Re: KEN 1005 small parcel
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 1998 10:10AM

Mr. Pasco called me several times about the sale well before the sale was closed. Ken 1005 is apparently between his subdivison lot and the Kenai Ri ver. He claimed that he had an access easement across the property. When I advised him there was no recorded easement, he then said it was an oral promise from Ninilchik. I advised him that as a real estate agent himself he surely understood that any easement had to be recorded to be enforceabl e. I told him I would include some language in the deed assuring publlic access to the property. He then advised me that he and the other subdivisi on owners felt they should have an exclusive access easement, and I advised him that I was unable to accomodate that request and that he should addre ss that to Ninilchik before they sold the property. I have never heard from any of the other subdivision owners. Following discussions with Ninilch ik we included language in the deed assuring public access to the property.

Alex Swiderski
1031 W. 4th Av. Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-5274
(907) 278-7022 (fax)
alex_swiderski@law.state.ak.us

>>> Eric Myers <EricM@oilspill.state.ak.us> 02/17 9:25 AM >>>

Carol: FYI... I went ahead and spoke with Jeff Pasco (567-3365) on 2/13/98... he owns a lot in the subdivision adjacent to KEN 1005... apparently someone (real estate agent perhaps? or possibly the native corp? unclear) represented to him that the lands in question would remain as is... he's unhappy the land was sold to the state (not clear exactly what his concern is since the land is not being developed for any particular purpose), but he wanted to know about the process, what opportunity he had to comment on the sale... (he suggested that the state should have posted adjacent properties and put up signs announcing the pending sale... I also spoke with Alex who had prior knowledge of the Mr. Pasco ... when I spoke with Pasco, I refered him to Alex for additional details about the small parcel process ... Alex indicated that he'd take further questions... unclear what, if anything further will come of it... Eric

---

From: Carol Fries
To: Eric Myers
Subject: Re: KEN 1005 small parcel
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 1998 9:01AM

Eric,
KEN 1005 is located adjacent to Ninilchik State Recreation Area. There are no plans for facilities for this parcel. It is just sitting there. It is wetlands so it won't support much in the way of facilities. Generally the intent is to preserve the streambank and associated habitat. Before Parks would make any improvements on the parcel, they would solicit public comment. I can make a few more calls, but I am not sure what all the fuss is about. Ninilchik could have tried to develop it. Landowner has the right to dispose of as he sees fit.
Carol

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Alaska Regional Office
2525 Gambell Street, Room 107
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-2892

IN REPLY REFER TO:
N36(AKSO-RER)

February 9, 1998

Memorandum

To: Molly McCammon, Executive Director
ATTN: Sheri Womac

From: Bud Rice, NPS EVOS Liaison

Subject: Restoration Notebook Series

Thank you for the wonderful first set of four recently published Restoration Notebook series. I believe this series would greatly benefit resource managers and interpreters at a number of national parks in Alaska with marine resources that were impacted by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill or that have similar marine resources near or within their boundaries. Please send this and future notebook series publications to the following National Park Service addresses in addition to mine:

Anne Castellina, Superintendent
Kenai Fjords National Park
P.O. Box 1727
Seward, Alaska 99664

Karen Gustin, Unit Manager
Katmai National Park and Preserve
P.O. Box 7
King Salmon, Alaska 99613

Jim Brady, Superintendent
Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
P.O. Box 140
Gustavus, Alaska 99826

Diane Jung, Regional Interpretive Specialist
Alaska Support Office
2525 Gambell Street, Room 107
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Thanks for the great product!

Sincerely,

Bud Rice

Bud Rice

Pratt
Museum

...mer Society of Natural History, Inc. *3779 Bartlett Street, Homer, Alaska 99603*

February 5, 1998

Via Facsimile to:
907-276-7178

3 pages

Molly McCammon, Executive Director
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3451

Dear Molly:

I want to thank you and everyone involved in planning and hosting last week's Restoration Workshops. As usual, they were informative and stimulating. It was a great time to touch base with everyone.

While I never got a chance to talk with you, I did speak with Stan and Joe about the need for the Pratt to get some help with updating *Darkened Waters*, our exhibition on the spill. The traveling version will move to it's next venue later this month. Updating will be done after the exhibit has been installed. In my mind it is particularly important that this year's updating and the Council's exhibit at the SeaLife Center reflect some element of coordination. Both Stan and Joe seemed to agree. Joe also mentioned that there is some thought of turning what you do at the SeaLife Center into a travelling exhibit and he asked for our advice regarding that whole process. We agreed to talk more sometime this week.

There was merit in the Restoration Reserve proposal Bob Spies presented at the Workshop. I was pleased to see among his "guiding principles" a call for greater public outreach and support for formal/informal education (principle 13) and for greater involvement of students in research through programs similar to Youth Area Watch (principle 14). It is my opinion that both are necessary if the research Bob envisions is to have public support or if the resulting data is to influence future policy decisions and resource management practices. Recent studies indicate that scientific literacy in the United States is at an all-time low, while public apathy and distrust toward the scientific community is at an all-time high. A strong effort will be required to turn this around.

The Pratt Museum's *Sperm Whale Project* and *Kachemak Bay Discovery* programs are aimed at increasing scientific literacy by bringing students into contact with scientists and their research and through related community programing and exhibitry. As one of the original *Kachemak Bay Discovery* collaborating organizations, the EVOS Trustee Council is in a position to use Museum programs to increase public awareness and enthusiasm for Restoration Reserve programs. I look forward to continuing Council participation and support and encourage incorporation of Bob's guiding principles 13 and 14 into whatever final Restoration Reserve plan emerges.

Sincerely,

Mike O'Meara
Special Projects Coordinator

P.O. Box 937
Homer, Alaska 99603
January 19, 1998

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

Dear Ms. McCammon:

I want to thank you for providing the excellent program "Alaska Coastal Currents" which brings together much information for the general public on the research, restoration and changes in Prince William Sound following the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. It is so important to let the public know what is going on by interviewing many authorities in different agencies on topics and in terms that are easily understood by a layman.

I found it very interesting to find out how research is done, how samples are collected, how animals are tracked and how the health of the environment is monitored. The agencies involved in the different areas affected by the spill bring us up to date on the long term impacts on food supplies and signs of recovery.

"Alaska Coastal Currents" covered so many interesting topics and recorded studies going on (seabirds, otters, octopi, land animals, intertidal zones, plants, archeological sites and artistic cultures...). Jody Seitz is to be highly commended for organizing a wonderful variety of short, informative and interesting topics.

Please continue these excellent programs which leave a concise record of studies and research going on at this time in the history of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Klingel

RECEIVED
JAN 21 1998
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

TC project

TONY KNOWLES
GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001
(907) 465-3500
Fax (907) 465-3532

STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

January 7, 1998

Mr. Tony Turini, Director
National Wildlife Federation, Alaska Office
750 West Second, Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Tony,

Thank you for your letter regarding the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council's habitat protection program.

The Trustee Council has been trying to work with the state's Congressional Delegation to secure federal legislation which would allow the council to invest settlement funds outside of the court system in order to increase earnings consistent with prudent trust management principles. During consideration of this legislation, Senator Frank Murkowski proposed to include provisions which would direct how earnings from these new investments could be used. The Trustee Council opposed the proposed restrictions; but as you know, this issue was not resolved prior to the adjournment of Congress and is a matter which may be taken up again next year.

Please know I appreciate the value of the Trustee Council's habitat protection efforts as a key element of the Restoration Plan formally adopted by the Trustee Council in November 1994. Together with the council's scientific program, I believe we continue to make substantial progress toward the goal of ecosystem restoration following the oil spill.

Thank you again for contacting me.

Sincerely,

Tony Knowles
Governor

cc: Molly McCammon, Director, *Exxon Valdez* Trustees Council

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Varez

Name Kenneth Varez
Address 8839 Cross Pointe Loop, Anchorage, AK 99504
Telephone: 907-338-8815 Email: Kvarez@alaska.net

JAN 7 1998

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Linda K. Imle

Name Linda K. Imle
Address 3925 Resurrection Dr, Anch, AK 99504
Telephone: [redacted]257-2791 Email: anlki@uaa.alaska.edu

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

This is certainly the method to use the money!

Sincerely,

Todd Smith

Name Todd Smith
Address 1029 Ugrok Ave Point Lay AK 99759
Telephone: 833-8211 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Sigrun C. Robertson

Name Sigrun C. Robertson
Address 7611 Ermine St, Anchorage, AK 99504
Telephone: (907) 333-6171 Email:

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

I see habitat protection as the most important aspect of restoration of the Sound Whether by purchase or lease of lands or purchase of logging rights I spend a lot of time in these areas and have been a significant reduction in numbers of mammals, birds & fish

Sincerely,

Name Marilyn Scarborough
Addre 17001 Aries Ct
Telepl Anchorage AK 99516-5316
345-0069
Email

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name DAVID W MCKELVEY
Address 1889 E. TUDOR RD. #E104/ANCHORAGE/99507
Telephone 562-5083 Email DWM@ALASKA NET

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Mary Jane Mangus
Address 1401 W 13th Av 99501
Telephone 278-9275 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name LOUANN FELDMANN
Address 10421 LONE TREE DR 99516
Telephone 346152 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name Rachel McConnell
Address 1487 S. Van Ness SF CA 94110
Telephone: Email: rachelstu@earthlink.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

THANK YOU FOR THE LAND YOU HAVE PROTECTED SO FAR. I WILL TRY TO HELP YOU PROTECT MORE IN THE FUTURE.

Sincerely,

Name RICHARD BEASLEY
Address 7711 HENNINGS WAY ANCH 99504
Telephone: HO 337-8664 WK 269-8809 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name George Beck
Address 4051 E 64 Ave Anch AK 99507
Telephone: 344-6740 Email: geobeck@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name Karyn & Adam Grove
Address 4701 E 145th Ave
Telephone Anchorage AK 99516-4106 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Bonnie L Bunz
Address 14710 Park Hill Circle, Anchorage, AK 99516
Telephone (907) 345-5113 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Dr Robert D Wald
4520 Edinburgh Dr
Anchorage, AK 99515 1121

Name
Address
Telephone 90 34170 Email bilb@humanoid.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely, Joel D. Hubbard

Name Joel D. Hubbard
Address 4220 Southpark Bluff Dr. Anchorage AK 99516
Telephone Email JOEL.HUBBARD@MMS.GOV

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name James Baumann
Address 8250 Kip Ct Anch AK
Telephone (907) 344 0623 Email dude@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the [redacted] Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name_ Ms. Ruth H. Wetzlich
Addres P.O. Box 870527
Telephone: Wasilla, AK 99687

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name Alice J. Crawford
Address 8233 Loganberry St.
Telephone: 243-3056 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Jane Burri
Name JANE BURRI
Address 6911 ROUND TREE DR Anchorage AK 99516
Telephone: 907-346-4296 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

E.T. Allen
Name E.T. ALLEN
Address 1839 E. TUDOR RD #302 ANCHORAGE AK 99507
Telephone: 561-1879 Email: allene@alcompo.topcover.af.m

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Douglas P Short
Address 2813 E. Tudor Rd #4 Anch. AK 99507
Telephone _____ Email _____

Dear LVOS Trustees

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Jo Clark
Address PO Box 876395, Wasilla, AK 99687
Telephone (907) 376-9570 Email _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Brian J McMahon MD
Address 3110 Regis Ct Anchorage, 99508
Telephone 337-0847 Email _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council habitat protection, program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

I believe Murkowski has zero business meddling in this program

Sincerely, Mark Lusch

Name Mark Lusch
Address PO Box 870634 Wasilla, AK 99687
Telephone _____ Email mlusch@[illegible]alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Tom Armstrong

Name Tom Armstrong
Address POB 877150 Wasilla, AK 99687
Telephone: _____ Email: mta@akcache.com

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Martin R. Sherman

Name MARTIN R. SHERMAN
Address P.O. Box 91298 ANCHORAGE, AK. 99509
Telephone: 248-5755 Email: _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Gretchen A Cusack

Name Gretchen A CUSACK
Address 19634 Big Diomede Eagle River AK 99577
Telephone: 696-1696 Email: _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Joyce Bauer

Name Joyce Bauer
Address 2201 Lake George Dr. Anch.
Telephone: 333-1790 Email: craigb@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Linda Maxwell

Name
Address P.O. BOX 671693, Chugiak, AK 99567
Telephone: 688-3118 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Faber

Name LARRY FABER
Address P.O.Box 201147, ANCH. AK 99520-1147
Telephone: 907-243-8569 Email:

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name
Address
Telephone: 337-0905 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

David E Peach

Name
Address 5401 Bristol Dr, Anchorage AK 99516
Telephone: 345 1464 Email: Peach@Alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Marie V. Lastufka

Name Marie V. Lastufka
Address Box 110052
Telephone 346-1744 (907) Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

RECEIVED
DEC 29 1007
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Sincerely,

Terri Brandon

Name TERRI S. BRANDON
Address 4900 Chuck Drive, Anch., AK 99507
Telephone 907-729-3403 Email tbb3@cdc.gov

Dear EVOS Trustees

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Sylvia J. Cyr

Name
Address 2517 McKenzie Dr, Anchorage 99517
Telephone 243-5935 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Dena Goldberg

Name Dena Goldberg
Address 5626 E 40th Ave Unit E104 Anchorage
Telephone 333-5236 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Teresa Blume

Name

Address PO Box 201456 Anch Ak 99520

Telephone Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Please continue your efforts at habitat protection!

Sincerely,

William M Cox MD

Name

Address

Telephone 907 349 7080 Email

William M Cox, M D
7806 Linda Lane
Anchorage, AK 99518

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Nancy K Vait

Name Nancy K Vait

Address POB 1532, Homer, AK 99603

Telephone 907-235-5944 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Karen L Severy

Name KAREN L SEVERY

Address 3957 KUTCHER, ANCHORAGE AK 99516

Telephone Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Carl Jr. DelValle

Name Carl Jesse DelValle
Address 5721 Colly Dr Anchorage 99504
Telephone _____ Email _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

S. L. Barker

Name Sheri Barker
Address 905 Rich Vista Rd #322 Anchorage 99501
Telephone 277-0171 Email _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Colleen K Bickford / Jay T Bickford

Name JAY & COLLEEN BICKFORD
Address 2429 Telequana DR, Anchorage, AK 99517
Telephone 248-4348 Email _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Helen M. Ryan

Name Helen M. Ryan
Address 2220 NORTH STAR #21, ANCH 99503-1887
Telephone 907-272-1901 Email _____

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Dagmar J. Nye
Address The Nye Family 12011 West Rimrock Blvd. Anchorage, Alaska 99515-1562
Telephone 1-907-349-1154 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Please consider cultural site protection as well

Sincerely,

Name Jeanne Schaaf
Address 14240 Old Rabbit Ck Rd
Telephone 345-6071 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name RALPH H. BASNER
Address P.O. Box 187, PALMER, AK 99645
Telephone 907 373-2256 Email DBasner@MSB.Mat-Su.K12.ak.us

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name IVAR IVAN KOTEN
Address 9495 HILAND RD. EAGLE RIVER
Telephone 694-7430 Email

...Trustees,

...support the Exx...dez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. ...his outstanding c...ation program has protected lands all across the ...989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, ...nds are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land ...es in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska ...laritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more ...aces.

...support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to ...rotect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

...incerely,

...ame Kim Behrens
...ddress PO Box 110498 Anch, AK 99511
...elephone: 345-5304 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name P.H. WADDINGTON
Address P.O. 797 HOMER, ALASKA 99603
Telephone: & FAX 907 235 2385 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection pro... This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all acro... 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trust..., lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name SANDRA VAISVIL
Address 2440 E. TUDOR #337 ANCH AK 99507
Telephone: 561-3690 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

T. Smallwood
Name T. Smallwood
Address PO BOX 231712 Anch AK 99523
Telephone: 907 2644052 Email:

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Gwen Turner

Name Gwen Turner
Address 5520 E 98th Anchorage AK 99516
Telephone (907) 346-1327 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

David B Dolese

DAVID B DOLESE
Name 2577 FORAKER DR
Address ANCHORAGE, AK 99517
Telephone 243-3274 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Sylvie Montalbo

Name Sylvie Montalbo
Address PO Box 1052 Girdwood AK
Telephone 783-2069 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Richard L Crisci

Name RICHARD L CRISCI
Address 10160 CRAIG CREEK ANCHORAGE 99516
Telephone 907-346-3883 Email asrlc5@uaa.alaska.edu

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

I homesteaded on Kachemak Bay over 50 years ago — & in 1997 had a wonderful kayak trip in Kenai Fjords —

Sincerely,

Wm Wakeland

Name Wm Wakeland
Address 150A W 15th Anchorage 99503
Telephone 563-6246 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Robert F Shary

Mr Robert F Shary
3417 W 84th Av
Anchorage, AK 99502-5304

Name
Address
Telephone Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Thankyou for your part & a program For all species.

Sincerely,

Jeri Alexia Rosenthal

Name
Address 325 Eklutna #3 Anchorage, AK 99504
Telephone (907) 338-5174 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Protecting fish & wildlife habitat is paramount for our children's futures

Sincerely,

Terry Cummings

Name Terry Cummings
Address 6740 E. 10th, Anchorage 99504
Telephone 333-7509 Email

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

We need to STOP DON YOUNG & FRANK MURKOWSKI's LAND grabs for LOGGING, MINING, etc

Sincerely, Gerald R. Taft

Name Mr. Gerald R. Taft
Address 3180 Marathon Cir Anchorage, AK 99515
Telephone: 349-9989 Email: gtaft@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

The more land acquired [redacted] to protect fish & wildlife habitat the better!

Sincerely,

Name JAMES R. CARTER
Address 3505 WOODLAND PARK DRIVE
Telephone: 907-243-6744 Email: jrc@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Name Nancy d. Paton
Address 336 Fischer Ave. Anchorage AK 99518
Telephone: 907-562-6698 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Land acquisition for habitat protection- YES
Buy the Land

Sincerely,

Name Jean M. Eaton
Address 8700 E. Klatt Rd Anchorage AK 99516
Telephone: 907 345-3606 Email: jeaton@alaska.net

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Jay + Pilar Stearns
Address 6961 Lovitt Circle Anchorage Ak 99516
Telephone 346 7800 Email

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name KIRK HUNSAKER
Address 3160 ADMIRALTY BAY, ANCH. AK 99515
Telephone Email mhunsaker@aol.com

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

I believe strongly that land acquisition is the highest & best use of the Exxon settlement money.

Sincerely,

Name Anne Marie Holen
Address 11241 Latta Circle Anchorage 99516
Telephone 346 2789 Email amholen@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Rachel Gernat + Dan Cheyette
Address 19235 Second St. Eagle River, AK 99577
Telephone 696-6932 Email dcheyette@customcpu.com

Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

PLEASE CONSIDER PURCHASE ~~OF~~ LAND TO EXTEND THE SHIP CREEK GREENBELT AND OTHER ~~GREEN~~ SUBAN GREENBELTS ALONG STREAMS

Sincerely,

Name JULIUS ROCKWELL, JR
Address 2944 EMORY ST ANCHORAGE AK 99508-4486
Telephone (907) 277-7150 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

I support your position on this matter 100%! Best of luck!

Sincerely,

Name Kimberly Bailey
Address 5101 E. 98th Ave, Anch. AK 99516
Telephone Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name KAREN JETTMAR
Address 618 W 14th Ave Anch 274-9087
Telephone Email egunnor@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Maureen Davis
Address 8023 Briarberry St #1 Anchorage 99502
Telephone 248-4653 Email

...Trustees,

I support the Ex...aldez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding ...ervation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant por...of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat thro...land acquisition.

Sincerely,

White

Name DONNA WHITE
Address 11120 HUFFMAN Rd. #362 ANCH. AK 99515
Telephone: 345-7311 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Ash

Name CHARLES R. ASH
Address 11300 POLAR DR ANCHORAGE, AK 99516
Telephone: 907 344-1340 Email:

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection p...
This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Kathleen E Johnson

Name Kathleen E Johnson
Address 2315 Eureka St Anch AK 99503
Telephone: Email: KJohnson@unicom-alaska.com

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program. This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone. Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places.

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Barbara Morris

Name Barbara Morris
Address PO Box 874254, Wasilla, AK 99687
Telephone: 907 373 5221 Email: mrguides@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council s habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Please consider land near Cordova and Valdez in PWS. Other areas of Homer, Kodiak & Seward were ~~to~~ not as directly affect as communities in PWS.

Sincerely,

Philip S King

Name Philip S King
Address 7611 Mentra St. Anchorage, AK 99518
Telephone 907-344-8694 Email skipper@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees, lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name
Address
Telephone Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

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I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely, Susan E Negus

Name Ms Susan E Negus
Address P O Box 141004
Telephone Anchorage, AK 99514
Email sanegus@alaska.net

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I support the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's habitat protection program This outstanding conservation program has protected lands all across the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill zone Thanks to the foresight of the Trustees lands are now permanently protected from logging and other damaging land uses in Kachemak Bay State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest and many more places

I support allocating a significant portion of the "Restoration Reserve" to protect fish and wildlife habitat through land acquisition

Sincerely,

Name Jennifer A Sutton
Address 1841 Alevkan St Anchorage AK 99508
Telephone 272 8026 Email estera@alaska.net
estera

Sincerely,

Name ANJANETTE KNAPP
Address 1333 B P ST ANCH. AK 99501
Telephone 272-4725 Email

Dear EVOS Trustees,

I understand you are looking for suggestions on how to spend your endowment. I strongly encourage you to continue using the money to protect habitats through land aquisition in sensitive areas. Habitat destruction has such an enormous impact on wildlife welfare, anything that can be done to slow it down is a step well worth taking. And I can think of no better way to preserve Alaska's beauty than to allow it to continue undisturbed. Please use a large portion of the Restoration Reserve to preserve habitat for animal and plant species native to our great state.

Thank you!

Rebecca Maxwell
P.O. Box 671693
Chugiak, AK 99567
(907) 688-3118

12/31/97

✓Sandra
✓Veronica
✓Stan
✓Eric

Restoration Office Tentative Meeting Schedule

6 Staff Meeting (9:00 am)

January 1998

13 ARLIS Founders Board
14 Wash Policy Group (Wash. DC)
26 SEA Review, Hotel Captain Cook
27 NVP Review, Hotel Captain Cook
28 APEX Review, Hotel Captain Cook
28 Community Facilitators, Restoration Office
29-30 Annual Restoration Workshop, Hotel Captain Cook

DRAFT

3 Staff Meeting (9:00 am)

February 1998

2-3 Genetics Review (tentative dates)

3 Staff Meeting (9:00 am)

March 1998

2-4 March Food-web modeling workshop

April 1998

7 Staff Meeting (9:00 am)

May 1998

5 Staff Meeting (9:00 am)

June 1998

For more information on any of the above meetings, please contact the Anchorage Restoration Office.

Update: 12/30/97 rwf

THE CONSERVATION FUND

RECEIVED
DEC 31 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

BRAD A. MEIKLEJOHN
ALASKA REPRESENTATIVE
9850 HILAND ROAD
EAGLE RIVER, ALASKA 99577
(907) 694-9060
FAX (907) 694-9070

Molly McCammon
Executive Director
Exxon *Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, AK 99501-3451

December 29, 1997

Dear Ms. McCammon,

The Conservation Fund has prepared the enclosed preliminary proposal detailing the establishment and management of a $20 million *Small Parcel Permanent Fund*. The purpose of the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* is to build a long-term funding source for the acquisition of critical habitat areas throughout the spill zone of the Exxon *Valdez*.

The Conservation Fund proposes to invest and manage $20 million from the Exxon *Valdez* Restoration Reserve for growth of the fund principal and annual income for land acquisitions. The Conservation Fund intends to invest the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* with a professional investment manager as a long-term stock and bond portfolio. Based on historical performance, even a conservative investment strategy for $20 million would produce a total return in excess of $1 million annually.

In coordination with state and federal agencies, The Conservation Fund would use the annual returns from the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* to purchase small parcel properties within the spill zone. The Conservation Fund has a proven track record of acquiring properties on Kodiak Island and the Kenai River, often below fair market value and often with funds raised from sources other than the Exxon Trustee Council. To date, The Conservation Fund has attracted $2 million to the Kodiak project from corporations, individuals, non-profits organizations, and federal grants. The Conservation Fund has the capacity to leverage the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* and to acquire good habitat at a fair price.

The enclosed proposal outlines our preliminary ideas on how a small parcel fund could be invested and managed. We do realize that many of the details would need refinement before creating the fund. We are more than willing to discuss these ideas further.

Sincerely,

Brad Meiklejohn
Alaska Representative

cc: Patrick Noonan, John Turner, Dr. Bob Putz

SMALL PARCEL PERMANENT FUND

A Preliminary Proposal from The Conservation Fund

The Conservation Fund proposes the creation of a *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* to acquire private properties within the oil spill zone of the tanker *Exxon Valdez*. A grant of $20 million from the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council will be invested, managed, and leveraged by The Conservation Fund as a long-term funding source for small parcel acquisition. The establishment of the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* will end the EVOS Trustee Council's involvement with small parcel acquisitions.

Since 1994 The Conservation Fund has assisted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Alaska State Parks in acquiring small parcels in the spill zone. The Conservation Fund has attracted a broad coalition of financial partners to the Kodiak small parcel effort, generating matching funds from businesses, non-profit groups, individuals, government agencies, and federal grants.

Through matching funds and careful investment, the $20 million *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* could annually generate funds to acquire property with a fair market value of $1 million with no reduction in the fund principal. Managed carefully, the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* could be a perpetual funding source for habitat protection.

EVOS Small Parcel Program

The EVOS Trustee Council initiated the Small Parcel Program in 1994 in recognition of the strategic value of small tracts of land in a broad conservation program. Tracts as small as a few acres can control access, management, and wildlife activity in a vast watershed. Inappropriate development of these small parcels can undermine protection of the surrounding uplands. The development threat is typically higher on smaller parcels because they are more readily bought and sold on the real estate market than larger tracts.

Opportunities to protect important habitat areas for spill-injured species will continue to arise unpredictably. We think it is important to develop a long-term funding source to take advantage of these opportunities. Alaska has never fared well in the distribution of the national Land and Water Conservation Fund, and a state funding source for land acquisition is not likely for the foreseeable future. The *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* could address habitat protection needs in the spill zone for many years to come.

While the pool of available funds is dwindling, public support for habitat protection, particularly small parcels, remains strong. The *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* is a creative way to terminate the Trustee Council's involvement with small parcels, to leverage EVOS money with matching funds, and to pursue habitat protection for many years to come.

The Conservation Fund - Alaska Acquisition Experience

The Conservation Fund is a national land trust responsible for protecting 1.4 million acres of habitat and open space throughout the country. The Conservation Fund develops partnerships in pursuit of sustainable conservation solutions that integrate economic and environmental goals.

In Alaska, The Conservation Fund has established working relationships with realty staff, biologists, managers, and directors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Alaska State Parks, Native corporations, and private land owners. Since 1994 we have completed the following acquisitions:

- 318-acre gift at Uyak Bay (Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, USFWS)
- 155-acre acquisition at East End Road (Kachemak Bay State Park, AK State Parks)
- 17 ten-acre parcels in Uyak Bay (Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, USFWS)
- 23-acre Tall Timbers property at Kenai River (ADF&G)
- 17-acre Lowe property at Kenai River (ADF&G)
- 27-acre Grubba property at Kenai River (ADF&G)
- 17 Kodiak properties, including lands at the Karluk and Ayakulik rivers (USFWS, ADF&G), totaling 260 acres.

The following acquisitions are in progress:

- 2800-acre Kennicott property (Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, NPS)
- 8-acre Mullen property (Kenai River, ADF&G)
- 79-acre Patson property (Kenai River, ADF&G)
- 3-acre Karluk weir (Kodiak, ADF&G)
- 7-acre Fiore property (Kenai River, ADF&G)

All acquisition work done by The Conservation Fund has delivered the properties to the acquiring agencies at or below fair market value, based on agency reviewed and approved appraisals. In fact, the Fund often acquires properties at well below fair market value, resulting in a considerable savings to the agencies.

In addition to The Conservation Fund's own Revolving Fund, we manage the Northeastern Wetlands Conservation Account, and the SALWIL Revolving Fund, to support land acquisitions.

Leverage

One of The Conservation Fund's greatest strengths is in leveraging our financial resources. In our work on Kodiak Island, we have built an extensive coalition of partners to finance the purchase of small parcels of important habitat. We develop financial partnerships to maximize the leverage of each contributor. So far the Fund has attracted $2 million in private funds and grants to the Kodiak small parcel effort. Highlights of the Kodiak partnership include:

- The acquisition and donation of a 318-acre parcel at Uyak Bay, ranked "high" in EVOS Small Parcel process. This gift from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, valued at $700,000, was the first such conservation donation in Alaska.
- A Challenge Grant of $150,000 from the Orvis Company and Customers.
- Grants of $50,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and $437,000 from the North American Wetlands Conservation Council.
- Major contributions from the Kodiak Brown Bear Trust, Wildlife Forever, Anheuser-Busch, and the Weeden Foundation.

The Conservation Fund has the capacity to leverage the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* with money from private businesses, non-profit groups, foundation grants and government appropriations.

Investment

The Conservation Fund will invest the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* with a professional investment manager as a long-term stock and bond portfolio. The investment strategy will emphasize protection of the fund principal, with sufficient annual income and growth to fund small parcel acquisitions. Our consultations with investment advisors at Mellon Bank, Chevy Chase Bank, and Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette indicate that an annual return of 7-9%, based on historical performance, could be expected from a conservative investment portfolio. Portfolio managers would adjust asset allocations of the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* to respond to market conditions.

While a range of options exists within the risk/return spectrum, even a conservative portfolio with a 7% annual return on $20 million would provide $1.4 million annually. Adjusted against a long-term rate of inflation of 3%, such a portfolio still provides $800,000 annually for small parcel acquisitions and/or to build the fund principal.

While the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* could be managed as a "perpetual" funding source, the fund could alternately be drawn down over time and liquidated by a specified date. If the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* was scheduled for liquidation over a 25 year period, the fund could be drawn down as follows:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Principal	$20 million	$19.4	$18.8	$18.2	$17.5
Draw Down	$1.4 million	$1.39	$1.38	$1.36	$1.35
	Year 10	**Year 15**	**Year 20**	**Year 25**	
Principal	$14.1 million	$10.4	$6.2	$1.7	
Draw Down	$1.28 million	$1.21	$1.12	$1.03	

This model assumes an annual draw down of $1 million plus one-half of the annual return, based on an annual rate of return of 4% after inflation; the remaining one-half of the annual return is reinvested in the fund principal. For example, in Year 1, the

annual return of 4% on $20 million is $800,000, one-half ($400,000) of which is reinvested, while the other one-half is available for small parcel acquisitions

Several portfolio managers have indicated a willingness to discount their management fees by 10-25% because of the nature of this account As a result, portfolio management fees are projected to be less than 0 5% annually

Property Acquisition

The Conservation Fund will coordinate with state and federal agencies to identify acquisition priorities Much of this work has been completed through the existing EVOS Small Parcel Program The Conservation Fund will make a deliberate effort to provide parity for state and federal agencies

The Conservation Fund will appraise, negotiate, and acquire all **properties from willing sellers at or below fair market value, based on agency reviewed and approved appraisals** With land values in the spill zone exhibiting a wide range, from $500 per acre to $30,000 per acre, $1 million could buy as much as 2,000 acres to as little as 33 acres But even parcels as small as one acre can be important sites for access, habitat, and management

Decisions to acquire properties will be based on agency priorities, degree of threat, and financial performance of the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* It may be practical to expend less than, or more than, $1 million in any one year The Conservation Fund's own Revolving Fund can be drawn on to provide loans for expensive or complex acquisitions

Where possible, The Conservation Fund will pursue conservation easements and limited development opportunities to stretch the buying power of the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* As an example, The Conservation Fund is acquiring the 8-acre Mullen property on the Kenai River for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game In the transaction, the Mullens are conveying a conservation easement to Kachemak Heritage Land Trust to limit future development of the property Because of this easement the ADF&G purchase price for the property is reduced by 1/3, saving roughly $50,000 and doubling the habitat protection In an example of limited development, The Conservation Fund acquired the important wetland habitat areas of the Tall Timbers property while the owners retained the less-critical areas for homesites

In Summary

The *Small Parcel Permanent* Fund can provide a long-term source of funding for small parcel acquisition in the spill zone. With a fund principal of $20 million, at least $1 million could be available each year for land protection.

The Conservation Fund will add value to the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* in three ways:

1. By acquiring properties below fair market value
   The Conservation Fund will acquire properties in a cost-effective manner.

2. By investing the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* to produce income and growth
   Assuming a $20 million fund, an annual rate of return of 8%, and inflation at 3%, income and growth could produce $1 million annually.

3. By leveraging private funds, grants, and appropriations
   The Conservation Fund has a proven track record of attracting additional funding to acquisitions on Kodiak Island.

The Conservation Fund has the experience, flexibility, and creativity to responsibly manage the *Small Parcel Permanent Fund* as a long-term funding source for habitat protection in the *Exxon Valdez* spill zone.

Sent by Fax: This is a confirmation copy.

Alaska Rainforest Campaign

Alaska Center for the Environment * Alaska Clean Water Alliance
Alaska Wilderness League * Defenders of Wildlife * Earth Justice Legal Defense Fund
National Audubon Society * Natural Resources Defense Council * Sierra Club
Sitka Conservation Society *Southeast Alaska Conservation Council * The Wilderness Society

December 15, 1997

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

Dear Ms. McCammon, molly,

The Alaska Rainforest Campaign would like to make sure you know how much we appreciate your staff's thorough work on the Pauls and Laura Lakes portion of the proposed Afognak Joint Venture acquisition. In particular, ADF&G biologist Mike Weidmer and Department of Law attorney Alex Swiderski should be commended. After consulting with biologists and conservationists, they developed a scientifically-based priority list for acquiring individual pieces of the area in question.

It is unfortunate that the Trustees have not set aside enough money to acquire all lands that deserve protection in this area. Given that constraint, though, the approach outlined by Mike and Alex enables the Trustees to focus negotiations on the most important habitat.

We realize the negotiations ahead will be difficult, with no guarantee of success. We are hopeful that the capable work by your staff will improve the odds of completing a deal that protects the most biologically important portions of this vulnerable area.

Best regards,

Matt

Matt Zencey
Campaign Manager

RECEIVED
DEC 17 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

320 4th St. NE
Washington DC 20002
(202) 544-0475

419 6th St. #318
Juneau AK 99801
(907) 463-6755

3326 W. 29th Ave.
Anchorage AK 99517
(907) 243-8003

James G. King
1700 Branta Road
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Molly McCammon, Executive Director
EVOS Trustee Council
645 G Street, ste. 401
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3451

12/12/97

Dear Molly,

The enclosed letter from Professor Albert Tyler resulted from the last PAG meeting that he attended. I think you will agree it confirms my conviction that the University could work with the Trustee Council to develop an endowed program that would address all the needs and ideas we are hearing for use of the Restoration Reserve. I hope that the public will be given the option of considering a well designed proposal for such a program.

Please forward copies of Dr. Tylers letter to the Trustee Council and to members of the PAG.

I do hope that Dr. Tyler will be invited to future PAG meetings where use of the Restoration Reserve is discussed.

Please accept my best wishes for the holiday season to you and the staff and my congratulations for such a productive year.

Sincerely,

Jim King

James G. King, PAG member

cc Professor Tyler

RECEIVED
DEC 17 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

P.O. Box 757220 Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7220

December 5, 1997

Mr. James G. King
1700 Branta Road
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Mr. King:

Thanks for your letter of November 11. I was glad to be of help at the EVOS Public Advisory Group (PAG) meeting of November 4, and would be glad to attend other meetings. I believe that I have to be specifically invited to a meeting in order to attend officially as an advisor from University of Alaska.

Regarding details of endowed chairs, here are some possibilities. Endowed Chairs are attached to specific Colleges and Schools of the three main academic units: UAS, UAA, UAF. They are connected to degree programs, since the chief function of the University is undergraduate and graduate education.

The traditional concept of an endowed chair is that it supports a senior level professor who is specially recruited to fill a prestigious position. The professor has already achieved tenure because of his/her reputation and extensive accomplishments, and the chair is designed to attract the best in the world to the given university. It is expected that the individual would continue the level of accomplishment that has been evident at the time of the appointment. The chair is usually provided until retirement, and often the funds come from a private source.

The PAG seemed interested in supporting a faculty member if he or she was specifically engaged in research fitting the evolving criteria of the EVOS restoration. A perpetually endowed chair with a broad objective area, but with an appointment for a fixed term would seem most appropriate.

One might ask: "Why not just pay the portion of the salary that goes toward the specific research task", i.e., provide a competitive grant as EVOS has been doing? In answer, I suggest that competitive grants will always be the life-blood of the research process, but the limitation here is that the grant has to be applied for by a faculty member who is already hired by the University of Alaska. If there is no one at the University with a particular research specialty, then one would look Outside. Throughout North America university

245 O'Neill • Phone (907) 474-7824 • FAX (907) 474-7204 • Internet: fysfos@aurora.alaska.edu

faculties are getting smaller each year. In Alaska the Legislature has provided less funding each year, with the result that retirements are not being refilled. This year the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences had 11 faculty and staff leave through the State of Alaska Retirement Incentive Program (RIP). Much money was saved in this way because the people who retire are usually paid at the top of their salary brackets. But in the end, the University has to cope with fewer professors. Of the eleven, seven were faculty members and only two have been authorized to be replaced. Another RIP will occur this academic year.

Where do endowments come in? An endowment is from a gift that goes to the University of Alaska Foundation, and can be directed towards a category of research. The category can not be so specific that a contract is implied. A subject like "Research and teaching of ecology of salmonids of waters in and around Alaska" would be a good category. This chair might be called the "Exxon endowed Chair in Salmon Biology". The teaching would specifically include both undergraduate and graduate education carried out via hands-on activities of a research project that the student does in partnership with a professor. The end-product is not only a pertinent report on a specific research problem, but, as you point out, the launching of a young professional to carry on the tradition.

The Exxon endowed Chair in Salmon Biology could be occupied by a given individual for a fixed term, but the endowment in the University of Alaska Foundation will be established in perpetuity. This means that after the fixed term a new faculty member would be hired to fill the chair. As an example the Wadati Chair in Geophysics at UAF is a five year appointment. The EVOS Trustees, or their successors, could establish guidelines for specific chair recruitment depending on research priorities. The result would be an additive process that increases the capability of the University to carry out relevant research and training. I believe that this process would fit under the developing concept for a Restoration Reserve Fund.

Sincerely,

Al Tyler

Albert V. Tyler, Ph.D.
Professor and Associate Dean

11-18-97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a concurred student from Round Meadow Elementary School. My class and I read A book about what ***"YOUR"*** ship (The Exxon Valdez) did to thousands of poor helpless creatures. We think you should by more land so you can restore the populations of sea otters, birds, and the rest of the marine life.

If you don't buy this land you will live a horrible life knowing that you just let poor animals die from your oil.

Sincerely,
Andrew Britt

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a student teacher at Round Meadow Elementary School in Hatboro, Pennsylvania. Our class has been working on a unit about animals and endangered species. We have just completed the story Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. We are writing to you in regards of the land acquisition agreements in Kenai Fjords National Park.

We feel that it is not only your job, but your duty to continue to pursue this land acquisition agreement with Port Graham and other Native corporations. This land will help restore the population of sea otters, not to mention many other species of animals and plants.

We feel strongly that your corporation should continue to acquire land to help restore the populations of marine mammals that the Exxon Valdez harmed.

sincerely,
Rachel Axelrod

C/O Pat Swindells
2925 Byberry Road
Hatboro, PA 19040

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11/18/97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a fifth grade student at Round Meadow Elementary. We have read the story Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills and have been trying to preserve animal habitats.

We feel your spill has caused a lot of animals deaths and would like you to buy more land in Kenai Fjord National Park and restore animal population by increasing the size of that park.

Sincerely,
Erik Spicer

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

Hi! I am a student at Round Meadow Elementary School. Our class has been reading about animals and endangered species. We feel that it is not your job, but your duty to continue to pursue this land agreement with Port Graham and other Native corporations. We want you to make Kenai Fjords National Park bigger. We did our part now it's your turn!!!

Sincerly,
Kristin Ray

A person who cares.

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil trustees,
When all those animals died from your oil spill the population of the animals was unconceivably low.
We want you to buy the land so the animals can repopulate yet have more room. We feel thats your responsibility.

Sincerly,
Brett Sivesind

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a ten year old girl in fifth grade and I go to Round Meadow Elementary School. I am very concerned about the accident that has happened a couple of years ago. So I am doing my best to proswaide you to acquire tracks of land. You should make Keni Fjord National Park bigger, for the animals and the damage you have caused in their lives. A tremendous amount of animals have died because of this oil spill. I think that the land should be bought from you and make the place they have to live on a lot larger. The animals do deserve a better life. You could make up for the things you have done.

Sincerely,
Samantha Malgieri

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I'm a 10 year old boy. I go to Round Meadow Elementray School in Pennslyvannia. We have just finished the story Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. We have been working on a unit about animals and endangered species. We are writing to you regarding the land aquisition agreements in Kenai Fjords National Park.

We want you to honor this agreement with Port Graham and other National Corporations. This will help to restore papulations of animals that were harmed and killed. The animals were drivin' from there natural habitat by the oil that spilled. If we don't give them a home they will soon be extinct. We will did not to only be concerned for this generation but future generations as well.

Matt Johnston

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez oil spill trustees.

I think its important to give the Kenai Fjord National Park should make it bigger so the animals can reproduce there species. If the park gets bigger the population of animals will get larger. Hunting season should only be for two days.

Sam Karasow
from Round Meadow

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdex oil spill Trustees,

I am a student at Round Meadow School. I am ten years old. I may be a kid, but I read the story of Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. you should buy land so we can restore the unfortunate animals that suffered and died in the oil spills. Please help animals by buying land and restore the animal's.

Sincerely,
Felicia Levin

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exon Veldez Oil Spills Trusteez,

I'm a student at Round Meadow Elementary Shcool. I'm eleven years old. Mrs. Swindells has just finished reading a book called Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. I feel you should pursue this land because when oil spills happen it destorys the land even causes death to the animal. We think if you bye more land it will help these speces out. Plus the population will be bigger & stronger then before. So you should try to pursue the people for this land.

Sinceely
Dusty Smith

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Valdez Oil Spill Trustees

I am a fifth grader at Raind Meadow Elementary School. My class and I just finished reading Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills we are writing to you so you stop hurting animals and so you do not pollute their habitats

Your freind
Mike C

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11-18-97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Trustees,

I am a student at Round Meadow Elementary School. Our class has been reading a story about animals and endangerd species. We just finished reading Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. I'm writing to you about makeing Kenai Fjord National Park BIGGER!

I feel that it's not only your duty to continue to pursue this land agrement with Port Graham and other Native corp. This land will help hurt and endangerd species to recover and restore populations of animals that are harmed. I feel that you should continue to acomplish this agreement fully to help these hurt and endangerd species.

Sincerly,

Kevin Rairdon

Kevin Rairdon

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11/18/97

Dear Exxon Oil Trustie,

I'm a 5th grade student from Mrs. Swindells class. Please try to buy the extra land in Kenai Fjonde National Park. This will put more ocean sea life on the beaches. This way more animals will be able to go around by themselves. If you do this you will be saving otters and other sea life

Singerly,
Brian
Acher

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11/18/97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a fifth grade student at Round Meadow Elementary School. 5k (Mrs Swindells class) have been working on a unit consisting of Saving Sea Life from Oil Spills.

I feel that it is very important that you carry out to pursue with the land agreement. I feel that is a great idea. It will make a large change in the existence of many animals.

Sincerely,
Brian McCoy

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Nov. 17, 1997

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees.

I ara a student in Round Meadow Elementary School Mrs. Swindells class has been working on endangered species. We want to make Kenai Fjord National Park bigger. So the anamals aren't a pest to the nabors. We think it not only your prombe but your duty to do this. Try to pursue this land. Agreement with Port Graham and other Native corporation

By

Korinne

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil spill Trustees,

I 'm a ten year old student at Round Meadow Elementary School. I have just read Saving Sea Life from Oil Spills. I think that you should have more land in the Kenai Fjord National Park. I think this because the Exxon Oil Spill was terrible. Thousands of animals were killed.

I feel that you should have the park bigger. By buying more land you could have the population of animals grow. I feel that since you have been given the responsibility to save these animals, and you should take this seriously!

Sincerly,
Jesse Hill

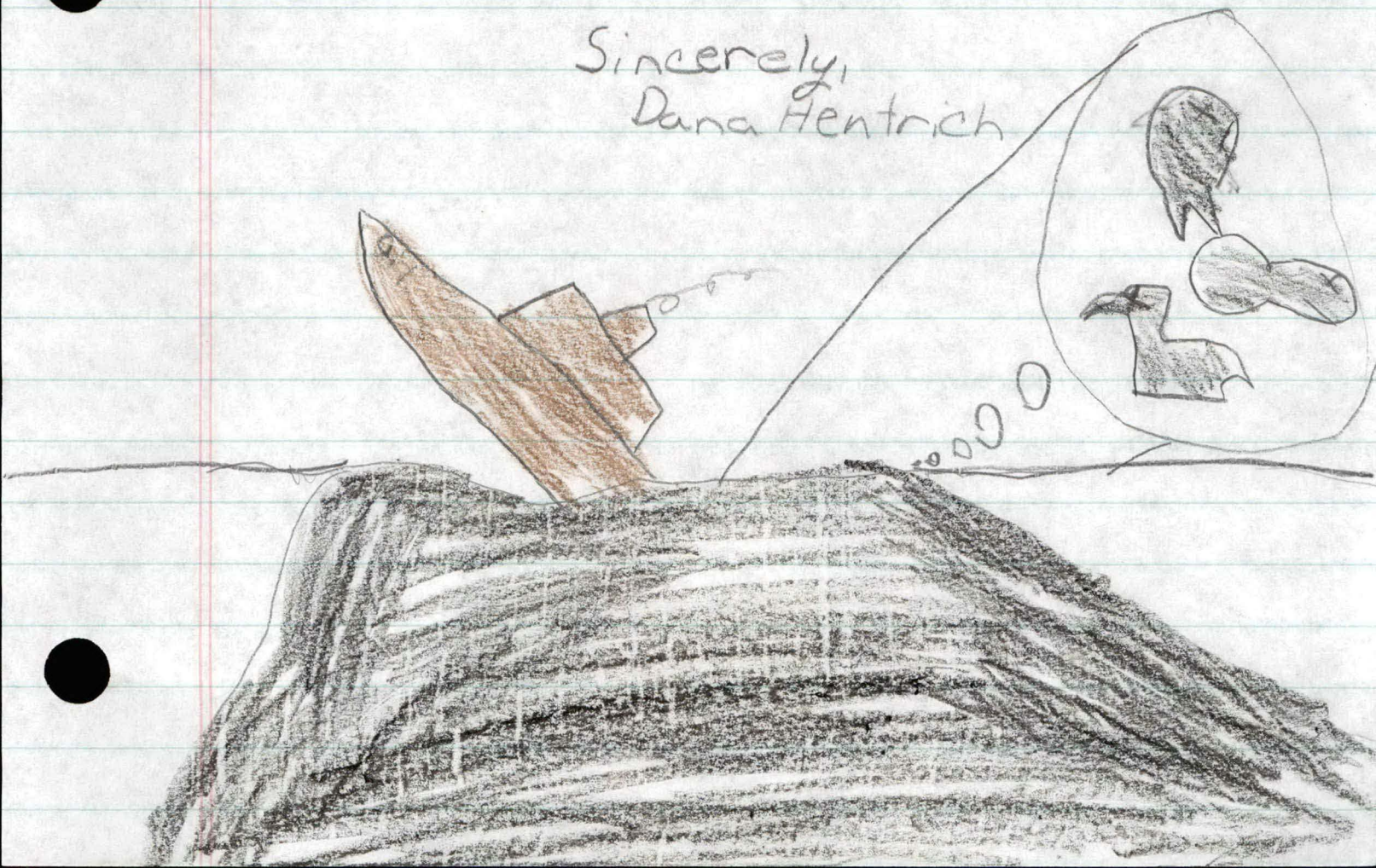
RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11-18-19

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I think you should really consider buying land for the animals, because many animals are being killed from oil spills. I think you should buy some land or animals will die. If you buy this land the animal population will increase, and their lives will not be in danger anymore. This will also create a place where we can go and observe these animals in their natural habitate

Sincerely,
Dana Hentrich



11/18/97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I'm a fifth-grade student at Round Meadow Elementary School. Our class is studying the rescue of wildlife, and we believe you should purchase areas of land around Kenai Fjord National Park, to restore the population of the animals which were harmed.

Because people hurt the animals, people should help them, even if it means paying large sums of money, or spending a lot of time.

These animals truly deserve your support and we encourage that you continue to acquire land to make Kenai Fjord National Park a bigger, and safer environment for the injured or harmed animals whom the oil spill affected.

Sincerely,
Kelly Latta

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11-18-97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am ten years old, but I know what's right. Keep trying to get tracts of land near Kenai Fjord National Park to make the national park bigger. Over 250,000 birds and 1,000 otters died. I really think you should buy the tracts of land. I would think it would make sea life much happier.

Sincerely,
Josh Bender

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez O.I Spill 11/19/97
Trustees,

I am a student here at Round Meadow Elementary School. Our class has been reading a section in our reading book about endangered animals including the story Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. Our student teacher, Miss Axelrod, found an article about the Valdez O.I Spill. I am writing to you on behalf of making The Kenai Fjord National Park bigger.

We think that it is your duty to pursue this land agreement with Port Graham and other Native Corperations. The land will help the sea otters population including the other species of the animals and plants in the Valdez Oil Spill.

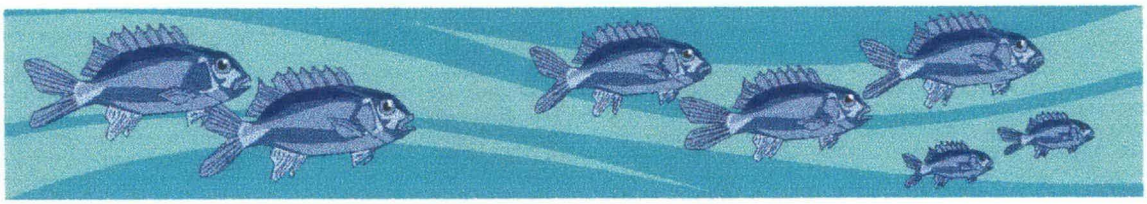
We think that your company should buy this land to help restore the populations of the

animals harmed in the Valdez Oil Spill.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Brosious

P.S. Please respond!!

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL



11/17/97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a student at Round Meadow Elementary School. We have learned about oil spills and are learning how to save sea life from oil spills. I feel that you should buy more land and make the Kenia Fjord National Park bigger. That way you can make more room for wildlife.

Sincerely,

Kristen Drumheller

Dear Exxon Valdez oil spill trustees,

I am ten years old, and in 5th grade. We are learning about dangers in wild life, but are most concerned with oil spills Our class just finish a book about damages in the water. I feel you should buy more land at Kenai Fjord National Park.

Shannon

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

My class and I were just reading a story about how oil spills have been killing lots of animals. We were writing to you regarding the land acquisition agreements in Kenai Fjord's National park. This will help to restore populations of animals that were harmed or killed.

sincerly,
Greg Herzog

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

Hi. My name is Stephanie, and I'm 10. It is very important to me that you make Kenai Fjord National Park bigger so that that the population of the animals will increase. I found out about the Valdez Oil Spill by reading in my book.

Yours Truely,

Stephanie
Tashjian

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a student at Raund Meadow Elementary School. I'm 10 yrs. old. Our class has been working on endangered species. We read a story called Saving Sea life from Oil Spills.

We feel that you should buy more land so you can fit more animals in the Kenai Fjord National Park. I feel that this is your job to continue to pursue to ged this land.

Sincerly,

Tara Sawyer

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

Hi, my name is Brennen. I am in fifth grade. I think it is important that you get more tracks of land to make The Kenai Fjords National Park bigger. I feel that it is your duty to make you help restore the marine life that was harmed or killed. The Kenai Fjords National Park will help restore the animals natural habitas that were destroyed due to the oil spill.

Sincerly,
Brennen Kavalek

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

May 5, 1998

Molly McCammon, Executive Director
EVOS Trustee Council
645 G Street, Suite 401
Anchorage, AL 99501

via facsimile 276-7178 2 pages

Dear Molly,

I just wanted to thank you and the other Trustee Council members and staff for meeting with us and KADCO yesterday I am very glad the Council will be looking at the opportunity to provide protection to the Bering River area as part of the Restoration program

A very preliminary list of the injured resources and resource services that would be protected and/or replaced by acquiring the coal patent at the Bering River area is attached The list would of course expand if an export coal port at Controller Bay is considered, which as you heard yesterday is a definite possibility I would be glad to work with your staff and the Forest Service staff as you develop your analysis of this linkage issue

Again, thanks for your consideration

Sincerely,

Rick Steiner, The Coastal Coalition
9940 Nearpoint Dr
Anchorage, AK 99507

cc Dr Hyun Joo Shin, Chairman, KADCO

Table 2 Resources and Services Injured by the Spill

Biological resources in the table experienced population-level or continuing sublethal injuries

INJURED RESOURCES			Lost or Reduced SERVICES
Biological Resources		Other	
Recovering Bald eagle Black oystercatcher Intertidal organisms (some) Killer whale Mussels Sockeye salmon (Red Lake) Subtidal organisms (some)	**Not Recovering** Common murre Harbor seal Harlequin duck Intertidal org (some) Marbled murrelet Pacific herring Pigeon guillemot Pink salmon Sea otter Sockeye salmon (Kenai & Akalura systems) Subtidal organisms (some)	Archaeological resources Designated wilderness areas Sediment	Commercial fishing Passive uses Recreation and Tourism including sport fishing, sport hunting and other recreation uses Subsistence
Recovery Unknown Clams Cutthroat trout Dolly Varden River otter Rockfish			

Amending the List of Injured Resources and Services The list of injured resources and services will be reviewed as new information is obtained For example, research and monitoring will hopefully show that recovery is beginning for many of the resources which currently show little or no signs of recovery In addition, information may be submitted to add resources to the list This information can include research results assessment of population trends, ethnographic and historic data, and supportive rationale Information that has been through an appropriate scientific review process is preferable If data have not been peer reviewed, they should be presented in a format that permits and facilitates peer review Information to change the list will be reviewed through the Trustee Council's scientific review process

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council

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

June 5, 1998

Rick Steiner
9940 Nearpoint Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Mr. Steiner:

The purpose of this letter is to respond to and clarify certain misunderstandings as evidenced by your letter of May 5, 1998 concerning the proposal you have advocated to use civil settlement funds to purchase subsurface interests in the Bering River area.

As you know, at your request, Dr. Hyun Joo Shin, Chairman of the KADCO corporation, was provided the opportunity to visit the Restoration Office on May 4th in order to present information concerning his property holdings in the Bering River region. As I made very clear at the outset, the meeting was an opportunity for Dr. Shin to present information to the Restoration Office. At no time has there been any indication of commitment by the Trustee Council to pursue the ideas described by Dr. Shin and promoted by yourself. As I stated at the May 4th meeting, the area of interest to you (i.e., the Bering River/eastern Copper River Delta) is outside the spill-impact area as defined in the Restoration Plan formally adopted by the Trustee Council in 1994, and there are no plans to purchase any lands or interests in lands outside of the spill impact area.

Please know that a copy of your letter, together with the attached listing of injured resources and services that you feel could benefit from protection of the land interests held by Dr. Shin, will be provided to the Trustee Council, as are copies of all public comments received by the Restoration Office. Several of the injured resources you noted in your correspondence are widespread in their distributions (e.g., sockeye salmon, bald eagle, river otter, etc.), and, based on your information, they are also apparently present in the Bering River watershed. However, this does not mean that these particular populations or sub-populations were injured by the oil spill. Moreover, an accurate assessment of potential benefits that might result from protection of the lands of interest to you would require a substantial effort.

Your letter of May 5, 1998 indicates that the Trustee Council is working toward protection of the Bering River area as part of the restoration program. This is not correct. While it is true that the Restoration Office has received a number of cards and letters from individuals and organizations advocating this idea, no action has been taken by the Trustee Council to expand the habitat protection program beyond the designated spill impact area. Further, the large parcel evaluation process involves a formal interagency review of resource and service values. I have been given no direction or authorization by the Trustee Council to pursue consideration of lands outside the spill area and, absent such direction and authorization, the Restoration Office will not

undertake any evaluation or analysis of linkages between Bering River resources and services and the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill

As the land management agency for the region in question, it is my understanding that the U S Forest Service has indicated that it would continue to consider the potential linkages, although I am not aware of any specific action that has been taken to date Regardless, any effort along these lines is not a matter that has been considered or endorsed by the Trustee Council, nor has the Trustee Council authorized the use of settlement funds to support such an effort

The civil settlement specifically calls for meaningful public participation and the Restoration Office is always willing to take comment and meet with members of the public with an interest in restoration program activities However, the fact that a meeting requested by members of the public took place should not be misinterpreted as any kind of commitment or endorsement on the part of the Trustee Council

Sincerely,

Molly McCammon

Molly McCammon
Executive Director

cc Trustee Council members

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spil Truters,

I am a fifth grader at Round Meadow Elementary school in Hatboro PA. Our class has been learing about endangered species. After reading about endangered species, I strongly feel that you should continue to pursue this land acquisition agreements. If you continue this agreements it will help restore the population of sea otters, and other plants and animals.

Shannon Davis

RECEIVED
DEC 1 1997
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

11-17-97

Dear Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees,

I am a student at Round Meadow Elementary school. Our class has been working on a Reading unit about animals and endangered species. We have just completed the story Saving Sea Life From Oil Spills. We feel that it is not only your job, but your duty to continue to pursue this land agreement with Port Graham and other Native corporations.

Sincerely,
Richard Tarves

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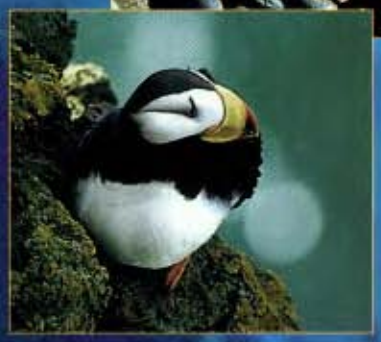
EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Your Official Guide to Alaska's World Class Marine Facility



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- Witness Marine Mammals in Their Habitat
- Learn More About Alaska's Marine Ecosystems
- View Sea Birds Close Up

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2.5 hr. Whales, Wildlife & Glacier Cruise $59
Departs daily at 12 noon

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2.5 hr Wildlife & Glacier Cruise & a visit to the Wildlife Park & Gift Store $99

WHITTIER/PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
Summer Schedule

3 hr. Seven Glacier Cruise $49
Departs 11:30 am & 2:45 pm

Lunch included on all cruises
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2.5 hr. Wildlife & Glacier Cruise.....$99
(Motorcoach, 2 hrs. free time, 2.5 hr. cruise, Alaska SeaLife Center)

4 hr. Whale Watching Cruise.....$99
(Motorcoach, 4 hr. cruise, Alaska SeaLife Center)

6 hr. National Park Cruise.....$129
(Motorcoach and 6 hr. Nat'l Park cruise)

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Motorcoach, Cruise, Rail.....Starting at $119
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Gather those budding young scientists, those children of all ages thirsting for adventure, excitement and entertainment and make plans to head to Seward.

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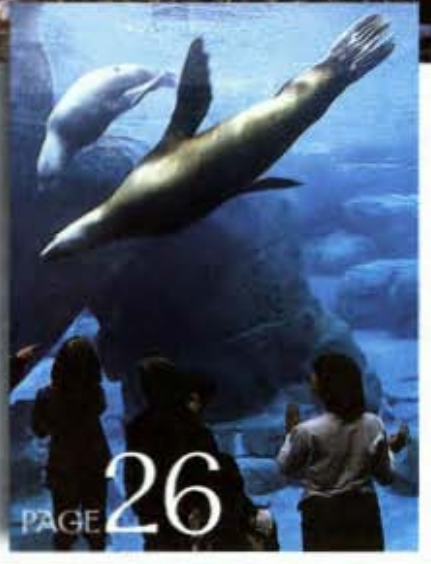
Photo credits: Alaska Division of Tourism, Alaska Tourism and Marketing Council, Mike Catellini, Al Grillo, Kenai Fjords Tours, Greg Martin, Clark James Mishler, and Seward Chamber of Commerce.

Alaska SeaLife Center

windows to the sea



WELCOME TO THE ALASKA SEALIFE CENTER

Imagine! For centuries, the northern oceans have held their secrets. Deep below the surface, sea creatures have lived out their lives mysteriously, coming into brief contact with humans that have, for so long, taken them for granted.

Now imagine – those secrets are about to be revealed on our doorstep.

Sea mammals and marine birds will begin to divulge their likes and dislikes; their needs, desires and antics in full view of scientists, school children and fascinated adults. And all of this within the boundaries of Alaska – within 125 miles of Anchorage, within easy driving distance for schools, visitors and those with a yen for knowledge and fun.

The Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward is now open daily from 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. So gather those budding young scientists, those children of all ages thirsting for adventure, excitement and entertainment and make plans to hit the Seward Highway for your piece of the action.

Anchoring the seaside community of Seward, and sitting at the base of Seward's main street, the SeaLife Center rises between the sea and the community's center. The $56 million project, housed in a 115,000 square-foot building, is a unique marriage of public education and marine mammal and bird research and rehabilitation. The building itself, a soaring concoction of sharp angles and flowing curves, combines utilitarian materials with artistic ornamentation carved into concrete surfaces.

The exterior surface of the building, a muted blue-green, is entirely of zinc from Alaska's Red Dog Mine. It's non-corrosive, and won't be affected by the salt and sea air. Artwork in the form of curving lines depicting sea birds and salmon previews the purpose of the Center. So park your car and prepare for a tour of this state-of-the-art facility.

You'll enter the building through a set of welcoming yellow doors — come on in. Tickets are $12.50 for adults, $10 for children ages 4 to 16, and free for children under 4. There are group rates for 15 or more people, and SeaLife Society memberships are also available.

Onward with the tour! First, you'll climb aboard the Kenai Peninsula's only escalator or a convenient elevator and let one of them take you into a brave, new world. The first stop is an ongoing movie to prepare you for what's to come. Sights and sounds of the ocean, Prince William Sound and Resurrection Bay cross the screen and fill the air. Watch as Steller sea lions haul out on the rocks, or return to the water with a mighty splash. See river otters mischievously munching on mussels, and harbor seals diving for their own dinner.

(cont. on page 38)

Welcome Aboard!

Major Marine Tours and the entire animal population of the Kenai Fjords National Park, congratulate the staff, scientists and directors on the opening of the new Alaska SeaLife Center. This world-class facility will be a benefit to all.

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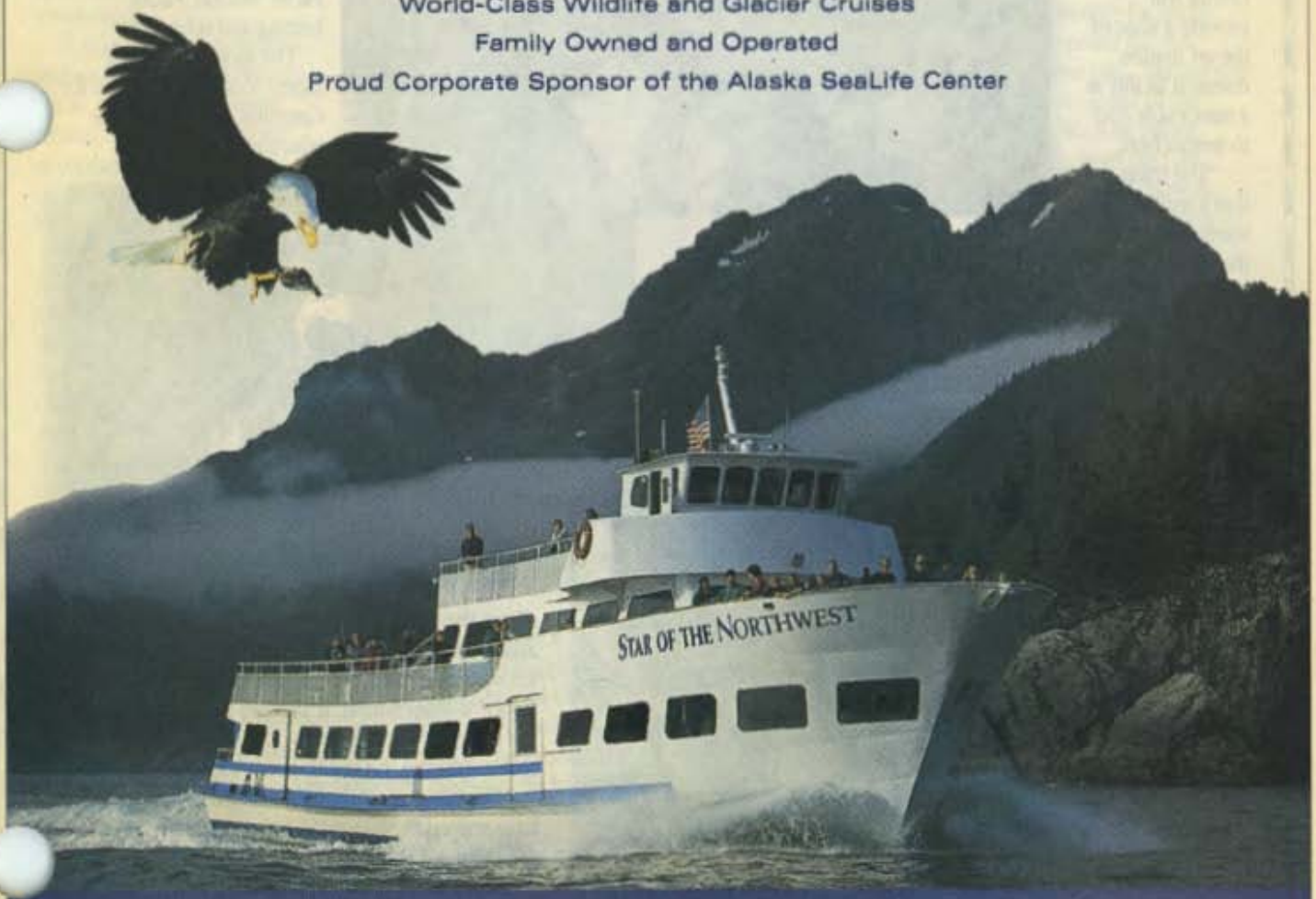

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WITNESS SCIENCE ON DISPLAY

At the Alaska SeaLife Center, rather than focusing exclusively on research, it's science on display, Research Director Michael Castellini said.

The mission of the SeaLife Center, according to Castellini, is to understand and maintain the integrity of marine ecosystems. And as a part of that mission, the Center will provide a state-of-the-art marine research facility at a reasonable cost to researchers.

"The thing that's really interesting about the Alaska SeaLife Center," Castellini added, "is the way it's set up. I've worked at most of the marine mammal programs around the country. And there are much bigger rehabilitation facilities and bigger aquariums. Some are even equivalent in the size of the research facility. But this place is the only one conceptualized and built to support all three and for each of the three to support each other."

The Alaska SeaLife Center is one of few facilities in the world and the only one in the Western Hemisphere for doing cold water research on marine mammals — there is one in Norway and another being built in Scotland. "Both of those are completely different from the Alaska SeaLife Center," Castellin said. "They're exclusively research facilities and are much smaller than this."

Research programs coming into the Center will focus on marine mammals, marine birds, and fish. Other programs will focus on seals, Steller sea lions and river otters in the fields of health and disease, body condition, energetics, hydrodynamics and diving physiology, and development and testing of telemetry equipment.

Additional research will be done on murres, murrelets, pigeon guillemots, and other marine birds such as puffins, loons and kittiwakes. Genetic and neurobiology research and research on energetics, disease and reproduction will be directed toward Pacific salmon, Pacific herring and other fish.

The most interesting aspect to all this research for Castellini, however, is the education program. "It allows the public to see the science, the purpose and the mission behind the facility, to let people know what's going on in the northern Pacific and Prince William Sound. It also lets them understand the reason we're here is to conduct the research and to educate the public about the issues involved.

"That's unique," Castellini added. "Many facilities have started as aquariums, to let people come to see the mammals and the fish. This is the only place that started out to combine all three — research, rehabilitation and education."

EDUCATION FOR YOUNG AND OLD

Big kids, little kids and adult kids will all enjoy the educational efforts of Alaska SeaLife Center staff. "We have games, tours, picnics and overnights planned," said Leslie Peart, director of education.

One of the primary missions of the SeaLife Center, public education will form the bridge between ongoing research and rehabilitation efforts and visitors, said Peart. "Visitors are treated to hands-on learning programs, and encouraged to take responsibility for their own environmental stewardship."

Curriculum and programs address all learning styles and levels. "Everyone has many talents," said Peart, "and we encourage them all to bring those talents and be ready to put them to work learning science."

Responsible for the daily programs for visitors, Peart's mission is to interpret and showcase the Center's research — to make it transparent to the public. "We'll have something for the public to see or do every hour. It might be a sea lion feeding demonstration. It might be going to the lab and doing a fish print. It might be making a wolf eel book, or having a discussion with one of the scientists about his or her project," Peart said.

Among the selections immediately available for school groups and the public is imitating puffins with hand puppets. "Fourth graders from Seward Elementary School helped us make them," Peart said. "We put the puppets on and make them stick out their tongues and hiss at each other. One of our staff wrote a puffin song, and the kids sing that with the hand puppets on."

A take-off on this activity is a puffin mask, which the Seward fourth graders also helped develop. "The masks go on with Velcro," Peart said, "and we clap the bills together like puffins do when they're mating."

Another entertainment selection is the intertidal toss game. "We tested it at the Anchors Aweigh boat show," Peart said, "and it was so-o-o popular." The game consists of a big frame covered with carpet to look like the seashore. The frame is divided into five zones — red algae, brown algae, and so on," Peart said. Kids vied to see if they could toss each bean bag marine invertebrate into the right tidal zone.

Ideas for activities seem to mushroom, Peart said. "Someone puts an idea on the table, and it just snowballs," she said.

"Our schedule for group activities is pretty full this spring," Peart said. "But we still have room in some of the programs. We'll be taking reservations from the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs — from a variety of schools and organizations."

Although individuals of all ages can participate in activities offered hourly to the general public at the SeaLife Center,

groups will need to make reservations at least three weeks before their visits. Make yours today by calling the SeaLife Center in Seward at 224-6300 or 1-800-224-2525. Teachers and one chaperone for every 10 students receive free admission.

REHABILITATION EFFORTS

Marine disasters are internationally recognized for the damage they do to fish and wildlife that depend on the water for their survival. Oiled birds and otters were common sights during the Exxon Valdez spill in Prince William Sound. Other disasters may not be as visible, but are no less real — the sharp decline in population of Steller sea lions over the last 10 years, for instance. Scientists have theories about the causes of this decline, but have nothing conclusive to which they can point their fingers and which they can correct.

The staff of the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward, the largest permanent facility for stranded or injured marine animals in Alaska, intends to offer assistance when needed in the rescue and care of marine mammals and birds during future natural or manmade disasters, and hopes research at their facility will uncover answers to the questions being asked by scientists today. *(continued on page 9)*

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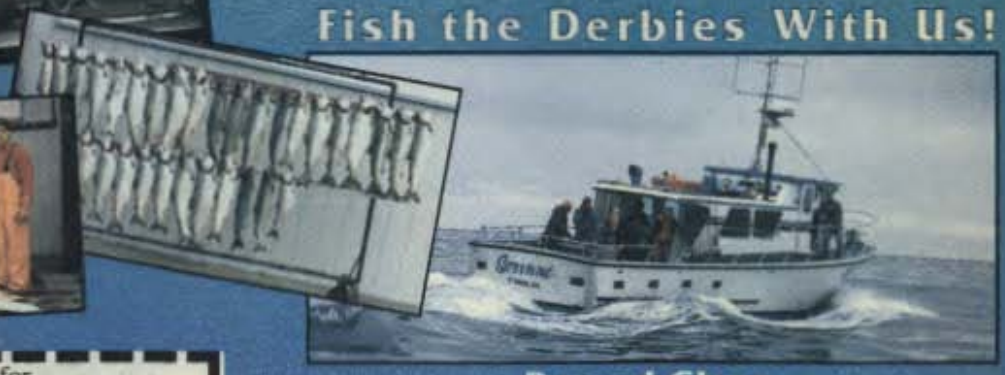

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REHABILITATION (CONT.)

According to Susan Inglis, the SeaLife Center's wildlife rehabilitation program manager, the SeaLife Center's rehabilitation mission is to provide emergency care for sick or injured marine mammals and seabirds. "While we're caring for them, we'll also be collecting critical health data that will be used to develop a wildlife medical database. This database will help us develop and provide effective medical treatments for the animals in our care, said Inglis, "and provide necessary information on physically compromised animals to researchers studying their populations in the wild. We also will release all animals back to the wild whenever possible," she said.

Among the resources the SeaLife Center has incorporated into the facility are a staffed veterinary clinic and hematology/pathology and water chemistry laboratory, quarantine areas with individual life support systems, food preparation areas, and x-ray, surgery, and necropsy areas. Outside the building are short-term and long-term holding areas with tanks large enough to accommodate most marine mammal and seabird rehabilitation needs. This includes a tank, with underwater viewing capability, large enough to accommodate small cetaceans, such as a Dall's porpoise, if one should need short-term rehabilitative care, Inglis said.

Primarily, however, the Center's rehabilitation program will focus on the rescue, rehabilitation and research of seals, sea lions, otters and marine birds such as common murres, pigeon guillemots, murrelets and puffins. They'll also focus on public education. "It's important that caring individuals know when an animal is sick and needs help, and when it is in the animal's best interest to leave it alone," Inglis said. "Often parents of marine mammals and birds will leave their young unattended for long periods while they look for food. These animals are not abandoned and should be left where they're found."

"It's our intent to pioneer medical techniques and to train individuals and organizations in helping wildlife injured during natural or manmade disasters," Inglis said.

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A WALK THROUGH SEWARD

Drive there, bike there, take a Seward Highway hike there. Or, if your 'druthers tend toward flying, call one of the airlines serving Seward and make your reservations now. Take a train, take a bus. Hop a ferry or a cruise line. Whatever method you choose to travel, put Seward on your summer itinerary today.

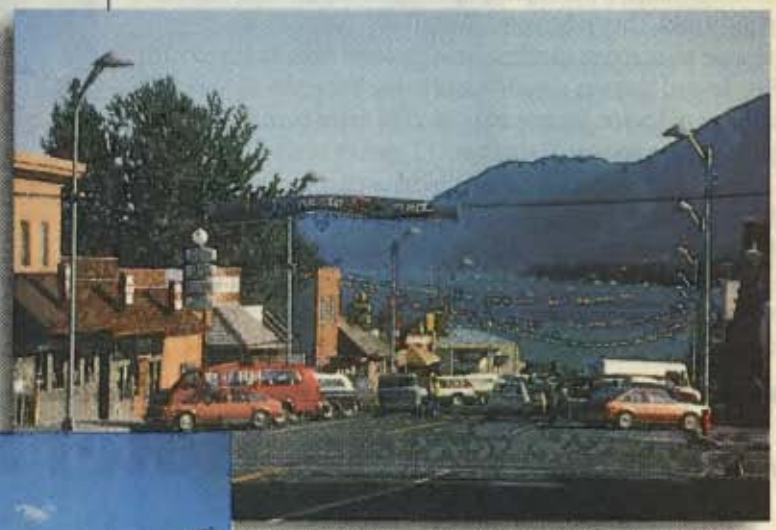
With the opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center on May 2, Seward has become the center of the travel universe that is Alaska. This small seaside community at the end of the Seward Highway, designated as one of the nation's 10 most scenic highways, is just about as accessible as a town can get in this state.

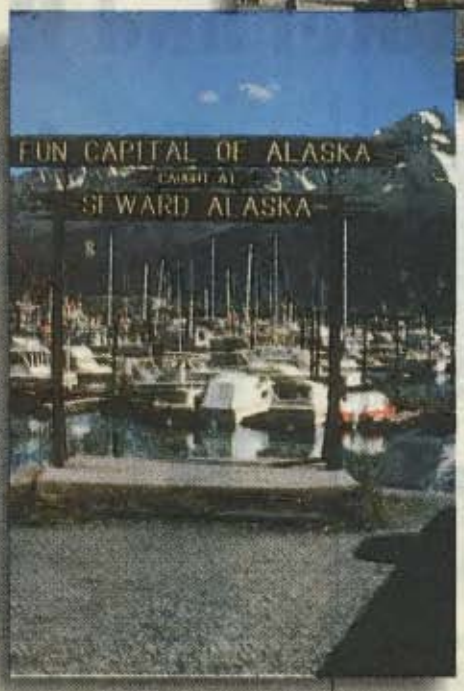
A mere 125 miles by road from Anchorage, Seward is about a 2.5-hour drive down a breathtaking fjord, over a mountain pass, beside a clear, icy-cold, rushing stream, and past glacier-blue Kenai and Trail lakes — which reflect spruce and snow-capped peaks. An easy drive, and a beautiful one. Stop for a picnic at any one of several campgrounds or spread your old checked tablecloth across a rock next to the stream and lay out your lunchtime goodies.

If you choose to travel the road but don't choose to drive, call one of the bus lines that travel back and forth between Anchorage and Seward, and let someone else do the driving while you drink in the scenery. Perhaps you'd rather enjoy the scenery off-road. Then make your reservations with The Alaska Railroad, and watch for wildlife near the tracks as you traverse untrammeled wilderness.

From Anchorage, you may also choose the fastest method to fun — call either Era Aviation or FS Air Service for an airline ticket to Seward. The Alaska Marine Highway System carries passengers and vehicles to Seward on some of the same routes traversed by luxury cruise lines.

After a visit to the Alaska SeaLife Center, plan to spend some time on Resurrection Bay — fishing for salmon or halibut, sailing among the picturesque coves and fjords of the Bay, or cruising on one of the many wildlife tours that take passengers to up-close-and-personal visits with whales, sea otters, puffins, murres and a whole myriad of other Alaska marine creatures and birds. Regularly scheduled marine tours head out from Seward's small-boat harbor daily on forays into nearby Kenai Fjords National Park.





You can take an easy drive to Exit Glacier and walk the trail that flanks the glacier to an overlook of the 700-square-mile Harding Icefield. National Park Service scientists say the glacier creeps forward at 2 feet a day, but it melts back at about 2.5 feet a day. The icefield is the heart of Kenai Fjords National Park, and eight glaciers reach the sea along the coast. Park rangers lead guided hikes to the glacier during the summer, and programs are free and open to the public.

Seward is a big draw for Alaskans, especially on the Fourth of July weekend — it's one of Seward's biggest celebrations. Everyone puts their hearts into a party second to none in Alaska — fireworks, a parade, bands, softball, barbecues, and a foot race for adults and kids up and down Mount Marathon, a 3,022 foot mountain in the middle of downtown Seward.

(continued on page 19)

SEALIFE CENTER HISTORY

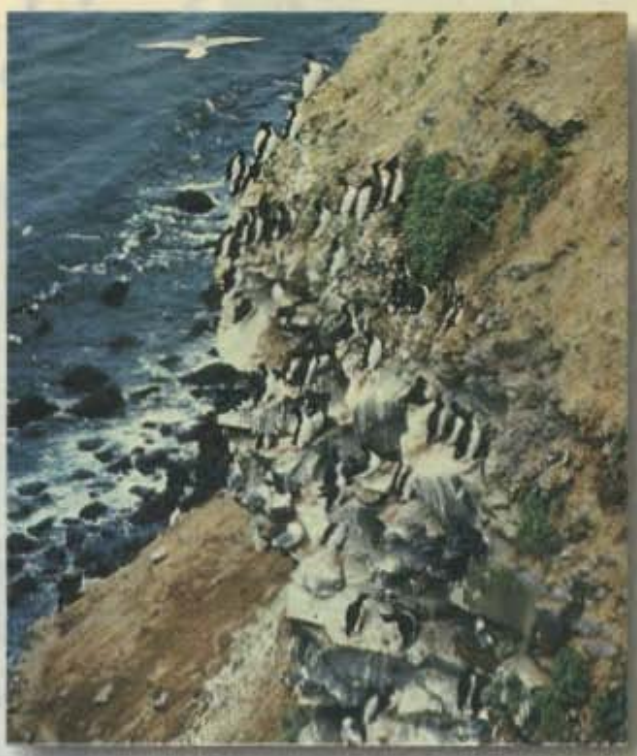
How did the new state-of-the-art Alaska SeaLife Center happen? How did it land in Seward? How is it funded? And what is its mission?

The Center's birth resulted from a convergence of events — the Exxon Valdez oil spill in March of 1989 and the subsequent legal settlements, a group of Seward citizens who wanted to enhance the University of Alaska's Institute of Marine Science, and a Legislature willing to listen to a dream. As a result, the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science was founded and began to pick up steam after the oil spill.

With the history of the spill and attempts to rehabilitate the sea life afterwards, SAAMS put a proposal together to meld a three-way mission into a program unlike anything anywhere else in the world. They pinpointed Seward as a logical choice because of its access to deep, clean seawater from Resurrection Bay. Seward also was already home to the University of Alaska's Institute of Marine Science and just a few miles from rookeries for Steller sea lions and more than 12 species of sea birds.

Seward is also the most accessible coastal community in Alaska, with road, train, air, boat and ferry access year-round. And Seward draws local residents and visitors to Alaska, from cruise ships, travelers in recreational vehicles and rental cars and military visitors coming to the U.S. Army and Air Force recreation resorts.

(continued on page 13)



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HISTORY (CONT.)

"The Legislature appropriated $12.5 million of the Exxon Valdez criminal settlement to fund the project, and that was the first chunk of money to make this thing go," said Kim Sundberg, executive director for the Center. "The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council said the civil settlement money could only fund rehabilitation and research," Sundberg said, "and it could not be used for an aquarium." At that point, Sundberg added, SAAMS put together an advisory group composed of representatives from the university, State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, National Marine Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Forest services.

With $24.9 million in civil settlement funds from the trustee council as a base, SAAMS pledged to raise $6 million in private funds, and the City of Seward put together a combination of municipal bond sales funds and bridge financing — the bond sales brought in $17 million alone. "We raised about $60 million all told for the project." Sundberg said,

A noteworthy accomplishment: residents of Seward contributed more than $1 million from their own pockets, and the City of Seward donated seven acres of prime waterfront property.

Funding for the SeaLife Center fell into place, not without a lot of hard work, but certainly with enthusiasm and a state's vision of what could be possible. Once the funds were confirmed, the community began to see their dream become reality. The walls of the SeaLife Center rose from the edge of the bay and were turned into the state-of-the-art facility that stands as a tribute to that dream today.

Congratulations to the Alaska SeaLife Center.
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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Alaska SeaLife Center wants you! We want your time, your energy, your talents — as a volunteer.

"We need people in four primary areas," said Jim Fredrickson, volunteer coordinator, "education, life science, special events and operations."

Volunteer educators will act as docents or guides to interpret the exhibits at the SeaLife Center for visitors, Fredrickson said. They also will help the education staff work on programs for the schools and the general public, or help with tours, overnights and seminars. Volunteers in the life science area will help the animal husbandry staff to feed and tend the animals, clean aquariums and exhibit areas, and generally work in the animal research and husbandry departments "and we expect that, as we grow, we will be getting more and more animals," said Fredrickson. He added that he expected most of the life science volunteers would be from the field of education or would have specific training or experience in working with animals. For this volunteer category, Fredrickson said, there will be a prerequisite of some kind of experience.

"We've used volunteers so far," Fredrickson added, "in operations helping our administrative and marketing staff with office and clerical work." Other volunteer opportunities in operations include work in the gift shop, as parking attendants and a few other areas that help to keep the Center opening its doors every day.

"And special events, such as the recent grand opening," Fredrickson said. "We had a lot of volunteers ready and willing to lend a hand for that. We'll also need them during the Fourth of July, the Silver Salmon Derby and the Polar Bear Jumpoff. We'll probably get huge crowds and will probably need about 20 to 30 volunteers.

Hoping to supplement these volunteers, Fredrickson said he hopes to have a college internship program up and running by this summer. "We're aiming to offer free housing for a full time volunteer commitment," he said. With word spreading informally, Fredrickson said he's already received about 15 inquiries.

(continued on page 1

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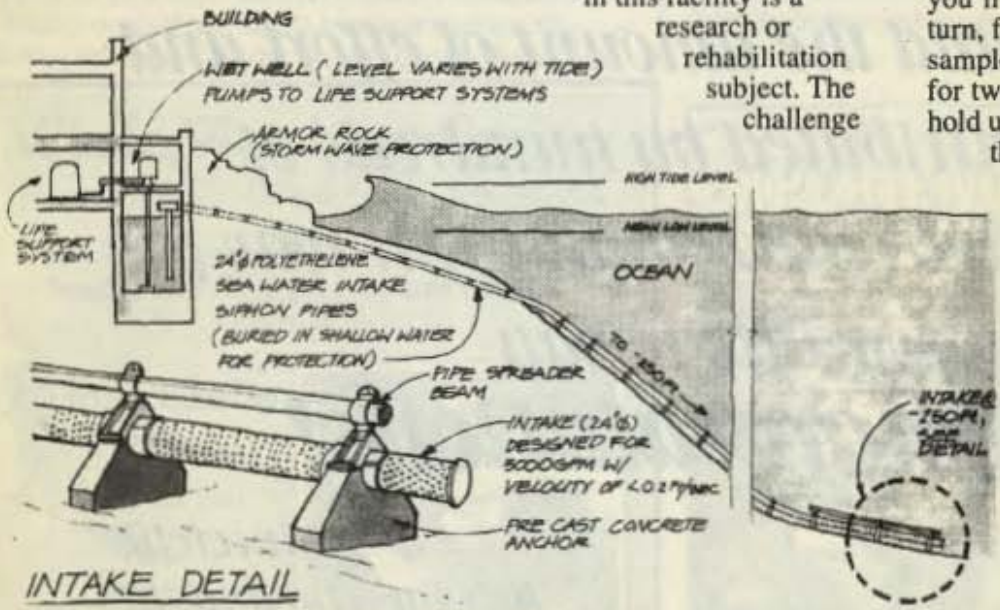
Designing the Alaska SeaLife Center:
A Building for Research on Exhibit

The idea of making a building where the research is on exhibit seems simple enough, particularly as you walk through the recently-completed Alaska SeaLife Center. In reality, however, the Alaska SeaLife Center is among the most technologically advanced designs in North America. Consider the challenges: over four thousand gallons of sea water must be piped in from Resurrection Bay every minute. Fresh water must be chlorine free. Some of the research areas and surgical rooms must have their own, separate ventilation and water systems in order to prevent the spread of contagious organisms. Habitat areas have to appear to be natural, yet safe for both the animals and visitors. Advanced computer systems must efficiently control everything from water temperatures to the lights. The building should withstand Seward's salty environment and be a gracious host to thousands of visitors each year. Most important, it must support and enhance the experience of understanding our ocean world for both the scientific community and our visiting friends and relatives. The list goes on and on.

What you see as you walk through the Alaska SeaLife Center is the final culmination of over 80,000 hours of intensive problem-solving by the design team. Core design team members, architects Livingston Slone of Anchorage, mechanical and electrical engineers Raj Bhargava Associates, and structural, civil, and marine engineers Peratrovich, Nottingham, & Drage (PN&D) found solutions to these design challenges drawing on their many years of experience. Principal-in-charge Tom Livingston sums up one of the building's primary design challenges: "Every animal you see in this facility is a research or rehabilitation subject. The challenge was devoting equal parts of the building to research and to the public education/exhibition component that ultimately pays for the research. This 50-50 split is unique in the world to this type of facility."



INTAKE DETAIL

Sea water intake system

Never before has a marine research facility, with its sterile work areas, had so much of its research on display. The design team had to keep this in mind as they sketched out the work spaces. A good example can be found as you look down into the research areas through the upstairs observation windows: you'll see an orderly grid of color-coded pipes suspended over the work area. The architects had to decide how to best lay the piping so as not to block your view, while at the same time providing the researchers with overhead access to fresh water, sea water, power, and compressed air. "And from the researcher's perspective," says Livingston, "they will hardly notice the people watching them work."

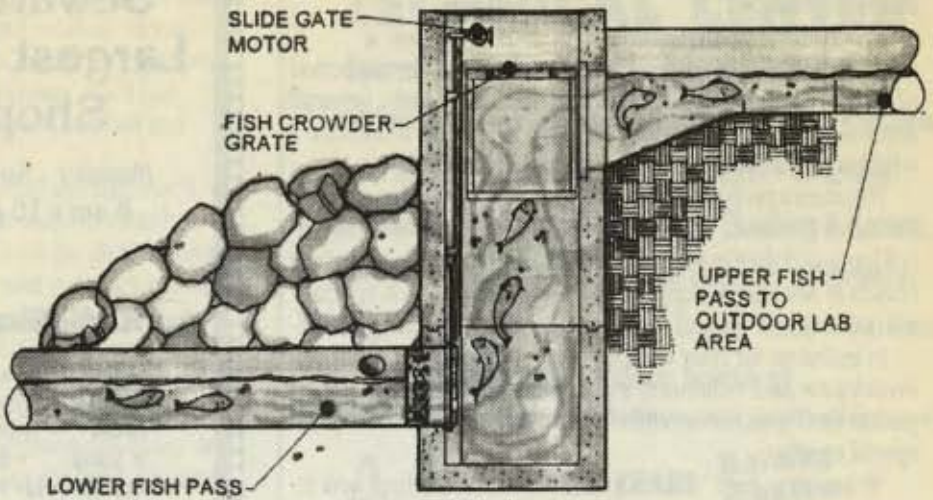
As you walk through the building, you'll see a design solution at every turn, from the type of carpet (a sample was submerged in salt wa for two months to see if it would hold up) to the eight-and-a-half inch thick acrylic viewing windows of habitats. (Manufactured to the same specific density as sea water, the windows appear deceptively clear.)

One of the biggest decisions is right above your head: how do we best protect the sea birds while still maintaining an open environment? The answer lies in the great, 33,000-pound, arched canopy flying over the sea bird habitat. "The sea birds would, in all likelihood, stay in the habitat," says architect Paul Daugherty, "but we realized we needed to keep some of the heat in and the eagles out, so our approach was two-fold—the canopy keeps enough heat from escaping while the netting protects the habitat from predators."

The building's exterior siding is yet another of its interesting design features. Rustproof, resilient zinc, was chosen after extensive materials research, because of its ability to withstand the saltiest of climates—critical to the building's location right on the breakwater. During stormy conditions salt water spray often can reach all the way up to Railway Avenue. Additionally, the zinc is flexible and moves with the building's steel structure, an important feature in North America's most active seismic zone.

Peratrovich Nottingham & Drage, came up with the innovative "fish elevator" for the center's own run of salmon: the returning fish are lifted by the rising tide into a large chamber, and when the water is high enough, a gate closes behind the fish and they're lifted to the concrete "fish pass." According to civil engineer Doug Kenley, "it's a free ride for the fish, almost work-free," which will ultimately create a better success rate for returning salmon. PN&D created the design because their experience has shown that a conventional fish ladder—which would have to extend 300 feet into the bay—would not survive buffeting by heavy waves.

Another of PN&D's innovations: the brilliantly simple sea water intake chamber, which guarantees a steady supply of salt water, at 4,500 gallons per minute, into the facility despite the level of the tide. As the tide rises, water is drawn into a reservoir by a simple siphon system. "It's actually an extension of the bay," Kenley points out, "allowing us to reach down nearly three hundred feet to cold, pure sea water."



Fish elevator

As you walk through the facility, you'll note that there is truly water, water everywhere. Raj Bhargava Associates had to create four different systems to deliver and distribute sea water, fresh non-chlorinated water, and water for the sprinklers and heating/cooling systems. When they were finished, sixty different types of plumbing fixtures were incorporated into the design. The sea water comes right out of the bay, cold and fresh, filtered to prevent algae and grime buildup in the tanks. "Resurrection Bay is very cold," says Raj Bhargava, "so we were able to use that to provide free air conditioning. It's a slick system." And as the salt water comes in from the bay, five hundred gallons of fresh water comes into the building every minute, piped in from a natural spring two thousand feet away.

With every decision, Raj Bhargava's engineers incorporated energy-saving devices—note the motion-detector controlled lighting and the electronic faucets in the restrooms—and safety features such as heated sidewalks and rocks. Yes, the haul-out areas in the habitats are heated so the birds, seals, and sea lions won't slip or stick to frozen rocks.

Much of the advanced technology in the center's many systems is behind the scenes—you won't even be aware of the 100-point security system, the closed-circuit television, or the sophisticated electrical system and controls. Maybe it's enough to know that senior engineers visited the billion dollar J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles to study the latest engineering ideas. Maybe it's enough to know that hours upon hours of problem-solving went into making your visit to the center pleasing and informative...

...but as you leave the facility, take a moment to step back and take it all in. The Alaska SeaLife Center is a miracle of modern technology created by Alaskan designers, who have successfully met the challenge of designing the world's foremost cold water marine research facility.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES (CONT.)

and the program isn't yet in place. "Most have been from marine biology students who want to work with the animals," Fredrickson said.

"The primary thing we're looking for is dedication, a commitment of time to a regular schedule over a certain period of time," Fredrickson said. "We'll have four-hour shifts, generally, and will schedule them weekly. And we ask people to indicate whether they'll work summer, winter or year-round."

Volunteers probably will come from Seward, Anchorage or the Kenai Peninsula, Fredrickson said. "Two retired teachers in Soldotna said they're very interested in working one day a week. Others in Anchorage want to work on weekends or on special events."

In exchange for their work on behalf of the Center, Fredrickson said, volunteers will reap benefits such as free guest passes, discounts on merchandise and free admission to certain special events.

"It's exciting here," Fredrickson said. "It's something new to Alaska and a lot of people want to be a part of it. They can learn job skills here, and we'll provide training for some of the volunteer positions. There are a few that require certain specific training such as divers — they have to be open-water certified."

Interested? Call Fredrickson today for your volunteer application. You can reach him at 907-224-6300, extension 343, or 800-224-2525.

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SEWARD (CONT.)

If you're not in Seward for an event but do want to supplement your special trip to the SeaLife Center, there are a wide variety of things that will hold your interest. Perhaps you'd like to start with a walk through historic Seward, or shop 'til you drop. You'll find a drug store, art galleries, banks, variety stores, book stores and specialty gift shops. In addition, you'll find several excellent eating establishments, hotels, and bed and breakfasts.

Whether your tastes run to pizza or to surf and turf, you'll find something to whet your appetite. The seafood is fresh, and the ethnic cooking will have you coming back for more. Dining runs from casual to elegant, and you can take your pick of attire. There's also fast food, if you want to dine on the go.

Where to stay when you get to Seward? Hotels, campgrounds and bed & breakfasts run from one end of town to the other, and more are planned. Be sure to call ahead for reservations, however, because the community's accommodations fill up. And with the opening of the SeaLife Center, they will likely fill faster.

Another new draw for the city, opening this summer as well, is the Chugach Heritage Center, owned and operated by Chugach Alaska Corp. The Heritage Center offers an intimate view of the Alaska Native lifestyle, arts, crafts and storytelling. In the historic Seward railroad depot adjacent to the SeaLife Center, the Heritage Center will host performances by actors,

(continued on page 22)

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See Harbor Seals, Sea Birds, Sea Lions, Marine Life, All In Their Natural Habitat...

Watch the Seals Dive

Eight harbor seals, already adapted to their new habitat since arriving last month from the University of British Columbia and aquariums in Oregon and Connecticut, are attracting lots of notice at the new Alaska SeaLife Center.

The seals, part of a long-term research project on the effects of a variety of fish diets, will help to test the current theory that pollock are "junk food" for these marine mammals.

The harbor seals' habitat mimic the actual shoreline habitat of the n[illegible]ern Pacific seals — complete with barnacles and starfish. From the s[illegible] floor of the SeaLife Center, visitors can watch the seals out of water — cavorting on the rocks and watching the public watch them. From the first floor of the building, visitors can watch the seals dive into the 17 foot-deep pool — for fish and for fun.

PUFFINS AND SEA BIRDS IN THEIR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Raucous cries are standard among the sea bird population at the new Alaska SeaLife Center. In the artificial rookery, one of the three primary exhibit areas at the Center and created to closely resemble the birds' natural habitat, populations of common murres and puffins flap their wings, dive for food and raise their young after breeding season.

Thirteen tufted puffins came to the Center from the Oregon Coast Aquarium, a research project in Homer and the Central Park Zoo in New York City. Several common murres arrived from Sea World in Florida.

Visitors can see the sea birds in their natural habitat at the SeaLife Center — hopping and climbing around the rock pool and cliffs and diving into the 21 foot-deep pool — beneath the overhead net. This net, a large canvas-like awning forms the top of the bird enclosure and mesh covers the sides. The net is more to keep predators, like eagles, ravens, crows and jays, out than to keep the sea birds in.

SEA LIONS

ENERGETIC & MISCHIEVOUS

They're energetic, they're mischievous, and they can weigh up to 1,500 pounds, give or take a pound or two. The Steller sea lions at the Alaska SeaLife Center are a prime attraction for visitors. Three sea lions, from the Vancouver Aquarium in Vancouver, B.C., and flown in by the Alaska National Guard, arrived at the Center in late March and tried their new digs on for size.

The sea lions, Woody, Kiska and Sugarloaf (all named for islands in the Gulf of Alaska), went into a specially designed habitat — one of three — for the Center's star attractions. Designers of the habitat, Jolly Miller of Seattle, are experts in the field, and spent long periods of time studying sea lions in the wild before sitting down at the drawing board.

The resulting habitat consists of a 16 foot-deep diving pool and sculpted rock haulouts. Visitors can watch the sea lions from the top deck — at haulout level — or from the first floor — at the bottom of the pool. Watching the huge, agile swimmers will be an enormous treat for visitors, kids and scientists alike.

Steller sea lions are on the list of endangered species, and the SeaLife Center not only hopes to find out more about them, but also hopes to help turn the downward trend around so more of the marine creatures inhabit Alaska's coastal waters in the future.

SEWARD (CONT.)

singers, dancers and drummers in authentic costumes. The Heritage Center will also stock Native crafts for sale, and will demonstrate their creation with artisans and craftspeople at the Center.

If your heart hankers after a different style of art, browse the Seward art galleries. Several offer work by local artists, as well as artists from across the state.

If all of this is on the tame side, and the visit to the SeaLife Center has given you a thirst to see more of Alaska and more of the critters, check out the air charter businesses and take a flightseeing trip around Resurrection Bay and the Kenai Fjords. If you start your visit with a flightseeing tour, then its an absolute must to visit the Center to learn more about the habitat and the sea life you've seen.

Whatever you have on your plate for the short summer season in Alaska, be sure to include Seward. The SeaLife Center alone is worth a special trip, but there's even more to add to your entertainment. There's so much to do in Seward year-round, you'll join the folks who make this community at the head of Resurrection Bay their away-from-home home. Come on down, the water's spectacular, the people are friendly and the critters are waiting.

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SeaLife Center Construction

Darryl Schaefermeyer, project administrator for the SeaLife Center and former city manager for Seward during the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989, was involved in the original formation of the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science in 1990. He also followed the idea for the SeaLife Center through the building's funding and construction phases. "We worked on the design with Livingston Slone from Anchorage and with Cambridge Seven Associates from Massachusetts who assisted in the early stages of the design," Schaefermeyer said.

"Cambridge Seven is one of the foremost designers of projects like this in the world — they designed the National Aquarium in Baltimore, the New England aquarium and the aquarium in Lisbon among others." Livingston Slone completed the design, RISE Alaska provided project management, planning and fundraising resources to SAAMS along with construction management services during the past two years. The prime construction contractor was Strand Hunt Construction, headquartered in Kirkland, Wash.

"We all worked as a team," Schaefermeyer added. "We had to do detailed budgets for construction, put that into a proposal to the trustee council, hold public hearings and complete an environmental impact statement."

(continued on page 34)

After spending a day *"inside"* viewing the Alaska Sealife Center

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BEHIND THE SCENES

Behind the scenes tours at the Alaska SeaLife Center are things you may not see on an average visit, including the water exchange system. Deep in the basement of the building, pumps drone steadily to pull in 5,000 gallons per minute of Resurrection Bay seawater, filter it and treat it with ozone. Water that's being replaced also goes through pipes and filters below the tanks and the floors and discharges cleaned and sterilized water into the Bay. Electric lights in labs, pump rooms and throughout the facility automatically turn themselves on and off through movement sensors. "The building is incredibly high tech," said Kim Sundberg, the Center's executive director. "Everything is operated by computer, including the massive filtration system."

Other rooms not on the regular tour include a surgery center and isolation tanks for ill sea mammals that may be ill or in need of rehabilitation. These tanks are designed for short-term use — for animals that need to be quarantined for some reason. In addition to isolating the animals, the water from the tanks in this area is also isolated from water circulating throughout the rest of the building.

"It's what's called a 'closed-loop' system," Sundberg said. "That means we fill them with water from Resurrection Bay, close off a valve and then circulate the water just in that one tank. The water drains out the bottom of the tank, passes through a series of filters to clean it, then is pumped back up to the tank.

Another unique aspect to the SeaLife Center," Sundberg continued, "is that the filter systems on these quarantine tanks have a protein skimmer for removing oil from water. Most research facilities would not have this oil-skimming capability built into their systems."

Whether you take the regular tour of the Center, or take a behind-the-scenes tour, you'll find a facility that will tickle your fancy, knock your socks off and fill you with admiration and wonder.

Behind-the-scenes tours are offered once a day for limited numbers of people, and groups can schedule tours by calling at least a week in advance.

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The United Nations has designated 1998 the International Year of the Ocean, and encourages organizations and individuals to become more aware of the role the ocean plays in our everyday lives. It's also vital to the global economy.

Courtesy of the United States Minerals Management Service, here are some important points to remember about our oceans:

The ocean affects your life every day — from the life-giving rain that nourishes crops to the critical medicines, and from the fish that swim near the ocean floor to the goods that are transported on the sea's surface, the ocean plays an important role in your life.

The ocean is vital to life on earth — to vacationers, the ocean is a place of recreation. To explorers, it's a great unknown. But the ocean is much more than just a vacation destination or a place to explore. It is food, transportation and medicine. One of every six jobs is marine related. The ocean's resources are finite. Each of us has a responsibility to treat these vital resources wisely and carefully so future generations can use and enjoy them. You have the power. You can make a difference.

Things you should know about the oceans — Oceans cover more than two-thirds of the planet.

Oceans provide food for more than half the world's population.

Oceans influence the global weather and climate patterns.

Oceans serve as a global highway to transport products and materials.

Things you can do to protect our oceans —

1)Learn all you can. Read or experience the ocean directly.

2)Protect ocean wildlife. Don't dispose of fishing lines, nets or plastic items in or near the water.

3)Be considerate of sealife habitats. Don't feed sea birds and mammals or disturb their nesting grounds.

4)Support marine protected areas.

5)Get involved. Take part in a cleanup or other ocean-oriented activities.

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LEARNING JOURNEYS THOUGH THE CENTER

The Alaska SeaLife Center's educational staff welcomes visitors with a wealth of daily activities — from self-guided adventures to glimpses into a working laboratory and talks with the scientists. The staff also has a star-studded lineup of group activities for schools and organizations. Not forgotten are activities that appeal to the adults, too.

Leslie Peart, the SeaLife Center's director of education, invites teachers and the public to join the educational fun. Her staff, adept at curriculum, activities and programs, has developed unique, conservation-minded learning journeys through the Center's galleries, discovery labs and behind-the-scenes areas.

"Our programs," she said, "are designed to extend a classroom or club's activities with gripping, below-the-surface adventures."

(continued on page 28)

Representative Gary Davis & Speaker Gail Phillips

congratulate Seward on the opening of the SeaLife Center!

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LEARNING JOURNEYS (CONT.)

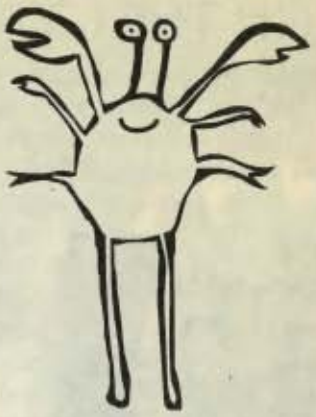
A sample of those adventures includes a self-guided tour of the Center. With the help of trained docents and staff, kids and adults get the opportunity to move through the exhibits at their own pace. Reading, touching, watching and learning to their heart's content, people also can ask questions as they go along. At many of the exhibits, someone will be available to answer questions and explain the sights.

If more structure happens to be your wish, you can select from among the SeaLife Center's educational menu of guided and chaperoned activities. The See Life Quest challenges kids, from grade 3 through age 16, to draw their way through the exhibits — encouraging them to put their artistic and scientific skills to use. Trained staff will provide natural history background during exercises that build image banks and observational skills. For this tour, the Center provides art boards and materials.

To challenge the more math-minded, you may want to pick the Measuring Up and Other Calculating Experiences tour of the Center. With materials carefully selected to be appropriate for the age of the group, staff work with the students to add, subtract, multiply and divide their way through the exhibits. For those older kids who are into calculating things, they can put their

(continued on page 28)

We're wild about sea life!



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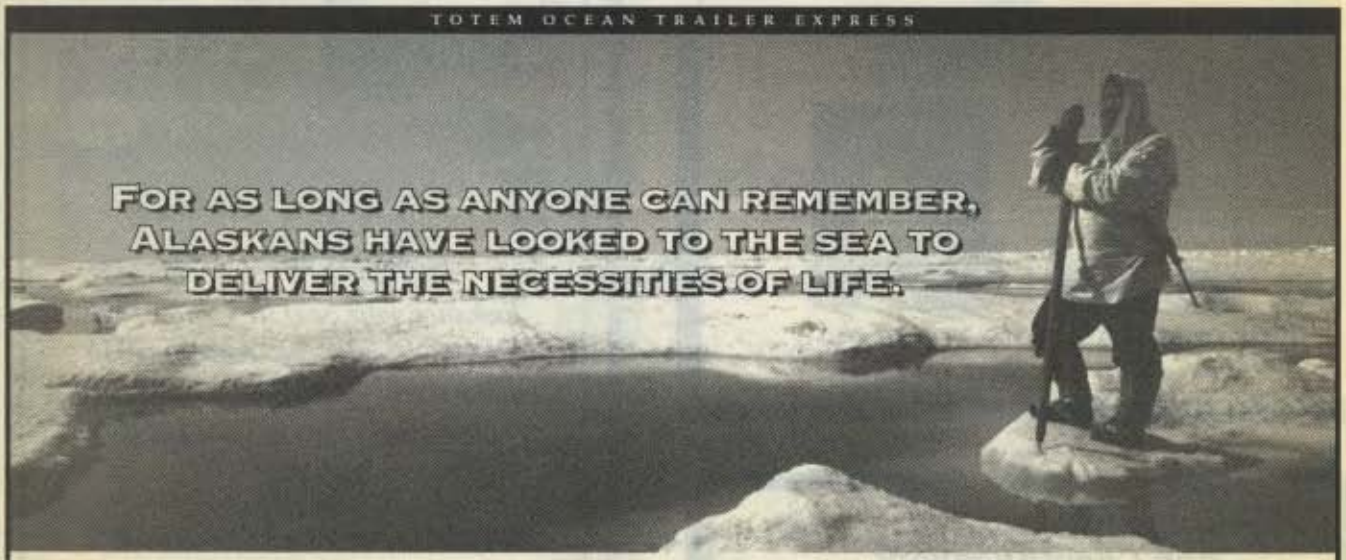

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LEARNING JOURNEYS (CONT.)

skills to use figuring the measurements of giant sand filters, calculating habitat volumes from scale models, finding the surface area of a biowheel, or figuring sea lion food to body weight ratios ratios.

Two of the most popular programs devised by the Center's educational staff are the Pinniped Picnic and the Nocturne programs. Your young scientist can watch behind the scenes as seal or sea lion food is prepared, then go below the surface to watch the animals eat their lunches. They'll talk with the scientists, get the skinny on pinniped fat and graph the latest data on Center computers. Topping off this program is a seafood lunch and the opportunity to chart their own caloric intake and energy needs.

For the more romantic or adventurous child, the Nocturne is just the ticket. With sleeping bags in hand, kids get the pleasure of a sleepover with the critters. Before laying their weary heads down for the night, however, they'll get to participate in a variety of games that involve creative writing, music, drawing and observing the animals.

Activities for younger children include Bird Brains and A Pocket Full of Stars. With the Bird Brains program, youngsters

(continued on page 31)

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SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

What Alaska SeaLife Center Research Director Michael Castellini, the designers, builders and staff of the SeaLife Center have done in the way of research facilities has been very successful. "We're opening the Center with six research projects," Castellini said. "We have the physical plant capacity for 10 to 12 large projects, and we're opening with half." Capacity should be reached, Castellini estimated, in about an 18-month to two-year range. "Then we'll face a quite pleasant prospect — how to figure out which projects to select from all those offered," he said.

The SeaLife Center is already known among scientists around the world, Castellini said. "My job is to deal with those scientists, to get them here and to help write proposals relevant to our mission.

"I've been promoting this facility for five years at international meetings, through mailings and on the Web site. I know most of the people in the marine mammal field, and I'm learning the fish and seabird worlds. The number of people in the world that work on marine mammals at the level of this facility is a relatively tight community."

Research projects coming on line or already on line when the Center opened on May 2 varied widely. "We have several fish research projects, and we'll be developing and using a fish pass for our own salmon stream. We'll do genetic studies on the salmon and on how to identify fish from different regions," Castellini said.

Another study will focus on pigeon guillemots and in their food energetics and breeding from year to year. "Some will be fed on herring and some on small sandlances, and we'll see what implications that has for the health of the animals," Castellini said. One method the SeaLife Center is implementing to assist this study is establishing breeding colonies of birds to enable researchers to study the birds over their lifetimes.

One of the marine mammal research projects, funded through EVOS, will look at why the population of harbor seals in Prince William Sound continues to decline at an accelerated rate compared to others in the state. "We see medical distinctions between seals in Prince William Sound and elsewhere," Castellini said. "We want to test the popular 'junk food' theory — that pollock is junk food without enough nutrition for the seals. Can we prove that? I don't know, but we'll test it over the next two or three years."

Many of the animals that will be research subjects have already arrived at the SeaLife Center. Sea lions came from the Vancouver Aquarium in Vancouver, B.C. "These are highly trained research animals," Castellini said. "They've been part of research projects since they were pups.

(continued on page 31)

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SCIENCE (CONT.)

It's quite something to have a 250 kilo sea lion jump up and settle itself on the scales so you can weigh it, or lay down and stretch out so you can measure it and take its blubber density.

"It's unique and wonderful to have the same animal to follow through time, and it's a critical piece to the research," said Castellini. "Many of us have had massive field projects in Prince William Sound and Alaska for years, but we've never been able to catch the same animal twice, so we can't follow it over time. Now we have the ability to have animals that remain constant, and that's critical to the types of study we're doing."

To help with the research projects, the SeaLife Center will add several intern positions to the staff. Castellini estimates the Center currently has funding for about three or four graduate and post-doctorate interns to work on projects.

"I get e-mail from people all over the world wanting to do internships at the Alaska SeaLife Center," Castellini said. "Interns should be able to come here on a relatively small amount of money. We believe we have the money secured to underwrite most of the internship programs.

"And," Castellini added, "since the Alaska SeaLife Center is a world-class facility, we'll be in demand with interns across the world." Add that to the researchers Castellini figures will be lining up at the door in the near future, and the Center will be a hot commodity in the scientific world.

LEARNING JOURNEYS (CONT.)

participate in activities using actual feathers from the birds, help the researchers gather seabird data or do a variety of other, specially designed tasks targeted to the needs and desires of the group. If your child loves the challenge of a hands-on activity, he or she will love the Pocket Full of Stars program. Your little urchins will love to handle the sea stars and other creatures from Alaska's tidepools. And they'll love juggling jellyfish and tossing tiny fish, stuffed toys of course. Puppets are always a hit, and kids are the stars of their shows with hand puppets.

If you and yours would like to sign up for any or all of these programs, get more information or find out prices, call the Alaska SeaLife Center today at 224-6300 or 1-800-224-2525.

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A WORLD CLASS FACILITY

During his education and work outside the state, Alaska SeaLife Center Research Director Michael Castellini said he's had the opportunity to work at facilities around North America for about 20 years. "In helping to design the Alaska SeaLife Center, I've had the opportunity to draw on the best parts of all of them to put together this facility," he said. "The Alaska SeaLife Center is pretty phenomenal in the world scheme."

The research facilities alone are stunning and include fully equipped wet and dry laboratories, running sea and fresh water, waste treatment, marine mammal, fish and invertebrate tanks; tissue preparation and freezer facilities, food preparation, a staffed hematology/parasitology/water chemistry lab and naturalistic marine mammal and marine bird habitats.

They also include offices, administrative support, a research library with global computer links to other research facilities and a wildlife veterinary clinic with surgery, necropsy, radiology and quarantine areas — all for use by scientists whose research projects are accepted by the Center.

One of the major advantages the SeaLife Center offers to scientists is sharing the cost for feeding, housing and caring for the research animals. "The real cost of housing an animal, about $100 a day, gets help from the SeaLife Center through its public end," Castellini said. Center visitors, through their admission and membership fees, help to cover about 65 to 70 percent of the costs to keep the animals there. "What that means," Castellini added, "is that we're able to use this public match as leverage for grants. That's very, very appealing to the scientific community."

Castellini added that very few universities can handle large marine mammals because the costs are so incredibly high. The SeaLife Center, because it was

(continued on page 33)

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FACILITY (CONT.)

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To enhance the academic standing of all research conducted at the SeaLife Center, the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, one of the nation's top 10 centers for research on sub-arctic fish and invertebrates, is adjacent to the Center. UAF is committed to the Center's research projects as well, and assists in ensuring the scientific integrity of all research projects conducted at the Center.

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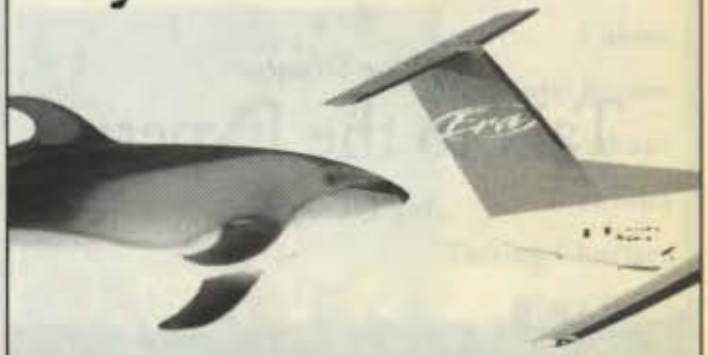

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CONSTRUCTION (CONT.)

Several additional Alaska businesses were involved in the design phase of the construction — including Raj Bhargava & Associates; Peratrovich, Nottingham and Drage; and Land Design North.

Out-of-state contractors and engineering consultants brought skills and knowledge not available in Alaska, such as Jolly Miller, which constructed the rock work in the three major exhibits; Starnet International from Florida which built the canopy over the bird exhibit; D.W. Thompson of Vancouver, British Columbia, which designed the life support systems; and BIOS from Seattle, which prepared the exhibitry design. Overall, however, the SeaLife Center added 50 full time jobs to the economy of Seward — and the largest majority of those jobs have been filled by people from Alaska.

Today, the Alaska SeaLife Center stands in testimony to the dreams and dedication of many — to the drive of research scientists and experts with the knowledge to rehabilitate ill and injured creatures, and to educators who have designed and produced a series of exciting and varied learning experiences. It also testifies to the expertise and abilities of Alaska's designers and builders who constructed a state-of-the-art marine facility from a dream.

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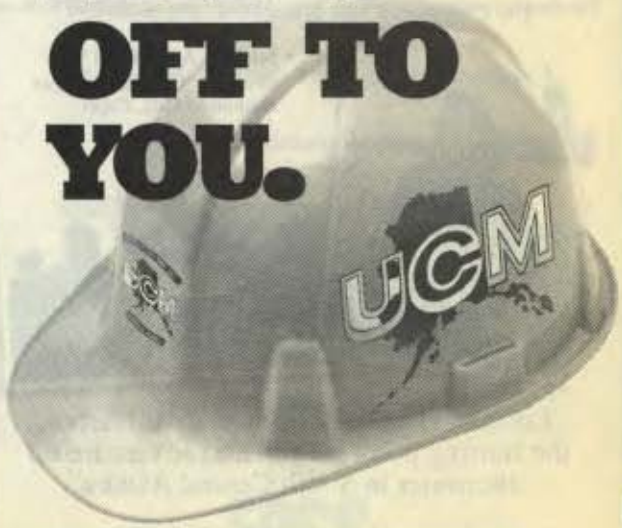

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SEALIFE CENTER FUN FACTS

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ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS MAY 11, 1998

Murres' deaths puzzling

El Nino could be villain, experts say

by NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

The first call came in early February from the National Park Service in Seward. A few weeks later, more calls came from birdwatchers and seafood processors in Dutch Harbor. Dead and dying murres were washing ashore by the dozens.

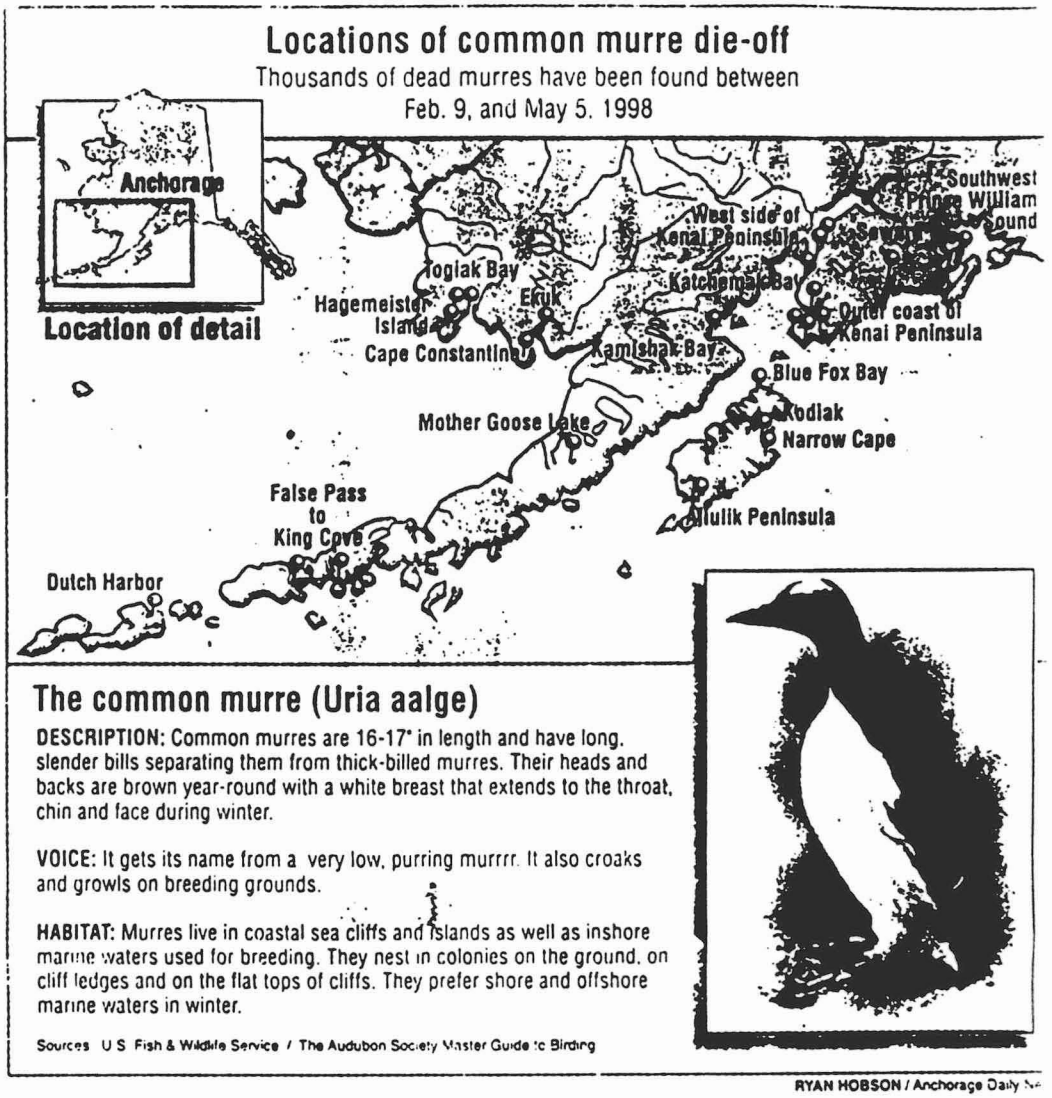
The calls are still trickling in.

This spring thousands, maybe tens of thousands of dead and lethargic common murres have been found on beaches and spotted at sea from Prince William Sound and Kachemak Bay, from Cook Inlet to the Aleutians and up into Bristol Bay, according to biologists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Some even have been found on inland lakes, where the coastal birds rarely venture.

Murres, with their slender pointed bills, dark backs and white breasts, favor sea cliffs and islands and nest in colonies all along the north Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea.

It's too early to say how many have died or what is killing them. Scientists have a hunch that the warm water brought to the gulf by El Nino may be at the root of a starvation problem.

But they also are looking at the die-off as a piece of a much bigger puzzle they have been working on for several years. Though data is sparse, scientists know there was a big change in the gulf ecosystem in the late 1970s. They call it a "regime shift." The gulf's water warmed and the populations of shrimp, capelin and other species collapsed while pollack and some others exploded.



RYAN HOBSON / Anchorage Daily N

Since then, scientists also have noticed periodic, big die-offs, or what they call "wrecks," of certain seabird species, said John Piatt, a research biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey Biological Resources Division.

The first was noticed in the spring of 1983, the last strong El Nino year. About 90 percent of the common murres along the Northwest Coast were wiped out, he said. They have never completely recovered.

While there were smaller die-offs of the Gulf of Alaska's murres in the years that followed, big ones also were reported in 1989, the year of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and in 1993.

About 250,000 of the Gulf's estimated 1 million murres died the summer of the oil spill. Scientists studying the effects of the spill reported that the murres were recovering, but then they were hit again in 1993.

That year, a weak El Nino brought a pulse of warm water to the Gulf of Alaska, and an estimated 120,000 murres washed up on beaches.

This year's die-off is similar, said Vivian Mendenhall, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Some seem lethargic. For instance, when a boat approaches them they sit there hoping it will go away, which is pretty common for sea birds that are in poor condition."

Scientists will be looking closely at the age of the dying birds.

In 1993, about 80 percent of the dead murres were subadults, 5 years old or younger and not breeding, Piatt said. "That has less of an impact than if they were breeding birds."

Common murres are tough and resilient and can rebound quickly if conditions are favorable, Piatt said

Samples of this year's dead were sent to a laboratory in Madison Wis The same lab tested the dead birds from 1983 to see if the birds had been exposed to heavy metals parasites disease, a virus a bacteria or biotoxins

The one thing most birds had in common was they were emaciated," Piatt said 'They had signs of starvation '

Common murres don t have a lot of energy reserves, Piatt said During the summer when breeding they eat about 15 meals a day or as much as 50 percent of their body mass In the winter they may eat as much as 70 percent of their body mass every day

"So it doesn't take long if they don t get food for their reserves to go down, Piatt said

In the summer, the murres forage on small schooling fish such as sand lance, capelin and juvenile pollock In the winter, they head for the ice-free waters along the continental shelf, but no one knows for sure what they eat They probably rely on crustaceans or krill, Piatt said

Operating on the theory that the birds may be starving and with a research eye on the Gulf s ecological regime shift, scientists now are looking at satellite images that show water temperatures in the Gulf were up by 1 or 2 degrees centigrade last month, Piatt said

He said the question is What effect did that have on the fish and krill that murres eat?

"It could be that it drives them deeper in the water column so they are less accessible or maybe large pollock cod and halibut are feeding on the same forage fish before the murres can get them, he said

When the water temperature increases, the larger fish s metabolic rate goes up and they eat more Piatt said 'This is all speculation, because nobody really knows what happens to these forage fish, ' he said

The difference between the crash this year and five years ago is that scientists are ready Because of the studies being funded with money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement some murres have been banded nesting sites are under observation and marine biologists are conducting acoustic studies to assess the abundance of forage fish

"There is not much more that we can do beyond studying it," Piatt said "But we are now in a position to see whether this die off is more than just a blip "

BLACK HOLE: Trench affects food chain of Prince William Sound

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

In the heart of Prince William Sound, there is a very, very deep spot just east of Lone Island scientists call "the Black Hole." They have long known about it, but now they are uncovering how vital this deep trench is to maintaining the balance of the Sound's food chain.

"It really hadn't been investigated that much until the oil spill," said Tom Kline, a principal investigator for the Prince William Sound Science Center in Cordova.

Now preliminary studies suggest the Black Hole may provide significant habitat for the big black cod and rockfish found in the Sound and in the number of salmon and herring the Sound produces. Several scientists around the state are studying different aspects of the Black Hole using settlement money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

"Because of its depth, it provides an oceanic-like habitat. It is in protected waters, so it is an anomaly," Kline said. If not for that deep pocket, some of the fish — like black cod, sablefish and rockfish — probably would leave the Sound once they became adults.

Generally, most of Prince William Sound is pretty deep, somewhere around 1,000 feet. But the Black Hole is thought to be 2,000 to 2,800 feet deep, according to Ted Cooney, a professor with the Institute of Marine Science at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. It's a wide, S-shaped trench that covers an area a few miles across and a few miles long.

"It's like a cliff, almost straight down," said Jeff Short, a biologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service at Auke Bay in Juneau.

It's where long-line fishermen go to find black cod, rockfish and halibut.

And it's deep enough that some invertebrates are tricked into wintering over in its deep, stable water column rather than migrating 100 miles south to the safety of the Gulf of Alaska's deep waters.

Scientists think the Black Hole may prove instrumental in supporting large numbers of salmon fry and herring.

Because of the Black Hole, a robust supply of plump copepods, which are small, fatty, shrimplike crustaceans, is waiting to be eaten by salmon fry that pour out of hatcheries and wild streams.

Without the Black Hole, the Sound would have to depend on the ocean for its supply of copepods.

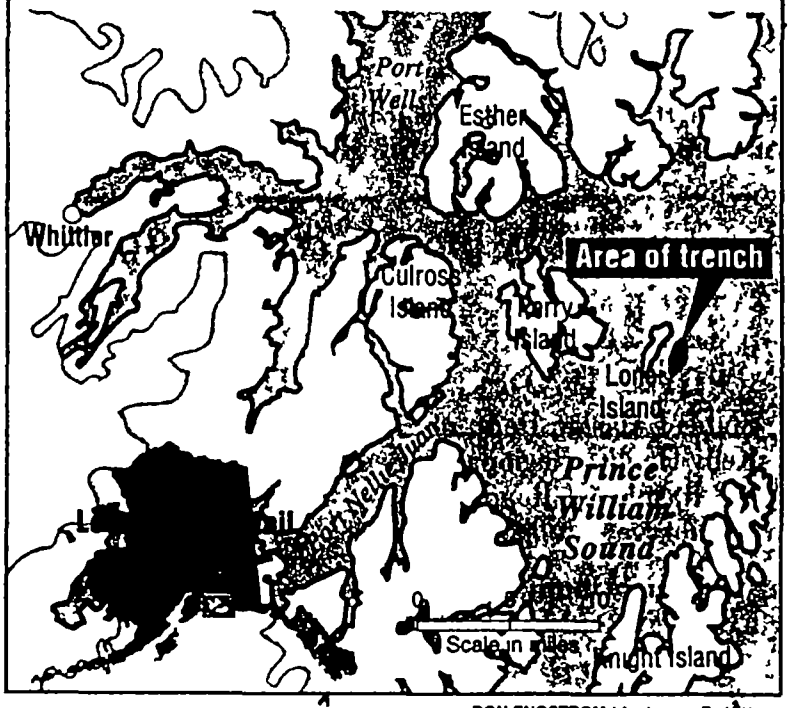
The crustaceans live only for a year and reproduce in deep waters in the late fall or early winter, Short said. In the late winter, they develop as they migrate to the surface. As they near the surface, they begin to eat phytoplankton blooms.

Because the Sound is generally more stable than the ocean and rich with a spring plankton bloom, the local copepods are fatter than their ocean-going cousins and handy for young, hungry migrating fish.

Though the Sound is periodically reseeded with copepods by the ocean's current, if the Black Hole didn't exist, there might not be that early supply of copepods.

Prince William Sound's 'Black Hole'

Scientists say some invertebrates winter there rather than migrate 100 miles south to the Gulf of Alaska. The "Black Hole," a trench a few miles across and a few miles long, is thought to be 2,000 to 2,800 feet deep.



RON ENGSTROM / Anchorage Daily News

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
5/3/98

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
5/4/98

Deep waters important to PWS

ANCHORAGE (AP) — In the heart of Prince William Sound, there is a very deep spot just east of Lone Island Scientists call it "the Black Hole"

They have long known about it, but now they are uncovering how vital this deep trench is to maintaining the balance of the sound's food chain

"It really hadn't been investigated that much until the (Exxon Valdez) oil spill," said Tom Kline, an investigator for the Prince William Sound Science Center in Cordova.

New studies suggest the hole may provide habitat for the big black cod and rockfish found in the sound, and it may boost the number of salmon and herring the sound can produce

Scientists around the state are studying different aspects of the Black Hole using settlement money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill

"Because of its depth, it provides an oceanic-like habitat It is in protected waters so it is an anomaly," Kline said If not for that deep pocket, some fish — like black cod, sablefish and rockfish — probably would leave the sound once they became adults

Most of Prince William Sound is about 1,000 feet deep But the Black Hole is thought to be 2,000 to 2,800 feet deep, according to Ted Cooney, a professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks It's an S-shaped trench a few miles across and several miles long.

"It's like a cliff, almost straight down," said Jeff Short, a biologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau

And it's deep enough that some invertebrates are tricked into wintering over in its deep, stable water column rather than migrating 100 miles south to the Gulf of Alaska's deep waters

Scientists think the Black Hole may prove vital in supporting large numbers of salmon fry and herring

Because of the Black Hole, the plump copepods — small, shrimplike crustaceans, provide a brunch buffet for the salmon fry that pour out of hatcheries and wild streams

Without the Black Hole, the sound would have to depend on the ocean for its supply of copepods.

The crustaceans reproduce in deep waters in the late fall or early winter, Short said. In late winter, they migrate to the surface and begin eating phytoplankton blooms

Because the sound has a rich spring plankton bloom, the local copepods are fatter than their ocean-going cousins and handy for young, hungry, migrating fish

VALDEZ VANGUARD
MAY 20, 1998

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Eyak residents learn to improve salmon habitat

Three years ago the Native Village of Eyak enlisted the aid of the U S Forest Service to help them im prove the meager salmon runs in eastern Prince Wil liam Sound and at the same time teach young adults about their lands and about resource management

Six Eyak residents, ages 18 to 25 started by surveying every inch of habitat along each of 11 streams, from their mouths to their headwaters Ken Hodges, of the U S Forest Service, coordinated the project

There's a reason why so few coho salmon return to the streams of eastern Prince William Sound, according to Hodges The streams are really rough "The mountains are pretty high and up in the higher areas it's raining a lot," said Hodges It's common to see high water marks about three to four feet above where you're walking along the stream bed So that water is really gushing and a fish can t live in there unless it has a lot of sheltered areas '

There are many stages in a coho salmon's life Each one has its own special habitat needs to survive The adults need well-sorted clean gravel half an inch to as much as two inches in diameter, for spawning Juveniles fresh out of the eggs like the quiet backwater pools to rest and grab a few bugs off the surface," said Hodges 'Those a little older can take more of the higher flows but they too mainly use pools for their habitat "

But, in the wintertime, both fry and the older juveniles need sheltered spots They need places where they can get out of the main velocities of the stream and down into the sticks and logs, some place out of the way where they can just rest and hunker down for the rest of the winter, said Hodges

During their habitat surveys the Eyak crew measured the different types of habitat present in each stream Then they put their numbers into a production model to see what factors were limiting coho production in each of the streams The deep quiet protected pools were in short supply

Of all the streams they walked, Plateau Creek in Port Gravina, looked like the stream with the best chance of suc cess "It was a smaller creek The flows weren t quite as high and as wild as some of these other places and if we put habitat structures in there there's less of a chance they d be blown out by high flows," he said

To make deep quiet pools and backwaters they anchored logs and placed boulders in the streambed This is the first winter for the habitat improvements If they hold residents can expect to see more coho salmon in coming years

Harbor seals in good health overall; declines in Sound remain a mystery

By Jody Seitz

Harbor seal numbers in the Gulf of Alaska began dropping about 20 years ago In Prince William Sound, biologists noticed their numbers declining in about 1985 While the nega tive populations trends continue in the sound their populations are thriving in southeast Alaska and the population is showing signs of stabilizing in Kodiak

About two years ago, Alaskan biologists Mike Castellini and Brian Fadely met another seal researcher who had found some interesting patterns in the blood of harbor seals from the North Atlantic Dr Paul Thompson, of Scotland, found that the blood chemistry of seals changed with their diet In particular the size of red blood cells increased when they shifted from eating high fat content fish such as herring to pollock and cod

Thompson wanted to know if biologists found the same thing in harbor seals here The collaborative effort has helped eliminate some reasons for population declines, and has helped scientists focus more closely on the exact nature of the problem

Fadely now with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau, says at first he didn't find anything excep tional On the whole the harbor seal blood looked healthy "Any veterinarian looking at the blood of these seals would say they are healthy said Fadely

And he found no serious dif ferences in the health and condition in seals from southeast Alaska from those in Prince William Sound

Then he analyzed the blood data of harbor seals from the Montague Strait area and the central area of Prince William Sound

What he found were trends that are considered "subclinical " They do not represent a lack of health, but are changes in the blood chemistry that occur according to where the seals live, the time of year and between years

' We see this change throughout several years, which is consistent with what the fisheries biologists are saying about the relative abundance of pollock and herring in that area '

To better understand what they are seeing in the wild studies of captive animals are needed Fadely said ' That way we will know what the animals are being fed," he said "We can take continuous measurements of its health and fatty acids accumulations based on diet, learn how stable isotopes change based on diet, what diets are best for the animals, and how well they assimilate them "

The puzzle still exists If the animals are in good condition, and their blood looks healthy then what is wrong? According to Fadely it could be a number of things

It might be our sampling that we re missing the animals that are compromised, or we have it in our data and haven't seen it yet,' he said, 'or another possibility is that it isn t health-related at all '

Scientists hope to get a better understanding of how diet affects the seals especially pups and juveniles in studies at the Alaska SeaLife Center begin ning this year

Jody Seitz lives in Cordova and also produces the Alaska Coastal Currents radio pro gram The series is sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to provide infor mation about restoration activi ties within the spill region

Coastal currents

CORDOVA TIMES
MAY 14, 1998

Scientists look to Prince William Sound to learn about mystery bird

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz

To find the Kittlitz s murrelet, one must travel into the ice laden glacial fjords of Prince William Sound It s one of the few areas in the world these uncommon birds can be found

So little is known about Kittlitz s murrelets it's hard to calculate whether or not their population is healthy Dr Robert Day of the biological consulting firm ABR Inc , is attempting to document more of the bird's natural history and to learn more about what may be happening to this very rare bird

During the summer of 1996, researchers learned how to locate the murrelets on the water Last year in June and early August, they found more adult birds in all four bays they visited

The amount of ice may regulate the number of birds they find in any one place, Day said "It looked as though early on there was less ice than last year and it may be that they are found throughout the bays if there's not too much ice," he said "Even though they nest near glaciers they don't like too much ice "

In fact, Day said, they prefer to feed off the face of glaciers more than anywhere else Exactly what they were eating was harder to determine "We tried to capture the birds alive at sea with mist nets and couldn't do it We wanted to take samples for stable isotopes to find out where they feed on the food web, ' said Day

It appears the birds are feeding on both fish and plankton with most of the diet consisting of small fishes They also seemed to eat more plankton than marbled murrelets "From a limited amount of data, it looks like 60 percent fish, 30 percent plankton," he said

Although they are not certain exactly what the birds are feeding on, they mapped the depths of the water near the face of the glaciers and found, on the sonar, a surprising number of targets they thought were fish

One alarming observation from the summer's fieldwork was the complete absence of juveniles "We were sampling in the same area where the Kittlitz s murrelets adults are and we saw no young in almost three weeks this summer," he said "So it s a little alarming to see two years go by with no evidence of reproduction at all "

And perhaps more alarming Day found pairs of Kittlitz's murrelets and their close relations, marbled murrelets, in almost every bay "These are birds sitting on the water, that very clearly appeared to have bonded to each other They were very defensive, they were alarmed , they swam together They stayed very near each other," said Day

According to Day, that could explain why there are so few Kittlitz s murrelets It's possible there are so many marbled murrelets that the Kittlitz's murrelets are simply inundated with them Unfortunately, it means some Kittlitz's murrelets are losing their chance to reproduce

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.

CORDOVA TIMES
MAY 21, 1998

Old bones offer clues to population changes, swings in Gulf of Alaska

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz

Theories about changes in the Gulf of Alaska ecosystem have been circulating for several years Declines in species such as common murres, marbled murrelets, sea lions and harbor seals coincide with documented changes in the abundance of several species of fish in the Gulf of Alaska since the late 1970s

Marine mammal researchers wanted to find out if changes in harbor seal and sea lion populations had anything to do with changes in their supply of food They were interested in learning if the animals were eating different prey, or if the prey were just less abundant

In order to see the changes, they first had to find some marine mammal data from the 1970s which could be compared to data they have today In spite of the limited numbers of animals which were taken for research in earlier years, they found what they needed in the University of Alaska Fairbanks Museum

Dr Don Schell and Amy Hirons, of the UAF Institute of Marine Science, looked for natural tracers of the food web, stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen atoms, found in the tissue of all living organisms

For chemistry buffs, isotopes are just different forms of a chemical element Those with more neutrons in their nuclei are known as "heavier" than ones with fewer neutrons Carbon 13 and carbon 12 are examples of carbon isotopes which don't change as they age Another isotope of carbon, carbon-14, is used to date artifacts because it changes predictably over time

The exact combination of these isotopes is set by the environment the animals live and feed in The nitrogen isotopes can tell about where on the food web the animals eat, while the carbon isotope ratios reflect the productivity of the environment.

Hirons compared the carbon and nitrogen isotope ratios in the bone collagen of the marine mammal skulls from the museum to muscle tissue of harbor seals collected during the 1990s

Hirons and Schell found that since the mid-1970s, the nitrogen stable isotope ratios hadn't changed, but the ratio of carbon isotopes had

Their findings suggest that something in the mid-1970s affected the plant production in the Gulf of Alaska With fewer plant plankton there was less food for animal plankton, less food for fishes, and so on, all through the food web

In other words their research suggests, the Gulf of Alaska may not be able to support as much life as it used to

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

Bones clue to changes in Gulf's ecosystem

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In order to see the changes they first had to find some marine mammal data from the 1970s which could be compared to data they have today In spite of the limited numbers of animals which were taken for research in earlier years, they found what they needed — in the University of Alaska Fairbanks Museum

Dr Don Schell and Amy Hirons of the UAF Institute of Marine Science, looked for natural tracers of the food web, stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen atoms, found in the tissue of all living organisms

For chemistry buffs, isotopes are just different forms of a chemical element Those with more neutrons in their nuclei are known as 'heavier' than ones with fewer neutrons Carbon 13 and carbon 12 are examples of carbon isotopes which don t change as they age Another isotope of carbon, carbon-14 is used to date artifacts because it changes predictably over time

The exact combination of these isotopes is set by the environment the animals live and feed in The nitrogen isotopes can tell about where on the food web the animals eat, while the carbon isotope ratios reflect the productivity of the environment

Hirons compared the carbon and nitrogen isotope ratios in the bone collagen of the marine mammal skulls from the museum to muscle tissue of harbor seals collected during the 1990s

Hirons and Schell found that since the mid-1970s, the nitrogen stable isotope ratios hadn t changed, but the ratio of carbon isotopes had

Their findings suggest that something in the mid-1970s affected the plant production in the Gulf of Alaska With fewer plant plankton there was less food for animal plankton, less food for fishes and so on, all through the food web

In other words, their research suggests, the Gulf of Alaska may not be able to support as much life as it used to

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

Merchant files appeal for hotel parking plan

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
MAY 14, 1998

While the city's Planning and Zoning Commission may be satisfied with Paul Carter's parking plan for Hotel Edgewater, at least one downtown merchant is not and has filed an appeal The action could delay construction of the 70- to 80-unit hotel Carter plans to build on the site of Dreamland Bowl on the corner of Fifth and Railway avenues

Gene Bradley owner of First Video, which faces the hotel site, wrote a letter to city clerk Patrick Reilly stating, ' I believe I have the right to appeal" the Planning and Zoning Commission's decision She said she is exercising that right

Bradley's letter, accompanied by the $300 fee, made it to the clerk s office just before closing time on May 8 and beat the Planning and Zoning Commission's appeal deadline by about an hour

Her main point of contention is that hotel guests will not use the hotel's valet parking service and will instead park as close to the hotel as possible, causing problems for her video store

"It's going to create a problem There's no doubt in my mind People seem to want to park in the street They don't feel safe with their cars parked that far away," she said

Carter's parking plan will move hotel guest's cars 775 feet from the hotel and a valet will have the keys, something Bradley doesn't see as a successful plan

"What legal remedy is available to the city if valet parking is not maintained or proves unworkable? Will we be stuck with a hotel adversely affecting the parking of neighboring properties for years into the future?" Bradley wrote

She said with more than three decades of hotel management experience in Seward, she's seen it all Bradley said people who come to a hotel want to see their cars — they often need to make trips back and forth to them and they like to have them handy

Clerk Reilly will go over the letter and make sure it addresses an appealable issue and is in proper order, but he said the fate of the appeal, and the parking plan, are in the hands of the City Council

Community development director Kerry Martin said Bradley's appeal will result in an appeal hearing within 30 days of the date the appeal was filed

Preparation for that hearing will involve publishing a packet of information for each city council member that includes transcripts of everything said or heard by the planning and zoning commission, relative to the hotel project

Also included in the packet, will be written decisions, written statements, maps, plans, letters and other information the city has regarding Carter's plan The packets must be ready five days prior to the appeal hearing

Upon hearing the appeal, the city council will have 60 days to deliberate In the meantime, Carter can move the bowling alley, he can tear it down, but he can not proceed with the construction of the hotel

Parking limits pass

SeaLife Center declares toll booth 'holiday'

By Colleen Kelly

LOG Staff

Two-hour parking limits in the downtown core business area will go into effect just after Memorial Day weekend, although it'll probably be closer to the Fourth of July holiday before limits are strictly enforced, the city administration says

At the same time, the Alaska SeaLife Center has declared a toll booth 'holiday in its parking lot because there aren't enough vehicles using its lot on weekdays to justify the salary of a toll booth attendant

Kim Sundberg executive director of the SeaLife Center, said ' the arm is up" Monday through Thursday at the parking lot toll booth — in essence, allowing

See Parking, Page 23

Parking ...

From Page 1

free parking four days of each week, and charging fees only on I riday, Saturday and Sunday

When traffic numbers increase in the parking lot, the SeaLife Center will put an attendant in the booth, Sundberg said 'We're just watching it for now'

He figures they'll continue to offer free weekday parking until Memorial Day weekend

The setup also makes it less complicated to coordinate installation of the Kenai Fjords Tours floating dock, Sundberg said

The Seward City Council's continuing debate on two-hour parking limits downtown was beginning to resemble a tennis match as the issue got batted from the "do-pass" to the don t-pass' side of the net during the past four council meetings

Monday the council voted to reconsider its A[redacted]27 rejection of parking time limits Some members said they had voted no last month simply because the issue was being rushed through

Scott Janke, who came on board last week as the new city manager, expressed similar sentiments as he urged the council to refrain from instituting time limits until he had a chance to analyze the associated costs

With a delay so he could identify a source of funding, Janke figured it would be July 1 before parking limits actually went into effect

Councilman Jerry King didn't like that idea Remarking on the parking situation at last weekend's grand opening of Chugach Heritage Center, King said, "Everybody was out in the streets and parking for free The (Alaska SeaLife Center parking) lot was empty '

King didn't think the council could wait until just before the July Fourth holiday to institute the change "Our needs may be June rather than July," he said

It was a split vote, but Mayor Bob Satin, council members King, Stu Clark and Nathan Orr were on the prevailing side as the motion carried to enact two hour limits in the downtown core area Voting no were council members Marie Gage and Pat Callahan while Edgar Blatchford couldn't vote due to a conflict of interest

The resolution is only in effect through this tourist season It expires Sept 1 Janke said city administration has the authority to delay implementation of the time limit while it prepares signs and puts together a funding proposal

Gage said the SeaLife Center shouldn't charge anything for parking in its 162-space lot That would alleviate the pressure on the downtown area caused by SeaLife Center patrons who don't want to pay to park

Orr said last Saturday he saw people park a block from the SeaLife Center lot and then walk to the marine mam[redacted]al center With the two-hour lim[redacted]wntown, those people will move into the parking lot

The SeaLife Center's executive director was glad to hear the city will be implementing time limits and said it is a positive step Sundberg didn't agree, however, with Gage's idea of free parking at the SeaLife Center

The original plan had been to implement a token system for the parking lot But after Sundberg became executive director in November, he said he worked with International Parking Management to devise a system that penalizes parking stragglers

Sundberg doesn't want people parking in the lot all day, tying up valuable spaces He said the key to the SeaLife Center lot is to get turnover

"The penalty is a fee The longer you're in this lot, the more you have to pay," Sundberg said

He said parking fees will be ' an important revenue source for the SeaLife Center" Revenue estimates are $200,000 annually The money will help pay for upkeep such as landscaping plowing, sweeping and security

"The SeaLife Center has to support itself," Sundberg said "We're not a government agency In fact we pay the city a percentage of our retail (sales) "

SeaLife Center employees park in the northern portion of the nearby Institute of Marine Science parking lot on Third Avenue According to Sundberg, as part of its agreement with IMS, the SeaLife Center put in paving and landscaping in exchange for parking spaces

"We issue permits to our employees," Sundberg said They're not allowed to park on the street

IMS director Tom Smith was out of town and unavailable for comment on whether or not IMS will institute paid parking on its share of the lot

JUNEAU EMPIRE
MAY 3, 1998

Puffins, street fair greet SeaLife Center visitors

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEWARD – Crowds gathered by the big yellow doors of the Alaska SeaLife Center on Saturday where a ribbon cutting was held for the $52 million building

A Seward dream going back more than 20 years, the two story center is the world's first cold-water marine research site designed specially to accommodate visitors, scientists and wildlife rehabilitation all under one roof

Groundbreaking for the building at the foot of Fourth Avenue was held in 1995 Saturday's dedication under clear skies attracted about 3,000 people to the center overlooking Resurrection Bay

Organizers projected as many as 5,000 would crowd into down town Seward, a town of about 3,000 The day included a street fair with jugglers, music and food booths, as well as performances of an original play by Moose Pass Elementary students

Dignitaries included Gov Tony Knowles, former Gov Walter J Hickel and U S Sen Frank Murkowski

Deborah Williams, Alaska special assistant to the U S Interior Department, also addressed the crowd Williams is the agency s representative on the Exxon Valdez oil spill trustees, which helped fund the center and its research

The center on Saturday also accepted a $1 million grant for sea lion research from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Suggested admission Saturday was $15 apiece for adults

The center's gift shop on the ground floor bustled Plans call for admission fees and gift shop revenues to generate all but $1 million of the annual $6 million operating budget

Crews spent the past week putting finishing touches on the center, which features three main exhibits of sea lions, harbor seals and puffins and common murres School children already have be gun spending overnights at the center, which offers an extensive marine science program for youths

SEWARD DOES IT AGAIN !!

The City of Seward and the Alaska SeaLife Center opened its doors to excited crowds with rave reviews In appreciation of the enthusiastic support and involvement of the community local and state businesses and numerous individuals the Alaska SeaLife Center thanks everyone who helped make the Seward Celebration and Grand Opening Days so successful

Volunteers Make It Happen

Dan Dixon John Tracy KTUU TV • Kathy Fredrickson • Kim Filo • Ida Cooper • Jenne Danzl • Devin Loomis Sharon Stevens Ganser • Susan Pfeiffenberger • Justin Lee • Travis Hoogland • Dale Hoogland • Ben Chitwood • Leonna Buschmann • Hope Darnell • Stephanie Moreland • Kathy Wartinbee • David Wartinbee Natua Aderholt • Julie Renwick • Herb Bischoff • Jackie Schakel • Brenda Cook • Herb Cook Jan Kristenson • Ibionna • Fred Wemark • Karen Duchow • Rebekah Smith • Jane Anderson • Lana Esposito • Lewie Stackpole • Kay Smith • Lynda Martin • Rose Ronne • Jayne Noll • Barbara Fleming • Jessica Rowley • Tom Osborne • Meggin Clancy • Bev Dunham • Keith Campbell • Jackie Campbell • Mary Huss • Mayor Bob Satin • Joan Burgess • Teresa Swartz • Maggie Kelly • Simon Carino • Leann Buschmann • Annicka Fabian • Larry Etukeok • Chad Lockwood • Lani Lockwood • Chuck Hart • Kelly Martin • Louie Bencardino • Jennifer Troutwein • Peter Armato • Mike and Linda Yarborough • Sharon Irvin and Cindy Capra s Art Classes • James Carl Helen Karla and Darryl Schaefermeyer • Susanna Branson • Maxine Hayes • Barbara Shea • Lorraine McCauley • Alda Wing • Irene Branson • Pam Amber and Eric Lloyd • Lynn and Dave Meyer • Alicia Jordan • Sandra M Dye • Yvonne Dahl • Rev Terry Doane Marilee Kloszewski • Annie Hemstock • Karla Hays • Jessica Ames

Above and Beyond Club

Melody Jordan Seward Fisheries • Carol Marshal Kenai Fjords Tours • Shirley Seavey, Seward Bus Lines • Sharon Seward Chamber of Commerce • The Seward Elks Club • Linne Bardarson • Roger Swenson Swenson Construction • Perry Merkle, Café Del Mundo • Fred Esposito, AVTEC • Darrell Deeter AVTEC • Jeff Austin AVTEC • Pat Johnston RISE Alaska • Beth Walker, RISE Alaska • Karen Atkinson RISE Alaska • Suzanne LaFrance RISE Alaska • Jennifer Randolph RISE Alaska • Rebecca Duke RISE Alaska • Dean Kasischke Four Seasons • Knots So Fast • Rolf Bardarson, Resurrection Rentals • Joe McLallen Rowan Pacific Rim Decorators • Tom Tougas Kenai Fjords Tours • Anchorage Cold Storage • Jenny Shontele, Trish and Sharon of the Best Western • Alvin Amason, Artist • Karla Morreira Artist • Brad Slama Slama Design • Alaska Railroad Corporation • Ray and Leslie Simutis Ray s Waterfront Restaurant • Glacier Brewhouse • Borealis Brewery • Steve Thorne Showcase Lounge • Tom Smith and Melanie Nakken Holmes University of Alaska Fairbanks, Institute of Marine Science • Randy McFarland • American Legion Seward Chapter • Scott Brown • Jostens Photography • United States Air Force Band of the Pacific • Lt General David McCloud Commander and the 54th Fighter Squadron Elmendorf AFB

The City of Seward Rick Gifford Tylan Schrock Dave Calvert Jeff Estes Dave Squires Tom Walker and Tex Ainsworth

The Grand Opening Committee Sharon Anderson Willard Dunham Dick Lowell Maureen Sims Mike Olson Jim Fredrickson Judi Adrianoff Barbara Hildebrandt Kathleen Armato Maria Benjamin and all the associated spouses and mates who endured them!

The Alaska SeaLife Center Board of Directors Jack Scoby Sharon Anderson Dave Crane Karen Swartz Willard Dunham Tom Tougas Carol Ann Lindsey Rick Gifford Dr Jerome Komisar Dr Joan Wadlow Dr Bob Spies and William Noll

The Alaska SeaLife Center Board of Governors Bernt Bodal Carl Brady Jr Michael Brown William Corbus F Scott Davis William Deaver David Gottstein Elaine Griffin Governor and Mrs Walter J Hickel Dale Lindsey Richard Lowell Carl Marrs Susie B Morris Dr Joyce Murphy George Page Mark Smith Mark Tabbut and Joseph Jr and Susanne Usibelli

And especially to the enormously talented Alaska SeaLife Center staff who contributed incredible hours of expertise manpower and sheer determination to make this dream come true THANK YOU !!!!

Alaska SeaLife Center

windows to the sea

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
MAY 14, 1998

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
MAY 14, 1998

Commentary

Urban meets rural at SeaLife Center

By Edgar Blatchford

Many Alaskans would say that the now discontinued series "Northern Exposure" represented little of what life is like in our state But maybe it reflected too much of all the exotic parts for which it is glamorized by Hollywood For many, the show represented ridiculous notions of something Alaska could never encapsulate within one community

Yet amazingly, the advent of the Alaska SeaLife Center opening in Seward reflects an urban and rural interaction of new proportions Clearly, the SeaLife Center presents opportunities for scientific research, education and exhibition yet unseen in the state The tourism industry can market this additional Alaska experience Seward will likely witness an economic boon from the increase in jobs and tertiary ripples

I see other benefits, other opportunities for the SeaLife Center Aspects of Alaska typically unseen by both the tourist as well as the majority of the state can now be observed In a sense, rural Alaska biota is now blended with some of the most urban parts of the state

This is good business for the state, good business for two reasons 1) We weave the connection between rural and urban Alaska through a public and private initiative and 2) the Alaska SeaLife Center brings research and business-related activities to the entire state With some of the cooperative efforts instituted between the center, Marine Science Institute, Department of Fish and Game and Qutekcak Native Tribe, multiple impacts will be realized Conducted research will provide the basis for some of our most promising economic opportunities, such as the shellfish industry; the resources that the SeaLife Center brings is key to such future development. Public education, university research and extension will be important for its ongoing success

As the SeaLife Center gets going, I look back on my childhood in a community mixed with transplanted people from all parts of the state and cultural backgrounds The community of Seward remains very much a mixture of sorts In this respect, Seward may be the most appropriate meld of community, culture and people for a center that combines the many marine animals that will come to the SeaLife Center In a way, we will be able to share different pieces of Alaska's marine wilderness at one site with those who visit.

To some extent, we may just have found a way to encapsulate some of the best aspects of Alaska within one location I welcome the Alaska SeaLife Center and all that it has to offer the community of Seward, surrounding areas rural Alaska and the state But in talking to some of the first visitors to the SeaLife Center, I have to say, "We need to get a beluga!"

Edgar Blatchford is a Seward city councilman a University of Alaska Anchorage journalism professor and was commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs under former Gov Walter Hickel

CORDOVA TIMES
MAY 14, 1998

Urban meets rural at Seward's SeaLife Center

Commentary

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SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
MAY 14, 1998

Roger Kane/LOG photo

A yearling moose trots up to the shoreline of Preacher's Pond where perhaps a dozen anglers fished early in April for beautiful Dolly Varden that overwintered in the pond.

Anglers worried about Dolly Varden numbers

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Hundreds, if not thousands, of Dolly Varden survived the winter in Preacher's Pond, but very few of the beautiful char were able to elude the unrelenting procession of anglers that followed the spring thaw.

And that worries some of Seward's angling population.

"My main concern out there was people abusing the fishery by overlimiting and snagging. And people throw trash out there, that's kind of disgusting," fly fisherman Robin Collman said.

"But as bad as it was, there were still people out there enjoying themselves" and respecting the fish, Collman said.

What worries Collman and other sport anglers is removing Dolly Varden breeding stock from the Resurrection Bay drainage.

"It's (the Dolly Varden) part of the ecological system. Dolly Varden eat a lot of salmon smolt, but that's part of the natural way of things and it's foolish to value one species over another. Even sticklebacks have their place.

"They're (the Dolly Varden) in the natural scheme of things and us fooling with the natural environment messes up more than just one species. Like when they killed off Bear Lake," in an attempt to kill everything but the coho salmon, he said.

"We've got to get back to where it was naturally," Collman said.

While there were a few catch-and-release fishermen prowling the banks of the little pond, many anglers were taking advantage of the five-fish bag limit put out in this year's Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulation book.

The regulations state that a five-fish per day catch limit and a five-fish possession limit is in effect for the Resurrection Bay drainage for the 1998 fishing season.

But the regulation book is wrong.

The actual codified bag and possession limits have not changed from last year and are the same as the Kenai River drainage. Each is two fish.

But trying to enforce the two-fish limit when the regulation booklet says it's five, "is a Fish and Wildlife Protection nightmare," said Barry Stratton, area management biologist for the Division of Sportfish in Anchorage.

Stratton said next year the two fish per day limit will be strictly enforced.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is also considering size restrictions on the Dolly Varden in the Resurrection Bay drainage, which includes all waters south of Milepost 12 of the Seward Highway. But until the department hears from sport anglers and the fish and game advisory committee here, it is unlikely restrictions will be imposed.

VALDEZ VANGUARD
MAY 20, 1998

City Council refuses to change Alyeska property assessment

By Ruth Case
Valdez Vanguard

Valdez City Council members meeting as the Board of Equalization Monday night refused to grant a deadline extension requested by Alyeska Pipleine Service Co , which complained that the value of some of its property was assessed too high

Board members voted on three separate assessments of property belonging to Alyeska and SERVS The SERVS offices, warehouses and docks, including the land, were assessed at a total value of about $16 million

"This is a significant increase since last year," said Andy Sorensen, representing SERVS, 'almost a 100 percent total increase (in the property value) In a nutshell, it doesn't reflect the fair market value Some information points to serious doubt that this number is accurate '

Sorensen asked the board for an extension past the June 1 deadline in order to do a new appraisal However, a motion by the board to grant the continuence died without a second

"We didn't extend the deadline for the residents who appeared before us tonight," said board member Lynn Chrystal "No one else gets a break like (an extension) Everyone needs to be treated equally "

"We haven't seen enough proof tonight that the (city) assessors are wrong," said board member John Harris

The board voted 5-0 in three separate votes — with Jim Shirrell Book Basket Auction to the budget

City council members received a written report from Dames and Moore on the Duck Flats Restoration Plan Monday night

Dames and Moore has been contracted by the Prince William Sound Economic Development Council and is in the process of preparing a management plan for the duck flats

"The Duck Flats' location on the road system, proximity to where the spill occurred, and accessibility provide unique management opportunites," said Jon Isaacs of Dames and Moore in a memoran dum to City Manager Dave Dengel

Four program options have been identified, he said Options include a scenic viewing area, a boardwalk to the small boat harbor, a board walk on the Old Mineral Creek Railbed and a visitor center building

A grant application for FY 1998-99 funds has been submitted to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Council PWSEDC will know by mid summer if grant funds will be awarded for the program Isaacs said

Vanguard
Opinion 5/20/98

Protected projects

Senate Bill 231, the capital budget for the State of Alaska, has passed the House and the Senate and will soon be transmitted to Governor Tony Knowles for his signature Although the session has been contentious at times, through the House and the Senate process Representative Gene Kubina and I were able to protect the following capital projects for Valdez

Valdez Harbor Floats F and G Replacement and Access Improvements $900,000, Valdez Gold Rush Trail $150 000 Valdez Airport Master Plan $378,000, Valdez Airport Rescue and Firefighting Equipment $100,000, Valdez Street Overlay and Reconstruction $106,624, PWSCC Campuswide Deferred Maintenance/Code Compliance Projects $306,600, PWS Harbor Seal Study $80 000, PWS Remote Moorage and Sanitation $150 000 total $2,168,224

Additionally the Richardson Highway road and bridge projects were funded at $15,245 100 which is an immense help to Prince William Sound and particularly Valdez travelers

Your community leaders were invaluable throughout the process in providing necessary justification to ensure passage of your project If you have any specific questions on this or any other issue please feel free to contact my office at the toll-free number 1 888 461-3732

Sen Georgianna Lincoln
District R
Rampart

AK JOURNAL/COMMERCE
MAY 18, 1998

The Society of Wetland Scientists is having its 19th annual meeting, 9 a.m.- 6 p.m., June 8-12, at the Egan Civic & Convention Center. The theme of the meeting is "Alaska's Wetlands, from Tundra to the Sea." For more information, contact Janet Kidd at 907-455-6777.

Seawan Gelbach/for The Times

A lifelong birder and director of the International Crane Foundation, Dr. George Archibald of Baraboo, Wis., was the festival's keynote speaker. Crane conservation was the topic of his speech, "The Role of Communities in Bird Conservation." Dr. Archibald presented Mary Ann Bishop (right) of the Copper River Delta Institute with a shawl from Bhutan.

Cordova Times May 14, 1998

Die-off of seabirds may be byproduct of El Nino

The Associated Press

ANCHORAGE — Starving murres may be another byproduct of El Nino Thousands — perhaps tens of thousands — of dead and lethargic common murres have been found this spring on beaches and at sea

The apparent die off stretches from Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet to the Aleutians and up into Bristol Bay according to biologists with the U S Fish and Wildlife Service

Murres have slender pointed bills dark backs and white breasts They favor sea cliffs and islands, and nest in colonies all along the northern Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea

It's too early to say how many have died or what is killing them Scientists have a hunch that the warm water brought north by El Nino may be at the root of a starvation problem

But they also are looking at the die-off as a piece of a much bigger puzzle Though data is sparse, scientists know there was a big change in the gulf ecosystem in the late 1970s The gulf s water warmed and the populations of shrimp capelin and other species collapsed while pollock and some others exploded

Since then scientists have noticed periodic large die offs of certain seabird species said John Piatt, a research biologist with the U S Geological Survey

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
MAY 21, 1998

In the spring of 1983, for example about 90 percent of the common murres along the northwest coast were wiped out, he said That was the last big El Nino year

Large die offs of Gulf of Alaska murres also were reported in 1989, the year of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and in 1993

That year, a weak El Nino brought a pulse of warm water to the Gulf of Alaska, and an estimated 120,000 murres washed up on beaches

This year s die off is similar, said Vivian Mendenhall, a wildlife biologist with the U S Fish and Wildlife Service

Samples of this year s dead murres were sent to a laboratory in Wisconsin The same lab tested the dead birds from 1983 to see if they had been exposed to heavy metals, parasites, disease or other stresses

"The one thing most birds had in common was they were emaciated," Piatt said "They had signs of starvation"

Common murres don't have a lot of energy reserves, Piatt said During the summer, when breeding, they eat as much as 50 percent of their body mass daily In winter the consume even more

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
MAY 12, 1998

Gulf of Alaska murres starving

■ Scientists suspect El Niño the cause

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Common murres don't have a lot of energy reserves, Piatt said During the summer, when breeding, they eat as much as 50 percent of their body mass daily In winter, the consume even more

"So it doesn't take long, if they don't get food, for their reserves to go down," Piatt said

In the summer, murres forage on small schooling fish such as sand lance, capelin and juvenile pollock In the winter, they head for the ice free waters along the continental shelf No one knows for sure what they eat there They probably rely on crustaceans or krill, Piatt said

Operating on the theory that the birds may be starving, and with a research eye on the Gulf's ecological shift, scientists now are looking at satellite images that show water temperatures in the gulf were up by 1 or 2 degrees centigrade last month, Piatt said

The question is, what effect did that have on the fish and krill that murres eat?

It could be that it drives them deeper in the water column so they are less accessible, or maybe large pollock, cod and halibut are feeding on the same forage fish before the murres can get them," he said

The difference between the crash this year and the one five years ago is that scientists are ready Because of studies in the wake of the Exxon Valdez, some murres have been banded, nesting sites are under observation and marine biologists are conducting acoustic studies of forage fish

There is not much more that we can do beyond studying it," Piatt said ' But we are now in a position to see whether this die-off is more than just a blip "

VALDEZ STAR
MAY 13, 1998

Habitat For Deepwater Species...

'Black Hole' In Prince William Sound May Support Fish Stock

VALDEZ (AP)--In the heart of Prince William Sound there is a very deep spot just east of Lone Island Scientists call it "the Black Hole "

They have long known about it, but now they are uncovering how vital this deep trench is to maintaining the balance of the Sound's food chain

"It really hadn't been investigated that much until the (Exxon Valdez) oil spill," said Tom Kline, an investigator of the Prince William Sound Science Center in Cordova

New studies suggest the hole may provide habitat for the big black cod and rockfish found in the Sound and it may boost the number of salmon and herring the Sound can produce

Scientists around the state are studying different aspects of the Black Hole using settlement money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill

"Because of its depth, it provides an oceanic-like habitat It is in protected waters, so it is an anomaly," Kline said If not for that deep pockets, some fish--like black cod, sablefish and rockfish--probably would leave the Sound once they become me adults

Most of Prince William Sound is about 1,000 feet deep But the Black Hole is thought to be 2,000 to 2,8000 feet deep, according to Ted Cooney, a professor at the university of Alaska Fairbanks It's an S-shaped trench a few miles across and several miles long

"It's like a cliff, almost straight down," said Jeff Short, a biologist with the national Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau

And it's deep enough that some invertebrates are tricked into wintering over in its deep, stable water column rather than migrating 100 miles south to the Gulf of Alaska's deep waters

Scientists think the Black Hole may prove vital in supporting large numbers of salmon fry and herring

Because of the Black Hole, the plump copepods--small, shrimplike crustaceans--provide a brunch buffet for the salmon fry that pour out of hatcheries and wild streams

Without the Black Hole, the Sound would have to depend on the ocean for its supply of copepods

The crustaceans reproduce in deep waters in the late fall or early winter, Short said In late winter, they migrate to the surface and begin eating phytoplankton blooms

Because the Sound has a rich spring plankton bloom, the local copepods are fatter than their ocean-going cousins and handy for the young, hungry migrating fish

Oily waste treatment center to open here soon

By Ruth Case
Valdez Vanguard

VALDEZ VANGUARD
MAY 20, 1998

Construction of the new Environmental Operations Station near the City of Valdez baler facility is scheduled for completion June 1, said Matt Stephl owner of Stephl Engineers of Anchorage

Similar facilities in Chenega Bay, Tatitlek and Whittier are also being built to collect and treat oily bilge water from boats and vehicles Cordova s Station opened May 11

About 45,000 gallons of used oil are generated in Prince William Soiund each year said Sue Cogswell executive director of the Prince William Sound Economic Develoment Council These buildings will give communities the capabilities to gather oil and recycle it, along with other household wastes

The Stations are the second phase of a project which began in 1995 when PWSEDC began to research how much waste was entering Prince William Sound and how to protect the environment from it

Our overall goal was and is to keep the sound and the environment cleaner' he said 'The Environmental Operations Stations will help improve the quality of water in the sound by decreasing the amount of oil going into it

Funding for the $1 143,700 project was provided by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council with PWSEDC as project managers, Cogswell said

Recycled oil from the Stations will be used to heat community buildings in Valdez and the other participating communities she said

The Stations will provide cleaner fuel for community buildings fuel that is easier and better to burn, said Stephl

Environmental Operations Stations in Chenega Bay Tatitlek and Whitter are scheduled to be open by the end of June A grand opening of the Valdez facility is currently being planned Cogswell said

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
MAY 22, 1998

Salmon carry toxins into interior lakes

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Isolated Alaska lakes seem like the most pristine places in the world But scientists have found toxins — still in small concentrations — are being brought to those lakes by an unlikely carrier migrating salmon

The salmon absorb and accumulate such pollutants as PCBs and DDT during their years at sea, then bring the toxins home in fatty tissues and roe when they return to spawn according to the researchers

A team of scientists led by Goran Ewald of Sweden analyzed contaminants in a nonmigratory fish species Arctic grayling in two Interior lakes in 1994 The findings are reported in the March issue of the journal Arctic

Grayling in Round Tangle Lake about 15 miles west of Paxson contain levels of PCBs and DDT closely reflecting the background levels of the toxins transported to the lake in the air the researchers found But grayling in Lower Fish Lake about four miles northeast of Paxson carry levels of the pollutants twice as high

The difference' Salmon from the Copper River system come to Lower Fish Lake every summer Round Tangle Lake has no salmon run

PCBs polychlorinated biphenyls once were widely used in hydraulic oil and other industrial fluids DDT or dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane is an insecticide Both substances were banned in the United States in the 1970s But they degrade slowly and tend to accumulate in the food chain Both are suspected carcinogens

The atmospheric spread of such pollutants has been amply demonstrated In another study reported last year, scientists looking for a pristine environment found high levels of PCBs and DDT in marine mammal tissue from four remote Aleutian islands

The lake study says migrating salmon may provide an efficient long-range transport route for pollutants

Levels of PCB and DDT found in the Lower Fish Lake salmon and grayling are far below the levels that have caused concern with regard to human consumption or fish reproduction the study says

HOMER NEWS
MAY 14, 1998

Kachemak Bay Discovery Project has eyes on the future

by Chris Russ
Staff Writer

Shorebird Festival participants came within inches of the feathered inhabitants of Gull Island last weekend But the seabirds didn t care In fact they didn t even know they were being watched

Remote video cameras on the island have made it possible to get views that until now weren t possible The cameras are controlled from the Pratt Museum where visitors can zoom in on the eyeball of a gull check out a puffin burrow catch a raven in the act of stealing eggs or watch murres build a nest

It's one element in the museum s new education and science program Kachemak Bay Discovery Project

When a kid reaches out and grabs the joystick ' said filmmaker Daniel Zatz who designed the remote video system his hand is reaching out 8 miles,'

The cameras are controlled from the museum s science room Above the joystick and a row of switches a monitor shows live video from the island

Tustumena Elementary fourth-grade students checked it out Tuesday and gave reviewal of the project a unanimous 'Coooool They switched back and forth between the four cameras by pressing panel switches and then tilted and panned the cameras with a joystick normally used with computer games The system was met with awe

The camera options included views from underwater and a subterranean look at what designers hope will become the home of a puffin There is also a 170 degree wide-angle camera and 64 power zoom lens camera for manipulated views from the top of the island Everything is powered by a solar panel

'As far as we know this has never been done before in the world Zatz said

Zatz and Mike Yourkowski designed installed and have maintained the remote video project which is still considered a prototype That also included writing software and building by hand certain parts and elements necessary to make the system work

The system is built to survive whatever Kachemak Bay can do during the summer Zatz said from battering wind and rain to curious critters and the guano they produce

Each camera is so watertight it can handle the pressure of being 30 feet under water The units are filled with nitrogen to keep from fogging up And they have a more commonplace feature — the designers rigged up windshield wipers and sprayers to keep the lenses clean Clear acetate covers the solar panel from bird droppings When it gets dirty — a single-service camera points to it — the roll of acetate can be advanced by remote control

The goal is to not disrupt the wildlife Zatz said

The digital system is controlled by radio Each camera is connected to a control box, which transmits and receives signals through a microwave link

There have been loads of technical quagmires that had and still have to be figured out but Zatz said the hardest part was staying persistent until the project was finished

It s almost where we want it ' he said

The project is actually a year ahead of schedule

There is also talk of putting a live remote camera at McNeil River next summer with a relay atop Mount Augustine Other cameras if the funding can be found will be placed on the Barren Islands for bird counts and perhaps staring into the crater of Mount Augustine

My passion is to give the people a glimpse into a world that very few people are able to witness Zatz said It s a remarkable window into the world '

Eventually that window will include those with Internet access he said

The remote video project on Gull Island is a part of a much larger complex and ambitious Kachemak Bay Discovery Project facilitated by the Pratt Museum

Project director Mike O Meara said the museum received a $175 000 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute which funds educational science projects The museum asked for $500 000

What money it did get will be spent on the live video link and also to pay for remodeling the marine science lab at the museum That involves some new high tech equipment including a microscope

Cont'd

The Discovery Project includes bringing in guests for science programs lectures and slide-shows the recent Kachemak Bay Discovery Conference and the development of a Global Information System The GIS will eventually provide biological geological and socioeconomic information on a given region from a computer kiosk to be placed at the museum

The project also includes funds to pay for the training of local teachers on the worldwide Project Globe for the transfer of Sperm Whale project works from Homer High School to the museum and to build a jellyfish tank among other things

Another element of the Kachemak Bay Discovery Project that museum officials are excited about is the rental of a two-man submersible research device that will explore Kachemak Bay for one day in June

The Kachemak Bay Discovery Project enhances marine science education in Southcentral Alaska by providing scientific and technological learning experiences for middle and high school students and it promotes ocean conservation O Meara said

Extraordinary opportunity granted

HOMER NEWS
MAY 21, 1998

Dear Editor

All of us at the Pratt Museum are deeply proud of the latest exhibition in the museum which we have called Wild-Eyed Alaska This is a unique remote video project that brings live images — the seabirds of the nationally important rookery of Gull Island — into the Pratt s Marine Gallery and puts them at the fingertips of thousands of young people and tens of thousands of other museum patrons To our knowledge this is the only exhibit of its kind in the nation It is a prototype for more interactive programs in the museum that will add exciting and stimulating dimensions to the field of natural science and to the educational opportunities our extraordinary community offers all its citizens and visitors

There are many people to recognize for making this possible but none of this could have happened without the generosity and cooperation of Seldovia Native Association At every step of the way these folks have stepped forward to make their Gull Island reserve open to us They have been unswerving in their confidence that the Pratt would do a first-rate job would respect the environment and the critters of the island and would be sensitive to Native concerns and to the concerns of all in the Kachemak Bay community who use the waters around the island We have done all this and will continue to do so as the project moves forward

So we wish to express publicly our thanks to Seldovia Native Association for all its support and the help advice and good will of all its members Their vision for improving the educational opportunities for all residents of the Bay is shared by us and we deeply appreciate the association s confidence in us to do a good job

Michael Hawfield, Director
Pratt Museum

VALDEZ STAR
MAY 13, 1998

Museum Opens Gold Rush, Spill Exhibits

by Tabitha Gregory
Special To The Star

MUSEUM--The Valdez Museum will open its new Gold Rush exhibit and its new salt water aquariums at a special showing Saturday, May 16, afternoon from noon until 4 p m

Admission is free Also on display will be the revamped Exxon Valdez Oil Spill exhibit

In addition to the new exhibits, the museum also has a display of art produced by local students

There will be plenty of things for kids to do including games, hands-on activities, and more During the Museum Day event, the museum store will have a sale featuring 20 percent off all merchandise

This year's international theme is "Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property" The museum hopes to incorporate that concept and continue to emphasize the often repeated refrain "This is your museum "

Toward that end, our focus will be on education through and about our natural resources

At 1 30 p m there will be a hands-on presentation, "What is Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property?" and what does it have to do with Valdez

Tours of the Museum archive for local business, organizations and educators will be offered at 12 30 and 2 30 in the afternoon Call the museum for reservations at 835-2764

Grant funds $1 million in Steller research

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Stimulating cutting edge Steller sea lion research at the Alaska SeaLife Center will be a little easier after the May 2 grand opening when Tom Melius from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation presents the center with a check for $1 million

The NFWF was specifically provided the money in fiscal 1998 through the National Marine Fisheries Service budget to support the SeaLife Center

This is one of the biggest research grants the center has received and it will be used to fund 22 months of research dedicated to sea lions, Executive Director Kim Sundberg said

The project's goals are laid out in a seven-element conceptual plan and reinforce the center's research-, rehabilitation- and education-oriented philosophy,

Objectives include helping Steller populations recover, educating the public about sea lion biology ecology and conservation, and assisting the National Marine Fisheries Service in compiling and synthesizing information relevant to Steller research and management

Under the direction of the center s research director, Mike Castellini, a professor of marine science with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Steller sea lion research plan would be implemented as soon as funding is in place

Research coordinator

The first order of business is to appoint Donald G Calkins as the senior marine mammal scientist Until his retirement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in December, Calkins served as the department's lead wildlife biologist for Steller sea lion research and was chosen for his 27 years' experience working with Stellers

While his position at the SeaLife Center is only half time, Calkins will lead the program, as well as any collaborative efforts between the center and the NMFS

Visiting scientist

Castellini said the $1 million appropriation offers the SeaLife Center a unique situation, in that rather than soliciting scientists to conduct their research at the center and charging them a bench fee, "we get to bring people here "

And bringing someone here is one of the program's elements

The center hopes to appoint a visiting Steller sea lion scientist by July 1 for a year-long appointment with a six-month renewal option

In the conceptual plan written by Sundberg and Castellini, they state the visiting scientist would pursue his or her own research project in coordination with the senior marine mammal supervisor

The position includes a $2,200 per-month stipend, travel, a housing allowance and office support costs

Research contracts

Under the guidance of an NFWF review committee, Calkins will prepare a request for proposals to contract for Steller sea lion research at the SeaLife Center The center hopes to have contracts in place by July

Preference will be given for linking field and laboratory data and the RFP will emphasize Steller sea lion nutrition, physiology and telemetry testing

The SeaLife Center also intends to initiate a graduate/post-doctoral research award program, which will absorb about $100,000 of the $1 million appropriation

Another $150,000 will be used to fund collaborative research between the SeaLife Center and the NMFS

Community-based research

Community and local industry leaders will be able to participate in research projects reporting data of use to Steller sea lion research The programs will be implemented and coordinated by Calkins and will potentially include support for the Youth Area Watch program to report tissue, age, size and other data collected from subsistence harvested sea lions

A trained-observer program will also be created and data will be collected by people aboard tour ships and fishing vessels out of Seward and other communities

Tissue database

An electronic database of Steller sea lion tissue samples will be created by the center's information technology manager and will catalog tissue samples from throughout North America.

Cataloged tissue will be published on the SeaLife Center's web page and will include samples from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, NMFS, UAF, the North Pacific Universities Marine Mammal Research Consortium and others

The database will be updated through 1999 and possibly longer if it's well received

Information management

Steller sea lion data will be brought together and the information disseminated through exhibits at the center and also on the web page Sea lion status, management, conservation efforts and research activities will comprise the bulk of publicly available information

Steller sea lions

The final element of the conceptual plan will be supporting the direct costs of maintaining sea lions at the SeaLife Center

There are currently three sea lions at the center, but more animals, specifically non-releasable stranded animals or transfers from other facilities, may take up residence at the SeaLife Center

Food, medicines, veterinary care and half-time support for the SeaLife Center marine mammal supervisor to train animals for use by researchers is included in this element

AK BUSINESS DIGEST
5/6/98

■ Testing oysters to see which grow best in cold Alaska waters and efforts to bring glass recycling to Anchorage are among projects awarded new technology grants Ten proposals won funding last week from the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation The Seward-based oyster project received $18,000 while Anchorage entrepreneur John Dean won $266,000 — the largest grant — to design and assemble a glass recycling plant A grant of $200,000 went to an Anchorage company planning to manufacture a dual-tracked all-terrain vehicle The North Slope Borough received $150,000 — the foundation's third-largest award — to test vacuum valves that could reduce sewer construction costs The Anchorage-based science and technology foundation is a state agency set up by the Legislature in 1988 The foundation also set aside $150,000 to continue wiring Alaska schools for Internet access Nearly 70 percent of state schools will be wired by the end of this year, the foundation said

VALDEZ VANGUARD
5/13/98

Subsistence issue tries patience

Our village is located in southwestern Prince William Sound, where subsistence is the way of life Chenega was destroyed by the 1964 earthquake and 23 lives were lost, but we re established our village on Evans Island through efforts led by Nick Kompkoff Sr, Gail Evanoff, Paul Kompkoff Sr, Charlie Selanoff Sr, Phill Totemoff Sr and other Chenega residents We grew up on all of the fish and game that are in Prince William Sound

Born and raised in Chenega, Alaska, I have a saying that was repeated by my dad, Pete A Kompkoff Sr, "qateqtutuarluten" which in Aleut means "always have patience" and also from my mother, "aqayurturcarci" which in Aleut means "always try to go to church" This reminds me of our subsistence way of life, how the whole village would move to Shipyard about 20 miles north of the old village of Chenega, which also was destroyed by the 1964 earthquake with the exception of my summer home And every year we'd go to Coghill Point in Port Wells, College Fiord for two months hunting seal, fishing, salting and smoking the fish and game and preparing it for the winter months I could remember rowing in a 22-foot open skiff from Pigot Point to Coghill Point, a two-day trip, hunting bear, ducks, seal, sea lion and porpoise with Paul Kompkoff Sr and his family

At Coghill, our fires would burn all day with a pot of seal or we would munyuk or barbecue seal on sticks over the fire The men would row into the glaciers, hunting and picking up kittywake eggs We rowed the skiff to save our gas for the ride back to Chenega or Nellie Juan stopping on the beaches to dig clams, barbecue seal along the way, and also pick up seagull eggs

Even while writing about our subsistence, it makes me feel better Thinking of how the Exxon Valdez oil spill destroyed a lot of our subsistence, and now reading about how our subsistence is in jeopardy again, I can t keep silent any longer As I write, this letter brings tears to my eyes, since we have so few days until the federal government will take over management of fish and game and tell us what, when, where and how we can hunt and fish for our subsistence foods One must "have patience" to a certain extent when it comes to our subsistence way of life and "pray to God in church that if the subsistence issue comes to a vote, our leadership and the public will make the right decision Thank you

Donald P Kompkoff, Sr
Valdez

VALDEZ VANGUARD
5/6/98

New Lethcoe book is Sound

Jim and Nancy Lethcoe have created a thorough, exhaustively researched "Cruising Guide to Prince William Sound' that boast plenty of photos and navigational charts

Bound in an easy-to use spiral notebook style, the 175-page guide offers in-depth information on the sound's natural history, weather and plethora of cruising sites Water safety hazards and precautions are also outlined with backup data offered on rates of survival

Useful and well layed-out, the manual makes cruising the sound a genuine possibility for novices and opens up new routes for experts There are plenty of nice graphical touches to keep it interesting to the eye, and enough photos to remind readers why they'd want to tour the sound in the first place

Check the guide out at local stores The Lethcoes first-rate guide is published by Prince William Sound Books and would make the perfect Mother's or Father's Day present for the Alaskan boater

Land aquisitions prove bonanza for borough

By SUE JEFFREY
Mirror Writer

The Kodiak Island Borough received $387,000 last week and about the same amount six months ago as compensation from the federal government for lost tax revenues.

Since 1978, when the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act became law, local governments receive money from the federal government when private land becomes federal property and is removed from the tax roles.

The borough deposits refuge revenue sharing funds, about $800,000 over the past year, into the general fund budget. But only recently has the law generated much money for the borough, said KIB Mayor Jerome Selby.

"The borough only used to receive $6,000-7,000 a year, or 25 percent of the total receipts the refuge took in from commercial operators — air taxis, guides and salmon setnet sites — because federal acquisition of private property was minimal until 1993.

"We are receiving more refuge revenue sharing money now — 3/4 of one percent of the market value — because 200,000 acres of private property has become national wildlife refuge land under the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council acquisition program," he explained.

Over the past several years, the council has purchased private parcels in the oil spill region, most of it Native claim lands, to protect wildlife habitat and then transferred title to the state or federal government for preservation.

The council recently purchased 41,750 acres on Afognak Island. The pot of refuge revenue sharing money will likely increase because the council intends to transfer at least 6,200 acres to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

"There's a narrow strip along Blue Fox Bay the council wants to make refuge land so all of Blue Fox Bay would be in the Refuge," said Jay Bellinger, KNWR manager. "And there's another strip between Waterfall Lake and the east boundary of the refuge which would become refuge land."

The remainder of the 41,750 parcel will become state property, which the council hopes the Legislature will make a state park.

"Making the Afognak parcel a state park has been part of the council's acquisition plan since 1993," said Joe Hunt, spokesperson for the EVOS Trustee Council.

The Afognak purchase is the last of the large parcel acquisitions, he said, but the council is still considering Termination Point and Long Island under its small parcel acquisition program.

"We did the appraisal on Termination Point and the landowner (Leisnoi, Inc.) is reviewing it," he said. "But I don't think an appraisal has been done on Long Island (also Leisnoi property.)"

THE KODIAK MIRROR
5/1/98

Sue Jeffrey photo

Kodiak Island Borough Mayor Jerome Selby, left, and Kodiak National Wildlife Manager Jay Bellinger agree the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council land acquisition program is benefitting local taxpayers and the refuge.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS MAY 7, 1998

Court order draws Kenai refuge land deal closer

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — A multimillion-dollar land deal that rewrites the boundaries of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge was stopped short last year by an old squabble over who owns a small Kenai River cabin dating back to the 1930s

But on Monday, state Superior Court Judge Harold Brown rejected the claims of James Showalter, a dissident member of the Kenai Natives Association who said he had rights to the subsistence cabin and 11 acres

Because Showalter waited 11 years to file suit, his claim was invalidated by the statute of limitations, Brown wrote in his decision

The decision clears the way for a deal between the Kenai based Native corporation and the federal government that was close to two decades in the making

The May 1997 agreement, which literally took an act of Congress to create, has three main components

First, it calls for removal of 15,500 acres from the refuge so the land can be developed by the association The Kenai Natives Association owns the land, but its hands were tied because the property was within refuge boundaries Most of that land is north of Sterling in the Sunken Island Lake area, and some is closer to Kenai near Beaver Creek

"They couldn't go in and cut down a tree They couldn't do anything," said Neil O'Donnell, an attorney representing Kenai Natives Association "This has been a central issue for the corporation since it was founded

At the same time, the government will spend $4 4 million of the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement to buy 3,200 acres of Kenai Natives Association land in the heart of the refuge

The purchase includes 803 acres that surround the Kenai River just downstream from Skilak Lake Called the Stephanka tract, the shore, marshes and streams there are said to be vital to the health of species such as red salmon and brown bears

But because the U S Fish and Wildlife Service will lose thousands of acres of waterfowl habitat in the deal, the federal government looked elsewhere in Alaska to make up the loss, said Deborah Williams, special assistant to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt for Alaska

Legislation created a 37,000-acre special management area around Lake Todatonten in the Interior It will be owned by the federal Bureau of Land Management and managed for fish and wildlife conservation and for subsistence hunting and fishing

"It is arguably the most significant withdrawal of public lands and creation of a special management area since ANILCA," Williams said The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 set aside 106 million acres of Alaska land as national parks, refuges and recreation areas

Showalter, the man who filed suit to regain his family cabin and 11 surrounding acres in the Stephanka tract, still could file an appeal His attorney, Tucker Thompson, said he has to study the judge's eight-page order before deciding

Showalter relinquished claims to the property in the late 1970s at the request of the Kenai Natives Association, which was making its claim to the larger Stephanka tract

Both sides agree there was a verbal agreement that he could keep the cabin and some acreage Showalter claims he was to get 11 acres and the Native corporation said it agreed to one acre They've squabbled about it since

In 1986, the corporation offered him the cabin and 2 5 acres to end the dispute, O'Donnell said Showalter refused The corporation later offered a cash settlement, but Showalter said cash wasn't the issue

THE VALDEZ STAR
4/29/98

Valdez: The EVOS Step Child

A staff member of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council was in Valdez Thursday to solicit local comment on how to allocate $140 million in Restoration Reserve funding in the years ahead

What the staffer came for and what he heard were two different things

Mostly, he was abraded by the absence of any substantial trustee council funding in the Valdez area, particularly as it relates to public information and public awareness of the spill event now nearly a decade old

While the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council may be far removed from the oil spill, Valdez is not

With summer upon us, Valdez will be inundated once again by thousands of tourists And the most commonly asked tourist questions will relate to the Great Spill of 1989

Are the birds still dying? Are the beaches still covered in oil? Is the cleanup over?

Valdez residents, merchants, tour operators, the visitors bureau have heard the questions ad infinitum And they are braced for yet around round of the same this summer

While the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has spent hundreds of millions on land acquisition, trail development, scientific studies, a research center, travel, staff salaries, etc , little has been spent in Valdez and none toward public information

There is no sign, no marker, no display, no kiosk-- nothing to educate visitors and newcomers to Valdez on the spill and its aftermath More than any single community in Alaska, Valdez was central to the Great Spill of 1989 Not Seward, not Kodiak and certainly not Anchorage where the EVOS staff in entrenched in its permanent camp

In our judgement, the EVOS has been remiss in its failure to create a presence in the Valdez area marking the location of the spill and the post-spill restoration efforts

Next year marks the 10th year of the spill Another round of national publicity is a certainty, much of it focusing on Valdez, but beyond some books at the library and some photos at the museum, there'll be scant evidence of Valdez' central role in the nation's worst-ever oil spill

May 1, 1998

JUNEAU EMPIRE
NEIGHBORS

Top employees nominated

The annual Federal Employee of the Year award will be announced at a noon luncheon on May 6 at the Baranof Hotel.

The guest speaker at the luncheon will be Jim Ayers, the governor's chief of staff.

The annual award is for outstanding accomplishments by a federal employee in community service, job performance and self development. Nominees are selected by their respective federal agencies in Juneau and reviewed by a panel of judges from within the community.

This year's nominees are:

Cindy Hartmann – Fisheries biologist for the National Marine Fisheries Service with 17 years of federal service.

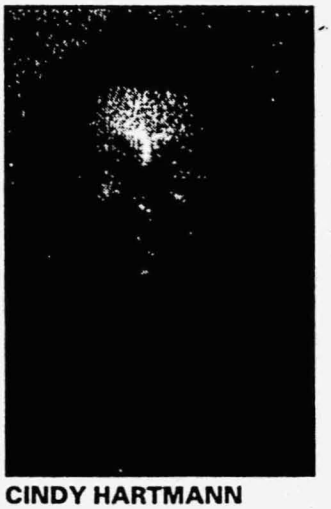
Michael Walsh – Rural carrier for the U.S. Postal Service with 13 years in the postal service.

Patricia Harris – Zoologist at the Auke Bay Laboratory for the National Marine Fisheries Service with 11 years of federal service.

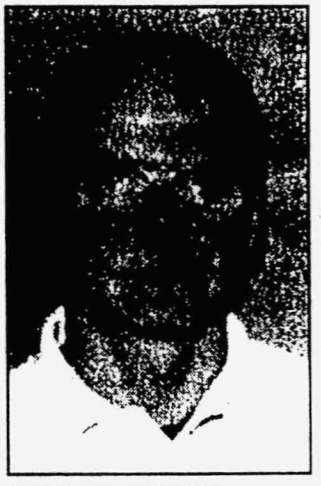
Orval Wieber – Budget analyst at the downtown regional office of the U.S. Forest Service with 21 years of federal service.

Margaret Beilharz – Watershed staff assistant for the Juneau Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service with 11 years of federal service.

Tessa Muehllehner – Civilian environmental scientist with the U.S. Coast Guard with four years of federal service.



CINDY HARTMANN



MICHAEL WALSH

PATRICIA HARRIS

ORVAL WIEBER

MARGARET BEILHARZ

TESSA MUEHLLEHNER

Sealife Center science sure beats dead trees

By DENNIS FRADLEY

Watch out Portage Glacier and Denali National Park! Your status as Alaska's top visitors' attractions is about to be seriously challenged.

The Alaska Sealife Center in Seward officially opened its doors this past weekend and promises to become the state's top, must-see destination for tourists and residents alike. The many exhibits, which provide windows to the surface and subsurface marine habitat of Resurrection Bay, are sure to fascinate visitors of all ages.

From jellies (they're not fish) to harbor seals, sea stars to a sea lion, and including puffins and other diving birds that swim through the depths as if they were in flight — an ample number of marine exhibits will attract your attention. Many more are in the works.

One informative display tells the story of the life of a salmon. Another traces the Exxon Valdez oil spill; the recovery and restoration efforts that took place afterwards; and the scientific research work that continues today, including that now started at the Sealife Center.

Fradley

My wife and I certainly were impressed with it all. So, too, were the dozens of young children with noses pressed against the aquarium glass staring wide-eyed at cavorting seals; or the adults listening attentively to Sealife Center staff explaining various aspects of the ocean ecosystem off Alaska's shores.

Somewhere between 3,000 and 4,000 of us, by my rough estimate, were on hand for the historic occasion. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day — despite the 6:30 a.m. check-in time at the Alaska Railroad station.

And speaking of the train, I don't know if this was an unusual day but we certainly saw a lot of wildlife during the ride. Sheep, bald eagles and whatever other kind of feisty birds were chasing one eagle over Turnagain Arm, a porcupine in a tree, and a herd of moose. (I guess "herd" is the correct term to use — there had to be about two dozen moose on both sides of the track just after we passed the turn-off to Whittier.) I've been on Denali Park bus tours that didn't encounter as much wildlife as we saw Saturday.

Even the ribbon-cutting ceremony as exhilarating — speeches included. The Air Force Band of the Pacific provided the opening entertainment. Their playing of the national anthem became especially poignant as a squadron of F-15s zoomed in from over the bay with snowy mountains and blue sky providing a spectacular backdrop.

It was a proud day for Alaska and particularly for the city of Seward, which has been campaigning for this marine center for more than 30 years. Many, many people have had key roles in pushing the idea forward, and former Gov. Wally Hickel leads the pack.

On a wall inside the facility, a quotation of Wally's is cited in large letters to define the mission and purpose of the Alaska Sealife Center: "We must use, understand, enhance and protect the resources of the North Pacific for the benefit of the total. The cost is to care."

Mr. Hickel said the center is testimony that Alaskans care for their environment. "The Sealife Center is a research facility that truly welcomes people. It's the people who support science. It's the people who must appreciate wildlife if we're to protect wildlife. It's the kids, the lifelong learners, the voyagers who come to Alaska out of curiosity in the first place, who will support our curiosity."

In addition to the $15-a-person entrance fee that each of us paid to take the tour, the center was awarded an economic boost from from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Its spokesman presented a check for $1 million to fund a study of what is causing the decline of the sea lion population in the North Pacific.

Sen. Frank Murkowski and Gov. Tony Knowles in brief remarks emphasized the benefits in store from the scientific research that will be taking place at the Sealife Center in the years ahead.

The facility is not your typical sea aquarium that you'll find in the Lower 48. No porpoises jumping out of the water or killer whales giving rides. The Alaska Sealife Center has a mission of research, rehabilitation and public education. It is unlike other marine facilities.

And to think it almost wasn't built. After the oil spill settlement, when then-Gov. Hickel was pushing hard to help the Seward organizers obtain funds from the settlement to use for the center, the extreme environmentalist groups mounted a strong campaign to defeat the effort. They ridiculed it as "Wally's whale jail." Remember?

These groups wanted all available money to buy up land from the Alaska Native corporations. They succeeded in getting a lion's share of the $900 million for that purpose, but Gov. Hickel and others who shared his vision prevailed in earmarking $26 million for the center. It is now a reality, one that is serving the wonderful purposes envisioned for it.

Years from now, when the benefits of the spill settlement are objectively evaluated, my hunch is the marine science developed at the Sealife Center will far surpass the value of the trees, many of which have been killed by beetles.

In any event, be sure to check out the center. And if you have company coming this summer — or any time of the year for that matter — send them down for the day. It's Alaska's latest must-see.

Dennis Fradley is an editor of The Times.

Anchorage Daily News
Voice of the Times
May 6, 1998

Dream comes true as SeaLife Center celebrates opening

PENINSULA CLARION
MAY 7, 1998

THE ALASKA SEALIFE CENTER IN SEWARD IS officially open

If Saturday's sunny skies and big crowds are an indicator of things to come, the future is bright for Seward and the new center

About 3,000 people reportedly took part in the official opening day festivities on Saturday, an event that proves dreams do come true

Although Seward has been the home of a marine science lab run by the University of Alaska Fairbanks for more than 20 years, the city saw the opportunity for more year-round jobs, as well as tourist dollars, in an expanded research center that would cater to visitors

Ironically, it was money from the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement that helped turn that vision into a reality The spill settlement fund contributed $37 4 million to the center; revenue bonds from the city of Seward added up to another $17 5 million, and private donors completed the initial budget.

This weekend after about two decades of dreams, plans and lots of hard work, Seward opened its doors to the approximate $56 million SeaLife Center, the only cold-water marine research site in the Western Hemisphere

The center is unique in all the world because its mission is to combine research, wildlife rehabilitation and public education under a single roof Not only will the public and researchers get to watch animals at the same time, but the scientists also will be on display To work at the center, researchers must agree to answer visitors' questions about their work. The center also has an extensive marine science program for young people

Such a mission is perfect for Alaska There's little doubt that the more people know about our natural resources, the more they want to protect them And for everyone who lives in Alaska — or visits here — wildlife is the No 1 attraction

The center's scenic setting overlooking Resurrection Bay is an ideal spot to reflect on and be inspired by Alaska's beauty, while at the same time learning about its marine life and other natural wonders

The SeaLife Center is a visionary undertaking The entire Kenai Peninsula can be excited to be called the home of such a unique project

The center, however, does represent a major change for the city of Seward And no change comes without a little difficulty and a few growing pains As we celebrate the opening of the center, our hope is that Seward will never lose its small-city charm and Alaska flavor We would hate for one of the state's most beautiful communities to lose its character in this sea change taking place

■■■■■

SeaLife Center opens

Diving birds, dignitaries entertain first-day crowds

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
5/3/98

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SEWARD — The crowds were so thick at the opening day of the Alaska SeaLife Center that at times it was nearly impossible to see Woody, the center's resident 500-pound Steller sea lion.

To get a better view, people jockeyed for position in the dark room to look through thick glass windows into large pools where Woody, harbor seals and seabirds swam.

Children pressed their faces to the windows and stared up through the green water at the underside of murres and puffin bobbing overhead, pedaling their webbed feet.

Occasionally a visitor would toss tiny fish into the water and the birds dove down. It looked as if they were flying under water.

"You can't see this just anywhere, this is unique," said Diane Parkhust, who had taken the trip from Anchorage with her husband, Dick, to watch the center's opening ceremonies.

An estimated 1,500 people crowded the front door about 12:30 p.m. for the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which began just as the sun came out. According to SeaLife Center staff, a couple of thousand more probably trickled in the rest of the afternoon.

The SeaLife Center prides itself as the Western Hemisphere's first cold-water marine research facility.

Researchers hope experiments on its resident animals will one day help them unravel mysteries such as why North Pacific Steller sea lions are dying off.

Speakers Saturday, such as U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski and Gov. Tony Knowles, talked about how little anyone knows about the biology beneath the waves of Alaska's lengthy coastline.

Former Gov. Wally Hickel said the birth of the new center on the shore of Resurrection Bay made him feel spiritual.

"We're doing something significant today, for the ages," Hickel said. "I feel like we're launching a ship. This building will stay in one place, but the learning from it will go very far."

Hickel, who was governor when the tanker Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of oil in 1989, is credited for making a marine center in Seward a top priority for criminal and civil settle-

Seward had sought a strong research institute and public aquarium since the late 1960s, but it was money from those funds that made it possible. Settlement money covered $38.7 million of the center's construction costs, with $17 million more coming from the sale of municipal bonds and private fund-raising.

Hickel may have launched the SeaLife Center, but the state doesn't intend to keep it afloat. The nonprofit organization may be the world's first large research aquarium to rely almost totally on public visitation to pay its bills.

The center is banking on 275,000 visitors its first year to meet a $6.25 million budget. Adult tickets are $12.50, and kids get in for $10. But on Saturday, the center asked for a $15 donation, which most people paid.

If the crush of people in the center's gift shop Saturday was any indication, the blend of hard science and hard cash could pan out.

A pile of 2,100 commemorative T-shirts, at $15 apiece, was going fast and expected to sell out by the end of the day, said Samantha Ovenden, retail manager.

Alaska artist Barbara Lavalee sat in one corner of the gift shop, busily autographing $75 prints of her painting "Windows To The Sea," commissioned by the SeaLife Center.

SeaLife Center opens to raves

Long-awaited Seward facility draws thousands of visitors on its first day

PENINSULA CLARI
MAY 3, 1998

By LOUISE McDONALD
Peninsula Clarion

SEWARD — Before officials cut the ribbon, before the band played or the dignitaries spoke, the Alaska SeaLife Center grand opening Saturday was a hit with the public — 1,500 adults purchased tickets before the ceremonies began.

A crowd of at least 4,000 was expected for the center's opening day, said center Director of Marketing Donna Harris, although only a quarter of that figure appeared for the ribbon-cutting ceremonies.

Parking spots were precious near the facility, and the string of parked cars ran smack up against the base of Mt. Marathon behind downtown. Even after the ceremonies were over, a steady line of cars and vans continued to stream toward Seward into mid-afternoon.

As the dignitaries began arriving at the outdoor stage area, the day was sunny with big white puffy clouds sailing on a slight breeze.

The SeaLife Center looked rain-scrubbed clean and wore creaseless white banners while awaiting its public debut. Across Resurrection Bay, pristine snow-caps dimmed and brightened under passing clouds.

At noon the U.S. Air Force Band of the Pacific kicked off the festivities.

'It was cool, because I've never seen all these animals before and I've lived here all my life.'
—Christina Indahl

Four F-15 fighter jets from the 54th Fighter Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage crackled overhead as people clapped and children cheered.

Former Alaska governor Walter Hickel, of the center's board of governors and one of the guiding lights of the $56 million facility, told the crowd the SeaLife Center is one-of-a-kind and will change the whole outlook of the Northern Pacific.

"Seward and all Alaska should be proud of this. It was a combined effort of so many people," Hickel said.

He noted it's a research facility that invites people in, and also is the flagship for marine science in Alaska. "Here at Resurrection Bay on this sunny day, I feel like I'm launching a ship. The learning from it will go far — Godspeed."

Gov. Tony Knowles praised backers of the facility, saying it was a "result of the vision of far-sighted Alaskans who had the energy and perseverance to carry through with this world-class marine research facility." The governor said the center, located on Seward's waterfront, will benefit thousands of Alaska families including the three-quarters of the state's population who live in a coastal environment and whose livelihood is linked to the ocean. Knowles said the center's challenge will be to provide information that can be used "for wise stewardship through sound science as we enter the next millennium."

With the center officially open, two 13-year-old Anchorage girls toured the facility and were wonder-struck. Caitlin Chenoweth said the center was "pretty cool, because Alaska never had anything like this before." Christina Indahl added, "It was cool, because I've never seen all these animals before and I've lived here all my life."

Saxophonist Phil Herndon, who played in the Air Force band at the ribbon cutting, said he drove down from Anchorage for the event. "It was a lot bigger than I expected. It's awesome. I wasn't planning on staying, but I'm going to go through it now."

Visitors arriving at 1 p.m. for tickets were surprised to learn they had to wait until 4 p.m. to enter the center. Tickets were sold on a time basis, with 150 people being admitted every 15 minutes between 1 and 9 p.m. Saturday.

The first 1,500 tickets claimed the first three hours inside the facility. Opening-day visitors were asked for a $15 donation per adult, and children ages four to 16 were admitted free. Starting today, tickets will be $12.50 for adults and children ages four to 16 will be $10. The center will be open 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily through mid-September, when it will shift to winter hours.

SeaLife Center opens to raves

Long-awaited Seward facility draws thousands of visitors on its first day

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MAY 3, 1998

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SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
4/30/98

Commentary

SeaLife Center's history goes back much further than oil spill

Editor s note The following is the text of remarks made by Willard Dunham during the April 25 Seward Celebration at the Alaska SeaLife Center

By Willard Dunham

Contrary to what many believe the concept of the Alaska SeaLife Center did not begin with an oil spill Its history goes back more than 30 years and includes the names of many people who should not be forgotten

On a mid-1960s trip to Seward for some fishing and R&R at the Seward Military Rec Center, then Vice President Hubert Humphrey told Sewardites that a National Science Foundation study had found that the waters of Resurrection Bay were ideal for the study of marine science He had been a supporter of the Sea Grant Act

In 1967 in a speech before the Seward Chamber of Commerce, Dr Donald Hood of the University of Alaska School of Fisheries asked if Seward would be interested in being the site of a shore station for the Institute of Marine Science and as home port for the research vessel Acona

We were A town meeting of 69 people appointed a board to pursue the IMS facility City Manager Kester Dotts Hal Chambers of radio station KIBH, teacher Bill Ullom, city councilman Larry Urbach, pharmacist Paul Stockard and myself representing the Department of Labor Five of us chipped in $200 each under the name Citizens for Progress to begin funding the effort

U S Sen Ernest Gruening called to offer his support Anchorage Mayor George Sullivan said while he could not commit the city, he was 100 percent behind Seward s effort Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor George Navarre (father of the present mayor) joined us, along with state Sen Bob Palmer who introduced a measure to the Legislature in support

In 1968 the RV Acona was home-ported here, followed in 1969 by the shore station It was located in the remains of a dock and warehouses destroyed by the 1964 quake The main building had no back wall and no plumbing or heat Fortunately that same year Seward had been chosen as the site for the Alaska Skill Center (now AVTEC), which had no building available until January 1970 So a deal was struck to renovate the building for IMS using Skill Center maintenance funds to make the building usable The Skill Center had a temporary place to teach mechanics and the IMS station ended up with a usable building

A citizens advisory committee for the IMS was appointed to support the facility By 1975 an ambitious plan was under way to provide expanded lab space, student housing, a wildflower arboretum and an aquarium The plan made it through the Board of Regents and Legislature, but was red lined by the administration Student housing, the Hood Lab Building and the Rae Auditorium did come to be, but further growth dwindled

For that reason in the late 1980s the IMS citizens advisory group decided to go independent to pursue additional marine science facilities and formed the nonprofit corporation Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science The SAAMS board grew to realize that only a combination of marine mammals and birds along with fisheries research, complemented by public education programs, could bring about a facility that would be able to prosper and grow The Alaska SeaLife Center idea was conceived

Many volunteers joined the effort Mayor Bill Noll, architect Louie Stackpole Peter Cheremeyof and Bobby Poole of Cambridge Seven Associates offered to help We began a public relations program, traveling the state talking about the project In February 1992, Gov Wally Hickel and Erma Lee attended our slide presentation here in Seward After the program Gov Hickel said, "Let's do it"

We made arrangements to meet in his office two weeks later to lay out a plan of action It consisted of asking the Legislature for $12 5 million of criminal settlement money from the 1989 oil spill and $25 million from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees coupled with the raising of $12 million in private money

The $12 5 million was realized after a year of working with the Legislature This enabled us to hire project people, Leif Selkregg & Associates and Livingston Slone architectural firm With the ability to hire staff we put together the project and submitted it to the EVOS Trustees who appropriated $24 9 million from the civil settlement Our final effort was the sale of $17 million in bonds

The result of all these efforts is the facility you see before you today Without IMS and all that went before, there would be no Alaska SeaLife Center To add to that statement, I would like to mention our own Dr A J Paul, who has been with IMS for many years, who wrote all our scientific backup to provide justification for the center Also IMS Director Tom Smith who put it all into words in mountains of booklets and backup information Both took annual leave many times over a three-year period to give presentations and testify in our behalf around the state

We mustn't forget Darryl Schaefermeyer who went from the maelstrom of city government to take on this project, and Leif Selkregg who resigned his position with Heery International, which had taken him around the world, to tackle a project that many said was impossible Also, Rep Gary Davis, who assisted in the appropriation of the original $12 5 million

Willard Dunham of Seward is on the board of directors of the Alaska SeaLife Center

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
5/3/98

SeaLife Center opens door to education

WALTER J. HICKEL

SEWARD — This is the International Year of the Ocean As the Alaska SeaLife Center opens this weekend, Seward, Alaska, and America send a powerful message We care

Few stocks of fish and marine wildlife are as important to the world as those of the North Pacific With the Seward research facility, Alaska has a great new tool to sustain and enhance the assets at our doorstep

In this century, Alaska and the United States fought to get control of our offshore marine resources In the next century, our quest won't be control, it will be knowledge

Our oceans are a commons From the dawn of time until recently, that commons has been exploited without management that cares for the total

Not so many years ago, we were fighting for a 200-mile limit so we could manage our fisheries

The prevailing international principle then was "freedom of the seas "The seas belong to everyone, they said We could not restrict access to anyone not a fisherman, not a whaler, not a leaky oil tanker, anyone

Freedom meant freedom to exploit — sometimes to the edge of extinction We were headed for what's known as the tragedy of the commons

The fight took 40 years, but we took control of the resources of the continental shelf in the mid-1970s

But just asserting ownership of our commons, and dividing the benefits, isn't enough Ownership has greater obligations A vital marine science capability helps us meet them.

Some may question what this research cost and what it will cost I say the cost is to care When there is a good idea, the money will follow Seward's initiative was a good idea

When we settled the Exxon Valdez lawsuit in 1991, I insisted the word "enhance" be added to allowed uses of the $900 million received for restoration The SeaLife Center is one kind of enhancement we had in mind

In the next few months, Congress will make an important decision to implement a $160 million fund for North Pacific research earmarked by Sen Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, last year

Here at home, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has asked for public comment on a Restoration Reserve, which would put about $140 million into a long-term fund for research and monitoring by 2002

Research won't just take place in Seward but in places like Juneau, Cordova, Kodiak, Dutch Harbor and Fairbanks — involving many scientists and institutions

But the SeaLife Center is a good flagship It is unique because it is visible, a research facility that truly welcomes people

It's people who support science People must appreciate wildlife if we're to protect wildlife It's kids, lifelong learners, voyagers who come to Alaska out of curiosity who will support our scientific curiosity

Over the long term, we cannot forget that people's needs always will include protein, minerals, energy These resources come from — or travel on — this sea, right here

While we know more today than ever, we're still only one step from the savage Oh yes, a few thousand years maybe — but in the history of time, we're very young

It is the primitive savage mentality that takes but does not give, that harvests but does not plant, that hides from fear rather than joins through hope, trust and knowledge

At our celebration, former Seward Mayor Willard Dunham reminded us the town's farsighted efforts didn't begin with an oil spill Community support for long-term science began in the late 1960s, as the University of Alaska's School of Fisheries established a foothold here

On the wall of the new facility in Seward are words I've contributed that I hope will guide scientists, visitors and all of us as owners — and users — of the oceans

"We must use, understand, enhance and protect the commons of the North Pacific for the benefit of the total The cost is to care '

Seward certainly cares In the festivities here, it feels like we're launching a ship This building will stay in one place, but the learning from it will go very far An appropriate word at such a launch is "Godspeed "

Godspeed to the Alaska SeaLife Center

❑ Wally Hickel is a former secretary of Interior and former two-term governor of Alaska

All eyes are on Seward's SeaLife Center

AK BUSINESS DIGEST
5/1/98

SEWARD — After years of anticipation, throngs of people will soon marvel sea lions and seals as they plunge into deep habitat pools at the Alaska SeaLife Center

Children will shriek as they touch starfish in the center's petting exhibit.

Huge displays will point out how little we know about the waters of Resurrection Bay and the Gulf of Alaska. In the foyer, a pod of life-size porpoises will hang from the ceiling, frozen in their pursuit of a school of herring Projection screens will show video images taken from the rocky shore a few miles away

With all that going on, probably nobody will take a second glance at the center's seven new cash registers

Yet those ordinary machines, which will spit out $12 50 admission tickets and gift shop receipts, are at the core of what might be the single biggest economic shift anyone in Seward has seen for decades — perhaps since the 1964 earthquake wiped out the port and sent hundreds of longshoremen packing for new jobs on the West Coast

The SeaLife Center's cash registers should add to a spike in Seward's already giddy rise in summer retail sales Beyond that, the center's very location on the south side of town could alter everyday life for the estimated 3,000 residents of this 96-year-old city

Nobody's certain how it will all play out once the $52 million state-of-the-art marine research facility opens to the public with a huge party on Saturday

But one emerging theory among people who live here is that more visitors will filter through the old downtown business district, perhaps stopping to shop, buy lunch or rent a hotel room on their way to the bright new building at the foot of Fourth Avenue

"It's going to really change the face of Seward, hopefully for the better," said Dennis Treadwell, owner of Starbird Studio, a Fourth Avenue art gallery

"It's exciting having a world-class facility in such a small town. It'll be kind of like having a business in the parking lot of Disneyland "

Some business could trickle into fall and winter, traditionally a quiet time when many of Seward's shops literally board up their windows and hibernate

In the darker season, school buses will ferry students who have paid to spend a day or camp overnight at the SeaLife Center A major part of the center's outreach involves slumber parties in which students will drop their sleeping bags next to windows overlooking the three rookeries where sea lions, seals and sea birds live

In addition, some 50 to 60 employees will commute to work, along with visiting researchers who have paid to use the center's laboratories to study marine mammals, fish or birds

Some observers say the SeaLife Center could give the city's hot-and-cold, tourist-driven economy a further dose of stability

"The idea of a summer-winter season is fading," Seward Mayor Bob Satin said

"And the SeaLife Center will help bring that about."

Some 275,000 people are expected to pass those seven cash registers during the SeaLife Center's first year, with most coming this summer

The SeaLife Center has built its own 170-space paid parking lot, but will visitors opt for the free street parking in town, creating congestion?

The idea for a Seward marine research center was born in the late 1980s, before the Exxon Valdez oil spill City leaders originally wanted to expand the University of Alaska Fairbanks marine research lab in Seward, turning it into an animal research center that would attract scientists and tourists

But after the March 1989 oil spill, and the ensuing legal settlements, Seward remolded its vision to combine research, animal rehabilitation and education

The idea took hold with then-Gov Wally Hickel, who once worked in Seward, and the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council, which oversees money from the oil spill settlement.

One of those early visionaries, former city manager Darryl Schaefermeyer, is the center's project administrator Sitting in his new second-floor office, Schaefermeyer said the facility literally is a dream come true

"This building is everything I

dreamed or imagined it would be," he said

"This is one of those things you probably have one opportunity in a lifetime to see happen and be a part of"

The 115,000-square-foot building cost $56 million to build, with $35 million coming from the oil spill trustees, and the rest from city bonds and private fund raising.

After eight years of planning and construction, the result is a huge, concrete-and-aluminum building with two stories of public displays and lots of windows Huge windows wrap around three animal habitats, which are molded from concrete and painted to resemble marine rookeries and sea lion haul-outs in Kenai Fjords Windows open up to stunning views of Resurrection Bay Other windows look out over holding pools — even into a lab where researchers soon will be studying pink salmon

Already, the Exxon Valdez oil spill trustee council has agreed to fund five research projects based at the SeaLife Center, and the EPA has set up a sixth

In addition, a $1 million federal program to study the beleaguered Gulf of Alaska Steller sea lion population may bring more researchers to the center, which has room for about 12

Before long, researchers will be watching how harbor seals react to certain foods, how river otters respond to oil-tainted foods and how genetic codes affect pink salmon survival

While they work, scientists also will be on display

"We're basically a research facility that's open to the public for viewing," said Kim Sundberg, the center's executive director Sundberg is a former state fisheries habitat biologist who guided the facility's design "There isn't anything like this in Alaska," he said "There isn't anything like this in the Western Hemisphere"

The facility will rely almost completely on sales receipts And it takes a lot of money to power what will be the Western Hemisphere's first cold-water marine lab Salaries, computers, tanks, pumps, water filters and all the other equipment involved in keeping exotic animals healthy means a lot of overhead, its managers say

The first-year budget of $6 25 million — which also helps subsidize the costs of visiting researchers — is based on 275,000 visitors showing up, Sundberg said

Will people pay $12 50 to stand before wide windows built below the water line to watch marine mammals glide by?

Early indications suggest they will, according to hotel owners and tour company operators — people who put their money on the line

Seward has a 3 percent sales tax, and revenues from it have doubled since 1988, when tourism sharply increased About two-thirds of the city's $61 7 million in taxable sales last year occurred in the summer months, according to Kenai Peninsula Borough figures

The SeaLife Center, a nonprofit corporation, won't add directly to the taxable sales figures, but the same downtown merchants who worry about parking also anticipate spillover spending

Martin, the city's development director, cautions against assuming 275,000 visitors to the SeaLife Center will be a new crowd, distinct from the visitors who normally flock to Seward each summer

Rather, he said, the SeaLife Center may create a shift in behavior

Some of the more than 200,000 cruise ship passengers who once jumped on a bus to Anchorage may spend a night in Seward, said Tom Tougas, president of Kenai Fjords Tours

Between the growing number of wildlife-viewing tour boats that ply Kenai Fjords National Park, hikes to Exit Glacier, summer sled-dog rides and the new marine research center, visitors have more than enough to fill a day, he said

"So clearly it's having a positive impact," Tougas said "It isn't going to triple the business in one day I look at it as adding an incremental 10 percent to the visitor expenditures in Seward, and I think I'm being conservative"

— Jon Little

Sun breaks out for grand opening

Mayor's notebook

By Bob Satin

Wasn't May 2 a day and a night to remember? It started like the Saturday before — gray and cloudy — but by 11 a m the sun broke through and by noon most of the sky was blue and the mountains across Resurrection Bay were gleaming white in the brilliant sunshine The Seward community opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center on the previous Saturday was a great success, and some people looked forward to this grand opening with mixed feelings

The staff and contractors had been working flat out all week Most of the major work was done by Saturday but the SeaLife Center will always be a work in progress As I point out on my nature walks, "The only thing constant in nature is change " The SeaLife Center will change, Seward will change, the North Pacific will continue to change and we will all grow in knowledge and appreciation of our unique contribution to the advancement of cold ocean marine sciences

The Air Force Band of the Pacific tunefully kicked off the grand opening festivities — TV cameras were rolling as the Air Force F-15s roared overhead (thanks, general) and the flags fluttered in the cool, clear air There was a U S senator, Alaska governors past and present, and more Seward and Kenai Peninsula mayors, past and present, than you could shake a stick at

Frank, Tony and Wally spoke Deborah Williams was her usual exuberant self and brought greetings from Bruce Babbitt back in Washington as well as the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Jack and Willard gave last week's speeches with conviction and Sharon was her usual, beautiful, bubbling patriotic self Tom Melius of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation gave SeaLife Center Executive Director Kim Sundberg a big check for a million bucks to support sea lion research Sundberg introduced his exhausted but happy staff

The center and its work were blessed and the boards of governors and directors assembled with the speech makers and a long red ribbon was cut into a lot of pieces The $55 million SeaLife Center — a window on the sea — was opened to the people of Alaska, the United States, the Pacific Rim and the world

I went in the back door and put on my maroon SeaLife Center volunteer T-shirt and took up my docent station at the lower level viewing gallery The payoff for volunteers is the look of delight and wonder on the faces of visitors of all ages Their eyes sparkle as they watch the gentle, effortless glide of harbor seals through their underwater habitat or the underwater flying of the puffins and murres and the otherworldliness of the king crabs

Some of us were fortunate to have shared in the experience of seeing the graceful young dancer Natalie, doing a pas de deux with the 5-year-old female sea lion, Sugarloaf I kid you not, the human dancer would do a fluid arabesque and the equally supple pinniped, separated from her partner by 8 inches of clear acrylic would complement her motions in a dance moment that

Notebook...

From Page 6

was a once in a lifetime experience for everyone Awesome stuff

Outside, food was available from stalls run by local churches and clubs and continuous entertainment came from stages two and three in the parking lot and in front of the center Delighted happy adults with carefree energetic children and beaming parents and grandparents with a smile on every face In the evening a street dance on closed off Fourth Avenue We danced to the Alaska Polka Kings Chips and the Button Box Gang They were followed by the versatile Out of Control and Sewardites of all ages were dancing in the street Parents had dropped their high school daughters and sons at the prom at AVTEC and then came downtown to do some real dancing!

The music was great, the hay flew, the sky at midnight was aglow with northern lights and pink-cheeked dancers of all ages came to me to say, "We should have street dances every week!" It was a true community celebration and like the lyrics to that great song "Chicago," "I even saw a man, he danced with his wife!"

Should we have another community street bash in the fall? How about a United Way street dance in September when our visitors are gone?

A grateful community's thanks to all of you who never took no for an answer and m the SeaLife Center a reality to the center's staff that put this grand opening together

Bob Satin is mayor of Seward.

Officials expect great things from SeaLife Center

The way former Gov. Walter Hickel sees it, the opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center is a way for humans to meet their obligation of returning something to Mother Earth.

Speaking at Saturday's grand opening ceremony, Hickel said the state of Alaska was fulfilling that obligation when it funneled Exxon Valdez oil spill money into construction of the $56 million SeaLife Center. As governor in 1993, Hickel signed legislation authorizing $12.5 million for the center.

Hickel described the SeaLife Center as "a flagship for marine science in Alaska," and praised its research facilities.

If the business of shipping oil has risks, "the kind of risks shown by the Exxon Valdez spill, then we must prepare and research how to prevent those risks," Hickel said.

He said the center is unique because "it's a research facility that invites people in to look and it welcomes them." Those visitors will play an integral part in helping fund the facility through their admission fees, which are expected to pay for 80 percent of annual operating costs.

The former governor thanked Willard Dunham of Seward for his persistence. "I'm glad you set me down a couple of times, once in 1966 and again in 1991. You said, 'We're going to build that SeaLife Center,'" Hickel noted.

"The learning in it, the learning from it, will go a long way," he said.

Some 4,000 people took in activities during the grand opening, which included the ribbon cutting, a street fair, SeaLife Center tours and two street dances.

U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski and Gov. Tony Knowles chimed in with Hickel in congratulating the community of Seward and everyone else involved in pushing through the idea for the SeaLife Center.

"This is a can-do city," Murkowski said. "It was an All-American city after the fire and earthquake (of 1964)."

He said he couldn't imagine a better hope for the future than the children of Alaska who literally can almost snuggle up to endangered species like the Steller sea lion when they participate in the nocturnal educational program at the SeaLife Center. "They can really dream about what the future holds," Murkowski said.

Knowles said Alaskans care for the health of the world's oceans because thousands of their jobs and families depend on the health and productivity of the ocean.

"Alaskans rely on the ocean for subsistence resources and cultural ties. Nearly three-quarters of us live in the coastal communities," he said. "Our livelihoods and lifestyles are linked to the sea," Knowles said, so it's imperative we continue to act as stewards of the ocean.

The SeaLife Center will help Alaskans meet that responsibility, he said.

Thursday, May 7, 1998 Seward Phoenix Log

Above: Deborah Williams from the U.S. Department of Interior beams as she hoists a pair of scissors during the ribbon cutting ceremony. Among the group slicing through the red plastic are (behind Williams, from left) SeaLife Center Executive Director Kim Sundberg, former Gov. Wally Hickel, Gov. Tony Knowles, SeaLife Center board member Willard Dunham, U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski and

Story and photos by Colleen Kelly/LOG Staff

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
4/30/98

It's open!

SeaLife Center grand opening is Saturday, locals get sneak preview

By Colleen Kelly
LOG Staff

Around 3,000 Seward residents were treated to a sneak preview of the Alaska SeaLife Center April 25 as a gesture of appreciation from the center

More than 30 years after a vacationing Vice President Hubert Humphrey voiced the idea of doing marine science research in Seward, the $56 million SeaLife Center officially opens its doors this weekend

Events kick off May 1 when the board of governors sits down to a formal dinner and program At 12 30 p m May 2, the grand opening program begins at the front entry of the 115,000-square-foot facility The ribbon will be cut at 1 30 p m

Gov Tony Knowles and former Gov Walter Hickel will be there, as will U S Sen Frank Murkowski, to share their thoughts on the project and what it means to Seward, to Alaska and to the nation

If you think the Alaska SeaLife Center came about because of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989, you're only partially right That's where the bulk of the money came from

The idea — well, it traces its beginnings back to the 1960s

In a speech last weekend as part of the Seward Celebration at the center, Willard Dunham, a founding member of the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science, recounted the history of the SeaLife Center (For a full text of his remarks, see Page 6)

He explained how the University of Alaska nurtured the idea for the first decade until ambitious plans to expand the Seward Marine Station failed to receive state funding in 1975 The idea for a research/public viewing building and a five-story administration building became stalled

Dunham said SAAMS formed in 1990 as an outgrowth of the citizens advisory group to the Institute of Marine Science The new nonprofit group knew it had to separate itself from the university system and create a facility that would offer a combination of public education programs, fisheries research and mammals and seabirds

When the state received money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill court settlement, the idea moved forward he said

As he declared April 25 as Seward Celebration Day, Jack Scoby, president of the SeaLife Center board of directors, said it was a way "to honor our community for the ongoing support over the past several years "

The sunshine and fair weather brought out an estimated 3,000 people for the event.

In addition to speeches, during the one-hour program the Circle of Honor was unveiled in the outdoor plaza in front of the center The circle was composed of bricks engraved with the names of people and businesses who had donated money for the bricks

Rep Gary Davis R Soldotna, admitted he had been among the skeptics when SAAMS made its pitch to the 1993 Legislature for a $12 5 million allocation But both the House and Senate approved the funding request and it was signed by Hickel

"It's called the Alaska SeaLife Center, but the impetus — the seed — was planted here in Seward," Davis said

And while the facility is for all of Alaska, 'everyone knows down in their guts that it's the Seward SeaLife Center," Davis said to a cheering crowd

Sharon Anderson from the board of governors said none of it would have been possible without volunteer effort It all began with the volunteer advisers to UA's Institute of Marine Science, she said

"Now we have so many volunteers, we have to have a volunteer coordinator — Jim Fredrickson," she said

Tom Smith was the first to bring the group a brochure of the aquarium design "That started us on the nine-year journey," Anderson said

Numerous community service organizations conducted raffles and fund-raisers Business and private individuals chipped in

"SAAMS challenged the city to donate the first million dollars in our $6 million campaign," she said "We not only met, we went over, our $1 million campaign "

Seward Mayor Bob Satin expects that more than 200,000 visitors will be coming to Seward He says it's easy to understand their interest in making the trip

People can get T shirts anywhere in Alaska, he said "There is only one place you can learn as much, feel as much and participate as much as you can in Seward "

4/26/98

Alaska SeaLife Center opening festivities set for Sat

The grand opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward is Saturday. Everyone is invited to celebrate the occasion with tours of the center and a community street fair

"We're expecting more than 5,000 people to join us for the ribbon-cutting, dedication and day-long festivities," said Kim Sundberg, the center's executive director, in a press release

"Everyone has worked very hard to make this dream facility become a reality and I hope all Alaskans will join us in celebrating its beginnings"

Events begin at 11 30 a m with a performance by the United States Air Force Band of the Pacific

The official ribbon-cutting ceremony will be at 12 30 p m Dignitaries scheduled to attend include Sen Ted Stevens, Gov Tony Knowles, former Gov Walter Hickel and Alaska Speaker of the House Gail Phillips of Homer

Others on hand will include representatives from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council and officers of the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science, the nonprofit that organized the effort to build the center

John Tracy, KTUU Channel 2 news director, will emcee the event Musicians, dancers, storytellers, films and artists will entertain visitors of all ages throughout the afternoon and evening Three tented stages are being set up, and food vendors will offer their wares

Performers include JoAnne and Monte, the Crow Creek Drum and Bagpipe Band, Bunny Swan Gease, Marge Ford and the Polka Chips, and the Swinging Golden Girls from the Kenai Senior Center

A juggling club and a clown also will be on hand Artists Alvin Amason, Barbara Lavalee and Karla Morreira will sign commemorative posters

Guests can tour the Alaska SeaLife Center Saturday from 1 to 9 30 p m A $15 suggested contribution for each adult will net a tour and poster Children under 18 will be admitted free on Saturday if accompanied by a parent

The center's education and animal husbandry staff will offer programs throughout the afternoon and evening

Events Saturday wind up with a street dance and beer garden beginning at 6 p m

Two events precede the grand opening but are not open to the general public

Last Saturday was "Seward Celebration Day," when invited residents of Seward, Moose Pass and Cooper Landing were invited into the center for a sneak preview The limited open house recognized community leaders and legislators for their support of the project

This Friday, the board of governors of the center will hold a formal dinner and dance event for the center's major contributors

The center will be open to the general public for regular summer hours starting May 3 Hours will be 9 a m until 9 30 p m daily through Sept 20 The center will be open year-round, but hours will scale back during fall and winter

Regular admission is $12 50 for adults and $10 for children ages 4 to 16 Group rates for 15 or more people are available

To get to the center, follow the Seward Highway, which turns into Third Avenue, straight into town all the way to the waterfront Turn left on Railway Avenue

For more information, check out the Alaska SeaLife Center home page on the Internet at www alaskasealife org or phone the center at 800-224-2525 or 224-6300

SeaLife Center opening events

Saturday, May 2

11 30 a m — U S Air Force Band of the Pacific
12 30 p m — Ribbon-cutting ceremony and John Tracy and Dan Dixon
1 15 p m — JoAnne and Monte, The Alaska Song
1 20 p m — Crow Creek Drum and Bag Pipe Band
2 p m — Dixieland Band
2 45 p m — John Damberg Latin Jazz
3 45 p m — Alaska Dance Theater, "Seagulls" ballet
4 p m — Bunny Swan Gease, Athabaskan storytelling, song and dance
5 p m — McLeod Bluegrass Band
5 45 p m — Swinging Golden Girls, country line dancing by the Kenai Senior Center
6 p m — Marge Ford and the Polka Chips, 16-piece polka band
8 p m — Out of Control, five-piece band playing top 40 tunes

Ongoing

Good Dog, a musical duo featuring vocal harmony, acoustic guitar and harmonica
Batteries Not Included, a cappella style folk tunes,madrigals, sacred and contemporary music
Owen Berklund and Gabrielle Jolivette, Seward children performing on flute and violin
Drop Zone Juggling Club
Nemo the Clown
Education and animal husbandry programs

PENINSULA CLARION
4/26/98

SeaLife Center combines science, excitement

Impressed

That, in a nutshell, is the reaction of everyone who sees the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward Children, parents, scientists, civic leaders — they walk into the cavernous lobby and widen their eyes

Other states have impressive public marine display facilities, Sea World and the Monterey Bay Aquarium are just two that come to mind But Alaska — and the world — has never seen anything quite like the state-of-the-art 115,000-square-foot building next to Resurrection Bay

A seal, cavorting underwater behind a wall of plexiglass, is the first clue that the SeaLife center is something different The graceful creature's movements are mesmerizing, yet it wears an array of sensors that make it look like an astronaut wired for space flight.

An elementary student who's been listening to the guide explains The white disks measure the seal's heartbeat, the box glued on its head tells researchers when it is diving, the tags on its flippers identify it

The animals on display are tame — raised in captivity and unable to survive in the wild The intelligent ones are trained — but these sea lions and seals learned not to balance balls on their noses, but to have their temperatures taken and to offer flippers willingly for blood tests

The center is not a zoo It is not a marine theme park

The Alaska SeaLife Center is embarking on a unique mission to combine research, rehabilitation and public education in a single project, dedicated "to understanding and maintaining the integrity of Alaska's marine ecosystems," according to its mission statement It also becomes the only cold-water marine research facility in the Western Hemisphere

See CENTER page C-4

This melding of science and public outreach is an innovation Half of the building is public displays, similar to those of a fine museum or public aquarium, but the other half is laboratories, offices, veterinary operating rooms and other support systems for advanced scientific research on marine life

The public and researchers will be able to watch animals at the same time And the scientists themselves will be on display, too Although some areas are private, public viewing areas overlook some of the laboratories and research decks To work at the facility, scientists sign an agreement to answer visitors' questions about their work

Animals are everyone's focus

The center's policy is that none of its research programs will involve the permanent capture of healthy marine mammals The critters to be displayed are from other institutions, permanently crippled despite rehabilitation or held temporarily for short-term projects

When the center opens in May, its menagerie will consist of three Steller sea lions, six harbor seals, 15 wild river otters, a couple dozen seabirds (tufted puffins and common murres), an octopus, fish (including a wolf eel) and assorted smaller sea creatures such as vermilion sea stars divers have been collecting from Resurrection Bay

The center's star so far is Woody, a 4-year-old sea lion with a fondness for people and underwater

acrobatics Rescued in poor condition at the age of 1 week, he grew up at the Vancouver Aquarium A 500-pound teen-ager, he'd outgrown his old home just in time to transfer to expanded quarters in [redacted] Before he stops growing, he's expected to quadruple in weight

Woody and his lady friends, Kiska and Sugar, are of special interest to scientists Steller populations in the western Gulf of Alaska have declined precipitously in recent decades and the subpopulation has been placed on the endangered list

Biologists scrutinize the diet and growth of Woody and company, seeking clues about the nutritional distress of their wild cousins

That study is one of six starting at the SeaLife Center during its first season

Others will look at biochemical responses to pollution in seals, river otters and seabirds and at genetics of salmon populations

Five of the studies are funded by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council and one by the federal Environmental Protection Agency

The center estimates about a dozen researchers will work on the premises this summer

The goal is to eventually handle 10 to 12 major research projects at a time

Scientists and their sponsors will pay to use the facility, including the equipment, animals and support staff Admission fees from the general public will heavily subsidize the costs The University of Alaska Fairbanks oversees the science projects in partnership with the SeaLife management team

Michael Castellini, a professor of marine biology at UAF, is the research director and serves as a bridge between the two institutions Starting July 1, he will divide his time between Seward and Fairbanks

"My job is to work with the world scientific community," he said "The interest level is accelerating rapidly"

The SeaLife Center's financial plans could prove fruitful for science, he said Projected gate receipts will cover about 70 percent of research costs and qualify as matching funds to obtain support from other financing sources

"We can really leverage that quite a bit," he said

Access to the animals is as attractive to researchers as it is to school kids

"Research animals are like gold to us," Castellini said.

Most Alaska wildlife biology is done in the field under harsh conditions Species declines are linked with animal health, yet there has never been a way to methodically study sick animals The rehabilitation component of the SeaLife Center will bring impaired wildlife and biologists together

The center plans to maximize its effectiveness by coordinating with other institutions Plans are afoot to work with the Vancouver Aquarium in Canada on animal housing, the Pratt Museum in Homer on exhibits, local high schools on internships, and Alyeska Pipeline subcontractors on animal rehabilitation plans in the event of another major oil spill in the region

Exhibits and projects will change over time and all of the programs will evolve and grow

"We've been thinking about this for eight years," Castellini said "It's a mistake to think the thinking stops on May 1 "

> "We've been thinking about this for eight years. It's a mistake to think the thinking stops on May 1."
>
> —Michael Castellini, marine biology professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks

PENINSULA CLARION
4/26/98

Opening marks long-awaited science facility

by Shana Loshbaugh

The ribbon cutting Saturday will mark the official grand opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center, but that event is neither the beginning nor the end of the enormous startup project

Dreams of a Seward science facility date all the way back to 1968 when researchers at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Marine Sciences laboratory in Seward wanted to expand

But nothing took shape until the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill provided motivation and funding In 1990, visionaries formed the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science to develop a facility

The city of Seward donated use of seven acres on the waterfront, ironically on the site of the Seward sea otter rehabilitation center during the oil spill

The sea lion's share of the project's funding $37 4 million derived from oil spill funding via the EVOS Trustees Council and the state's settlement restitution Seward issued revenue bonds totaling $17 5 million Private donors made up the difference As of April, the total cost so far for the construction and startup stands at about $56 million

Early in the planning, questions arose about the mission Federal representatives on the EVOS Trustee Council delayed funding due to concerns that the center was being promoted as a visitor attraction After the mission was refocused to emphasize science and education, the project moved forward again

Construction began in 1995 During peak building months, about 100 people at a time worked on the concrete structure and its challenging plumbing

Water is the lifeblood of the center Features include the nation's deepest diving pool for seabirds (21 feet) and pumps to circulate 4,500 gallons of clean salt water per minute through the tanks and pens

In October of 1996, the board hired John Hendricks from the Texas State Aquarium as the first director and Hendricks assembled a hand-picked core team of aquarium specialists, educators and scientists from the region and nation

A year later, Kimbal Sundberg, a retired biologist from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, replaced him as interim executive director On April 7, the Alaska SeaLife Center board of directors announced Sundberg's permanent appointment

The first animals, immature tufted puffins, arrived last fall and have been housed at the UAF marine lab in Seward while awaiting their new home The sea lions and seals started arriving at the end of March

The center will have about 50 employees during the first summer of operation About a fifth of the staff are specialists from out-of-state, but the rest are Alaskans and nearly all the nonspecialists and seasonal workers are local Seward folk, said marketing director Donna Harris In addition, the center is recruiting volunteers to help with office work and guiding tours

Area businesses are gearing up to keep pace with the increased visitor volume the center will generate Kenai Fjords Tours, for example, is coordinating tour schedules with the center and putting in a dock next door

All the center's major exhibits are scheduled to be complete by Saturday's opening, but the SeaLife Center will never be "finished" in the strictest sense of the word

In June, for example, the staff will release salmon smolts into new raceways leading to the sea The goal is to build up a small fish run imprinted on the building years into the future Staff are talking about setting up a technical library, interactive Internet education programs, summer camps for youngsters, a quarterly newsletter and a free-ranging colony of pigeon guillemots on the sea wall

"It's always going to be a work in progress " Harris said

HOMER NEWS
4/30/98

Pratt oil exhibit moves to Seward

by Chris Russ
Staff Writer

Overshadowed by the much anticipated opening of the Seward SeaLife Center on Saturday, a stark reminder of how the facility got built goes on display next door

The Pratt Museum s traveling exhibit "Darkened Waters Profile of an Alaskan Oil Spill," opens for the first time in Seward in conjunction with the SeaLife Center's grand opening The exhibit which documents the grounding and spill of the Exxon Valdez oil tanker in Prince William Sound in 1989, will be on display at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Marine Science Education Center through September

It was roughly $39 million in Exxon criminal and civil settlement money that delivered the vision of the SeaLife Center from dream to reality Meanwhile "Darkened Waters' has brought more than a million people face to face with the disaster over the past several years as it toured throughout Alaska and in the Lower 48 including the Smithsonian Institution s Museum of Natural History in Washington D C and the Burke Museum of Natural History in Seattle

Next year marks the 10th anniversary of the oil spill and the Pratt Museum has no plans to shelve the show Instead museum officials are pursing funding to upgrade the educational exhibit

"We want to focus on the changes and issues that have evolved since the spill " said museum director Michael Hawfield "We want to focus on what has happened in terms of safety, clean-up protocol and how the Coast Guard and other agencies have since changed in regards to spill response "

On the anniversary — pending funding — "Darkened Waters" will have some new bells and whistles including a new touch-screen computer kiosk fresh video interviews and new voices from other communities, along with updated information The effort will further document what has happened in the sciences, political arenas, oil industry and communities since the spill

> *"We want to focus on the changes and issues that have evolved since the spill."*
>
> **— Michael Hawfield**

Other players in the spill s aftermath including the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee council, Chugachmiut, Prince William Sound Science Center, Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet s regional citizens' advisory councils and others will contribute in various ways to the new exhibit

"We want to involve the visitor in the bigger picture of oil use and extraction ' Hawfield said

The cost of the exhibit upgrade depends on how much the museum gets funded for the project he said It's possible the project will cost between $22 000 and $25 000

"Darkened Waters ' will be on display in Seward for the next two summers

With SeaLife Center, Seward braces for new life downtown

By ROSANNE PAGANO
Associated Press Writer

SEWARD, Alaska (AP) — Kim Kowalski-Rogers is contemplating the end of Dreamland Bowl and trying not to cry.

It's not the unimpeded view of Resurrection Bay from her apartment window she'll miss most — although after 15 years of living above the bowling alley, the panorama will be tough to forget.

And it's not the four-lane bowling alley itself: Kowalski-Rogers and her husband, Darrell, came close to selling Seward's only lanes last year but that deal fell through.

"My dad has bowled in the house since the lanes were put in in 1948," she says, her voice choked with tears, vowing not to be in town the day the building is torn down. "I love those old guys. I don't know what they're going to do."

The Rogers, third-generation proprietors of Dreamland, are the new face of downtown Seward: Glad to see the new Alaska SeaLife Center revitalize the business district, which dates to 1903; not so glad to see a change in Seward's small-town charm.

Construction, like debate over the town's direction, is everywhere.

New charter fishing businesses have sprung up and there are bed-and-breakfasts and cafes aplenty. A restaurant across the street from the SeaLife Center just finished renovating and crews are busy at Seward's railroad depot, changing the forlorn building within view of the aquarium to a new fir-paneled performance and interpretive history center for Alaska Native groups.

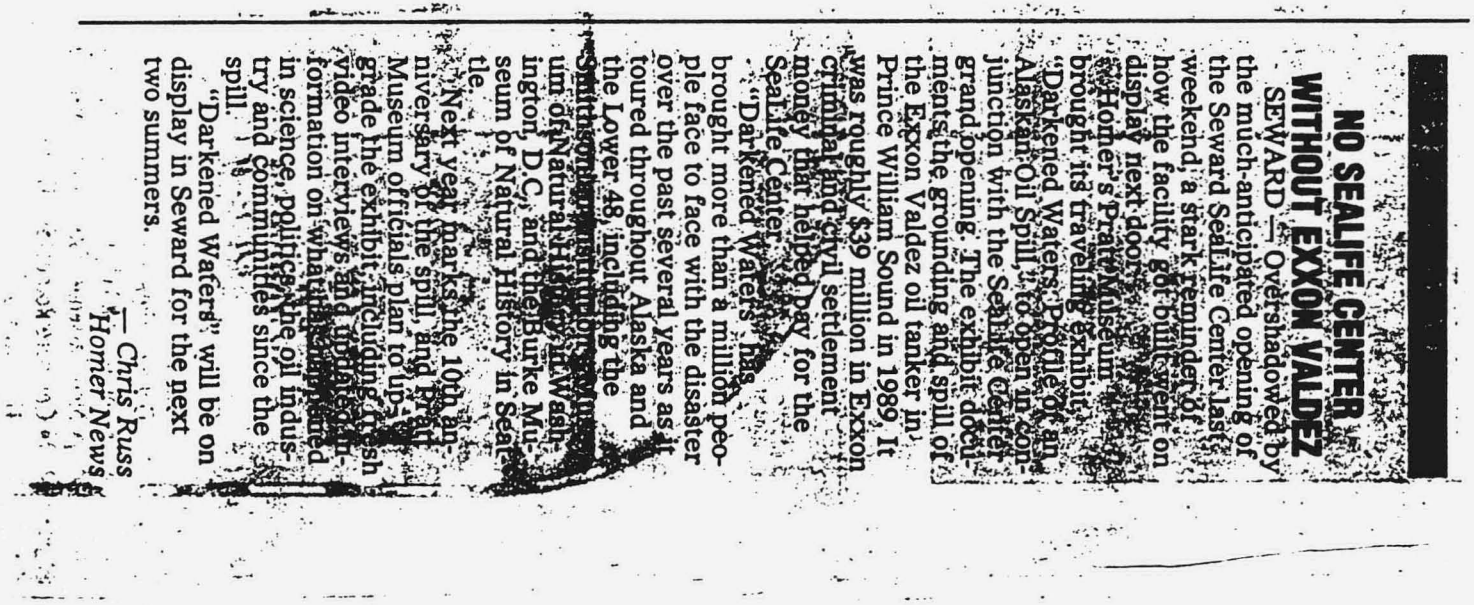
In Dreamland's place eventually will be a three-story, 75-room hotel, the city's largest. Plans call for a multimillion-dollar project that will attract sport fishermen, weekend tourists and cruise ship passengers on an overnight stay.

"Seward will be less a little sleepy fishing village and more a tourist center," said Hugh Darling, owner of Fourth Avenue's vintage Brown and Hawkins stores, a few paces up from the SeaLife Center. "It'll have a great impact."

In a blue-collar town of 3,000 where moose browse at the city limits and church bells ringing the hour aren't drowned out by traffic, some residents are reluctant to give up Seward's "Northern Exposure" ambience.

Some want to know how downtown will absorb all the buses and cars the new research aquarium will attract; others fret that it's time to consider a stop light — Seward's first.

From her spot behind the 83-year-old polished metal cash register of Urbach's clothing store, Dorothy Urbach has seen plenty of change in her 45 years in town — including the time the city pulled together to retain downtown's mom-and-pop shops in favor of strip malls.



NO SEALIFE CENTER WITHOUT EXXON VALDEZ

SEWARD — Overshadowed by the much-anticipated opening of the Seward SeaLife Center last weekend, a stark reminder of how the facility got built went on display next door. The Pratt Museum brought its traveling exhibit, "Darkened Waters: Profile of an Alaskan Oil Spill," to open in conjunction with the SeaLife Center grand opening. The exhibit documents the grounding and spill of the Exxon Valdez oil tanker in Prince William Sound in 1989. It was roughly $39 million in Exxon criminal and civil settlement money that helped pay for the SeaLife Center, which opened May 2.

"Darkened Waters" has brought more than a million people face to face with the disaster over the past several years as it toured throughout Alaska and the Lower 48, including the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and the Burke Museum of Natural History in Seattle.

Next year marks the 10th anniversary of the spill, and Pratt Museum officials plan to update the exhibit, including fresh video interviews and updated information on what has occurred in science, politics, the oil industry and communities since the spill.

"Darkened Waters" will be on display in Seward for the next two summers.

— *Chris Russ*
Homer News

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
5/10/98

Council rejects 2-hour downtown parking limit

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
4/30/98

By Colleen Kelly
LOG Staff

A two-hour limit for parking in the Seward downtown area appears to be an idea whose time has not yet come

After spending considerable time mulling over the issue at its last three meetings, the City Council rejected the proposal at Monday's meeting

In a parliamentary maneuver aimed at returning the item to the table for a future vote, Mayor Bob Saun at the last minute joined naysayers Marie Gage, Pat Callahan and Jerry King in drowning out the yes vote of Councilman Stu Clark

The seven-member council needs four "aye" votes to take action on an item

Councilman Nathan Orr was absent from the meeting and the mayor had disqualified Edgar Blatchford from voting on the issue due to conflict of interest as a downtown business owner

If the defeated measure is brought back for reconsideration, it'll take a two-thirds majority for passage, according to city clerk Pat Reilly

Although they voted against it, Callahan and King said they favored the proposal but thought it was being rushed through

Calling himself a strong supporter of the two-hour limit, King said it's conceivable that parking in the downtown core area could be tied up all day because of the impact from the SeaLife Center, Kenai Fjords Tours' new floating dock and the Chugach Heritage Center

Noting there was a major change in the council's composition following last October's election, Callahan said, "Some of us were voted in because there were just too many changes occurring in Seward ' He favored a go-slow approach in handling the parking problem

Callahan claimed that although the Downtown Business Association and city officials have been talking about solutions for some time, the townspeople certainly did not know about it

Before voting down the resolution, the council managed to amend it by redefining who would qualify for a resident parking permit

In response to a suggestion by assistant city administrator Tylan Schrock, the council agreed to his definition of a resident/tenant a person occupying a room or apartment in the affected area for not less than 30 days In effect, this means patrons of bed and breakfast establishments wouldn't be exempt from the two-hour limits

Schrock said the whole reason the city is dealing with parking time limits is to have businesses supply off-street parking

Almost 30 people filled the council chambers for a one-hour work session prior to the council meeting. Many had left by the time the resolution came up for a council vote

One criticism voiced in the work session was that a large portion of the SeaLife Center parking lot "is taken up with dead trees They could hold another 200 cars in there," one man said

Dave Crane who's on the SeaLife Center's board of directors said the Circle of Honor, the trees and the landscaping were all the city's idea.

"It wasn't in the original plan that way," he said "You, the community, made the SeaLife Center change that plan"

Crane said the board would have preferred "straight parking" and no landscaping, and hinted there could be changes "Some of it is just not practical," he said

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
5/1/98

Buoy's track surprises scientists

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Recently, oceanographers with the Prince William Sound Science Center used drifting buoys to find out more about ocean currents in the sound. What they discovered may change the way scientists think about the sound's ecosystem and also may affect oil spill response plans.

Drifting buoys record their path by sending coordinates to a satellite that transmits the data back to the Science Center. To eliminate the influence of wind, a large canvas bag called a drogue is attached to each buoy. It acts as a drag, and records the measurements 30 to 50 feet below the surface.

The buoys are an inexpensive way to get data, says oceanographer Shari Vaughan, "We get a data point every hour or two hours, so lets say 12 data points a day, for $10."

It's especially economical, according to Vaughan, "When you compare it to the cost of chartering a vessel and having 10 people out on a cruise for one week of data." And, the equipment can be used again.

Five buoys were deployed over several months in 1996 and 1997. The buoy paths showed scientists more about the way currents travel into Prince William Sound, the circulation inside the sound and, unexpectedly, recorded the direction and velocity of currents off of the Copper River Delta.

Previous studies used fixed current meters moored in Montague Strait and Hinchinbrook Entrance. They indicated that although the currents could move in the opposite direction, the basic path of the currents into the sound was northward, through Hinchinbrook Entrance, counterclockwise around the sound, and southward through Montague Strait.

On several occasions the drifter buoys did exactly the opposite thing. The contrast was surprising. "We sort of knew that the flow at Hinchinbrook Entrance could be inward or outward," said Vaughan. "But I think most people assumed the flow at Montague Strait was outward, and to have three drifter tracks, showing the opposite, it surprised me."

The buoys showed that there are two counterclockwise gyres in the sound, one in the central portion north of Hinchinbrook Entrance, the other between Perry and Naked Islands, over the deepest part of the sound. They showed that currents also flow into the sound at Montague Strait, and out through Hinchinbrook Entrance.

Another benefit of using the buoys is that, unlike fixed current meters or oceanographic cruises, the buoy data is free from human interference and completely unbiased.

An agreement was reached recently calling for oil spill contingency planning for the Copper River Delta area, partly due to this new information.

One buoy deployed in May of 1997 left the sound through Hinchinbrook Entrance and headed east to approximately within 10 miles of Kayak Island, then headed back past the sound, went up Montague Strait again, back out Hinchinbrook Entrance traveling west, and ended up in Shelikof Straits.

The buoy path shows clearly that the summer currents at 30 to 50 feet along the shelf of the Gulf of Alaska may flow either westward, or east, toward the fishing grounds.

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.

PENINSULA CLARION
4/26/98

Drifting buoys may change responses to spills

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

Recently, oceanographers with the Prince William Sound Science Center used drifting buoys to find out more about ocean currents in the sound What they discovered may change the way scientists think about the sound's ecosystem and also may affect oil spill response plans

Drifting buoys record their path by sending coordinates to a satellite that transmits the data back to the science center

To eliminate the influence of wind, a large canvas bag called a drogue is attached to each buoy It acts as a drag and records the measurements 30 to 50 feet below the surface

The buoys are an inexpensive way to get data, says oceanographer Shari Vaughan, "We get a data point every hour or two hours, so let's say 12 data points a day, for $10 "

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Alaska Coastal Currents

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Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Scientists search for clues to tiny bird's life

To find the Kittlitz's murrelet, one must travel into the ice-laden glacial fjords of Prince William Sound It's one of the few areas they can be found in the world

So little is known about Kittlitz's murrelets it's hard to calculate whether their population is healthy Dr Robert Day, of the biological consulting firm ABR, Inc , is attempting to document more of the bird's natural history and to learn more about what may be happening to this very rare bird

During the summer of 1996, researchers learned how to locate the murrelets on the water Last year in June and early August they found more adult birds in all four bays they visited

The amount of ice may regulate the number of birds they find in any one place, Day said "It looked as though early on there was less ice than last year and it may be that they are found throughout the bays if there's not too much ice," he said "Even though they nest near glaciers they don't like too much ice

In fact, Day said, they prefer to feed off the face of glaciers more than anywhere else Exactly what they were eating was harder to determine "We tried to capture the birds alive at sea with mist nets and couldn't do it. We wanted to take samples for stable isotopes to find out where they feed on the food web," said Day

It appears the birds are feeding on both fish and plankton, with most of the diet consisting of small fishes They also seemed to eat more plankton than marbled murrelets 'From a limited amount of data, it looks like 60 percent fish, 30 percent plankton," he said

Although they are not certain exactly what the birds are feeding on, they mapped the depths of the water near the face of the glaciers and found, on the sonar, a surprising number of targets they thought were fish

One alarming observation from the summer's fieldwork, was the complete absence of juveniles 'We were sampling in the same area where the Kittlitz's murrelets adults are and we saw no young in almost three weeks this summer,' he said "So its a little alarming to see two years go by with no evidence of reproduction at all "

And perhaps more alarming Day found pairs of Kittlitz s murrelets and their close relations, marbled murrelets, in almost every bay "These are birds sitting on the water, that very clearly appeared to have bonded to each other They were very defensive, they were alarmed, they swam together They stayed very near each other," said Day

According to Day, that could explain why there are so few Kittlitz's murrelets It's possible that there are so many marbled murrelets that the Kittlitz's murrelets are simply inundated with them Unfortunately, it means some Kittlitz's murrelets are losing their chance to reproduce

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

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PENINSULA CLARION
MAY 7, 1998

By JODY SEITZ

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EVOS Council helps preserve Homer Spit intertidal habitat

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Anyone who's ever driven down Baycrest Hill leading into Homer knows the majesty of Kachemak Bay The thin arm of the Homer Spit cradles the windswept bay against a panorama of snowy mountains

For many Alaskans the spit holds fond memories as the place they got their foothold in Alaska For migratory birds and intertidal life, the five-mile-long spit is critical terra firma. It's also the best access to the bay for shipyards, logging companies, fishermen and tourists — all important to the local economy

On Oct 3,1997, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council agreed to provide nearly $1 million to protect 116 acres of critical tidelands on the spit and at nearby Beluga Slough through their small parcel habitat protection program The small parcel program provides funds for protecting private property of less than 1000 acres which aid the recovery of resources injured by the oil spill

The agreement cleared the way to protect the habitat for resident and migratory wildlife in perpetuity The City of Homer will own and manage the property

When the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust took stock of local habitat needing protection, Mud Bay at the base of the Homer Spit stood out, according to the KHLT Director Barbara Seaman

'It is really valuable intertidal habitat," she said 'Without protection it would be lost There are lots and lots of building projects, boardwalks lumber storage lots, chip yards, and barge basins Things are happening at a pretty rapid clip out there and we saw that (Mud Bay) as being pretty seriously threatened"

Beluga Slough is a stretch of urban tidelands lying between the spit road and the city center Moose, bear, and birds all share the area About 38 acres of Beluga Slough wetlands were slated for development as an RV lot

The Homer Spit package was one of the most popular habitat protection projects considered by the council, which received hundreds of letters, phone calls, e-mails and faxes in support Protecting these habitats was viewed by many as a way of keeping tourism strong in Homer

Supporters ranged from local businesses, the Homer Chamber of Commerce, the City of Homer and the Kenai Peninsula Borough to tourists and birders from around the country

"People called in from across the nation to support the purchase," said Chris Rogers, of the Trust for Public Land, a San Francisco based nonprofit that helped put together the land package

The spit has a constituency Each May the City of Homer hosts hundreds of visitors who come from across the nation and the world to witness and celebrate the annual migration of more than 20 species of shorebirds as they rest and refuel on their way to nesting grounds further north The annual Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival has become a big pre-season attraction for birders and other visitors

Seaman sees the current investment in conservation as protection for the local economy

"I think people are drawn to Alaska and to Homer because of a chance to see semipalmated plovers and bears and moose and catch a salmon And unless we take care of those things they come to see we'll stop seeing the tourist industry grow and develop," she said

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

Cordova Times
April 30, 1998

Kodiak organizes to stop marine pollution at its source

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Coastal currents

After the T/V Exxon Valdez dumped 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound in 1989, public attention focused not only on the cleanup effort, but also on the sources of pollution in the spill area

In Prince William Sound the process of cleaning up the existing sources of pollution got underway in 1996 Communities around the Sound joined forces to deal with common problems such as overflowing landfills, inadequate sewage systems, scrap metal and household hazardous waste disposal The plan they created, the Sound Waste Management Plan, has inspired Kodiak communities to do the same thing

Practically all manufactured goods make it to Kodiak Island on a plane or a barge When the life of freezers, washers, batteries and paints is over, they're usually tossed in the landfill or down the drain That translates to overflowing landfills and sewage systems, and ocean and stream pollution from runoff

Recently Jeff Petersen of Old Harbor witnessed the waste disposal problem first-hand The Kodiak Island Housing Authority was putting in new boilers and furnaces for about a hundred houses Instead of taking away the old appliances after delivering its cargo, the barge left and all the old appliances were taken to the dump

Petersen was annoyed "Why are all the water tanks and furnaces up at the dump? Why can't we just put them on the barge that brought the new ones?" he asked "There's a hundred houses up there! That's 200 big bulky things up at the dump "

The Kodiak Island communities of Larsen Bay Old Harbor, Akhiok, Port Lions, Ouzinkie, Karluk, and Chiniak are each part of the Kodiak Waste Management Plan

The borough would like to see these communities team up to deal with their waste disposal problems, said Ron Riemer, Environmental Engineer for the Kodiak Island Borough ' Villages that are relatively connected to each other by air can exchange operation and maintenance personnel, conduct training together and solve some problems together " he said

Besides being more efficient, it s cheaper "Anything that is purchased can be purchased in quantity, (and) if these communities start getting equipment that is similar in all the facilities, operation and maintenance can be cheaper," said Riemer

According to Petersen, coordinating services and supplies with the other remote villages around the island makes sense because they face similar problems with transportation, shipping, on-site disposal, and training, as well as purchase and maintenance of equipment and supplies

One of the most common problems, waste oil, may soon have a solution The "Smart Ashe" incinerator takes waste water, bilge water and burns off the oil and water

"The used oil is placed in the drum and ignited and in about an hour 20 gallons of used oil has been eliminated," said Riemer

Education and public awareness are important components of the planning effort

"The public needs to learn how to manage the various problems — what should go into a landfill and what should not, what should go into the sewage system and what shouldn t," said Riemer

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

Small-town businesses count on big tourism cash

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau
First of five parts

SEA CHANGE FOR SEWARD

SEWARD -- In a matter of days, throngs of people will marvel as sea lions and seals plunge into deep habitat pools at the Alaska SeaLife Center.

Children will shriek as they touch starfish in the center's petting exhibit.

Huge displays will point out how little we know about the waters of Resurrection Bay and the Gulf of Alaska. In the foyer, a pod of life-size porpoises will hang from the ceiling, frozen in their pursuit of a school of herring. Projection screens will show video images taken from the rocky shore a few miles away.

With all that going on, probably nobody will take a second glance at the center's seven new cash registers.

Yet those ordinary machines, which will spit out $12.50 admission tickets and gift shop receipts, are at the core of what might be the single biggest economic shift anyone in Seward has seen for decades — perhaps since the 1964 earthquake wiped out the port and sent hundreds of longshoremen packing for new jobs on the West Coast.

The SeaLife Center's cash registers should add to a spike in Seward's already giddy rise in summer retail sales. Beyond that, the center's very location on the south side of town could alter everyday life for the estimated 3,000 residents of this 96-year-old city.

Nobody's certain how it will all play out once the $52 million state-of-the-art marine research facility opens to the public with a huge party on Saturday.

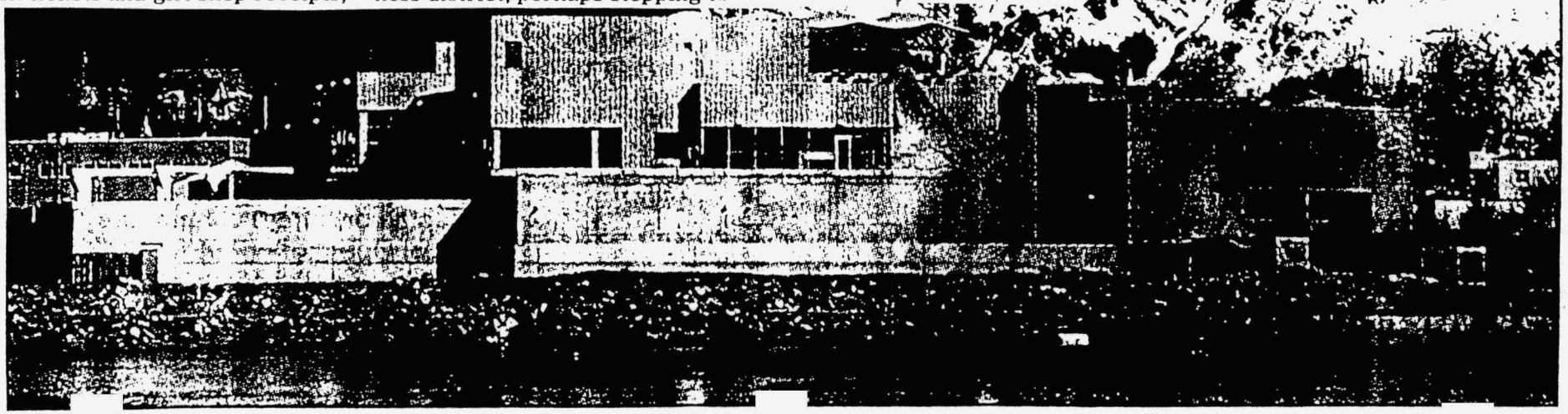
But one emerging theory among people who live here is that more visitors will filter through the old downtown business district, perhaps stopping to shop, buy lunch or rent a hotel room on their way to the bright new building at the foot of Fourth Avenue.

"It's going to really change the face of Seward, hopefully for the better," said Dennis Treadwell, owner of Starbird Studio, a Fourth Avenue art gallery.

"It's exciting having a world-class facility in such a small town. It'll be kind of like having a business in the parking lot of Disneyland."

One of Seward's oldest restaurants, Christo's Palace, is in the middle of a $150,000 face lift, anticipating a new wave of visitors to the formerly quiet waterfront on the south side of Seward.

The Alaska SeaLife Center dominates the view toward the water along Fourth Avenue in Seward. The center is dedicated to research, education and rehabilitating Alaska marine wildlife and ecosystems.



The 000-square-foot Alaska SeaLife Center cost $5 lion; $35 million came from Exxon Valdez oil spil ney.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 4/26/98

"We're basically a research facility that's open to the public for viewing," says Kim Sundberg, the center's executive director. He is a former state fisheries habitat biologist who guided the facility's design.

"The whole town is getting ready," said Marina Manolakakis, co-owner of the restaurant.

Some of that business could trickle into fall and winter, traditionally a quiet time when many of Seward's shops literally board up their windows and hibernate.

In the darker season, school buses will ferry students who have paid to spend a day or camp overnight at the SeaLife Center. A major part of the center's outreach involves slumber parties in which students will drop their sleeping bags next to windows overlooking the three rookeries where sea lions, seals and sea birds live.

In addition, some 50 to 60 employees will commute to work, along with visiting researchers who have paid to use the center's laboratories to study marine mammals, fish or birds.

Whether that winter activity will significantly boost the economy is anyone's guess.

The SeaLife Center won't be the only large employer in town. A few blocks away, the 67 employees at the Alaska Vocational Technical Center train future oil workers, cooks and boat builders. And the state Spring Creek maximum-security prison on the other side of Resurrection Bay employs 217 people.

Still, some observers say, the SeaLife Center could give the city's hot-and-cold, tourist-driven economy a further dose of stability.

"The idea of a summer-winter season is fading," Seward Mayor Bob Satin said.

"And the SeaLife Center will help bring that about."

CAN SEWARD HANDLE IT?

Some 275,000 people are expected to pass those seven cash registers during the SeaLife Center's first year, with most coming this summer.

But can Seward's turn-of-the-century street design, which has yet to see its first traffic light, withstand a crush of automobile and bus traffic?

An environmental impact statement prepared in 1994, before the center was built, says the heaviest traffic occurs on the north end of town — where tourists flood the city harbor for fishing trips or boat tours to Kenai Fjords National Park.

Already, some downtown merchants are calling for two-hour time limits for on-street parkers.

But city government is taking a cautious approach, and may wait a year to see if the projected crowds — and cars — turn up.

"There isn't anything like this in Alaska. There isn't anything like this in the Western Hemisphere."

—Kim Sundberg, executive director of the Alaska SeaLife Center

"We're all looking at trying to do things, but the wheels are spinning at the moment," said Kerry Martin, Seward's community development director.

Seward has an attractive, compact downtown. Storefronts hug the curb, giving the district a close, friendly feel. It's easy to walk down Fourth Avenue from shop to shop, which is what residents did when the street system was designed in 1906.

Automobiles weren't a fact of life then. People walked, rode horses and drove dog teams. Nobody in that era would have figured that each store might one day need its own parking lot, Martin said.

The SeaLife Center has built its own 170-space paid parking lot, but will visitors opt for the free street parking in town, creating congestion?

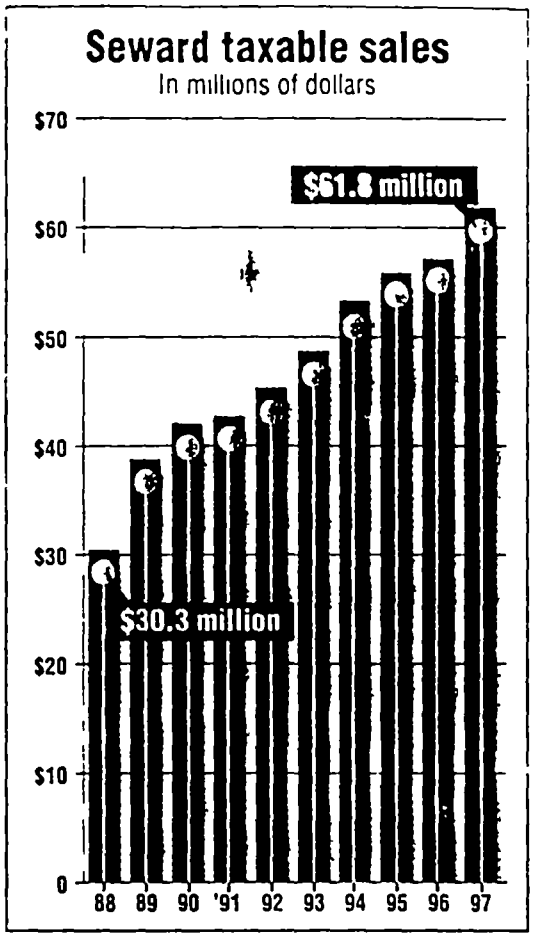
SEALIFE CENTER'S NEW APPROACH

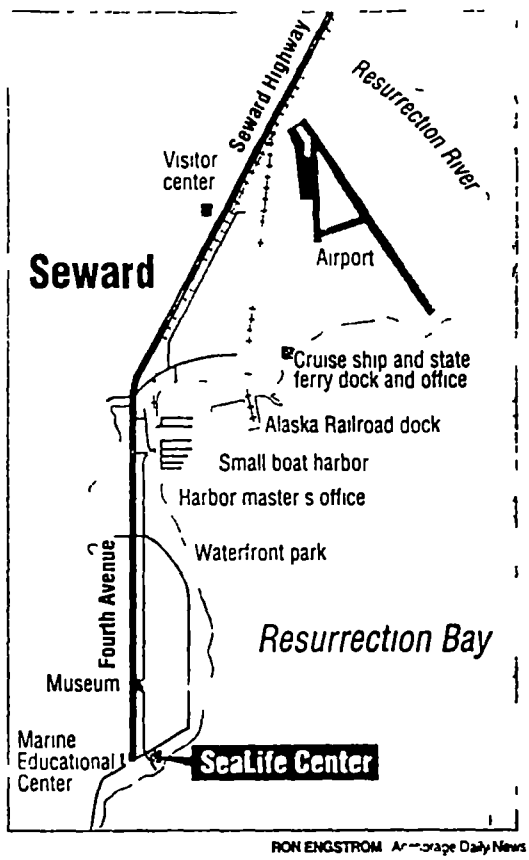
The idea for a Seward marine research center was born in the late 1980s, before the Exxon Valdez oil spill. City leaders originally wanted to expand the University of Alaska Fairbanks marine research lab in Seward, turning it into an animal research center that would attract scientists and tourists.

But after the March 1989 oil spill, and the ensuing legal settlements, Seward remolded its vision to combine research, animal rehabilitation and education.

The idea took hold with then-Gov. Wally Hickel, who once worked in Seward, and the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council, which oversees money from the oil spill settlement.

One of those early visionaries, former city manager Darryl Schaefermeyer, is the center's project administrator. Sitting in his new second-floor office, Schaefermeyer said the facility literally is a dream come true.





RON ENGSTROM Anchorage Daily News

This building is everything I dreamed or imagined it would be," he said

This is one of those things you probably have one opportunity in a lifetime to see happen and be a part of

The 115,000-square-foot building cost $56 million to build with $35 million coming from the oil spill trustees, and the rest from city bonds and private fund raising

After eight years of planning and construction, the result is a huge concrete and aluminum building with two stories of public displays and lots of windows Huge windows wrap around three animal habitats, which are molded from concrete and painted to resemble marine rookeries and sea lion haul-outs in Kenai Fjords Windows open up to stunning views of Resurrection Bay Other windows look out over holding pools — even into a lab where researchers soon will be studying pink salmon

Already, the Exxon Valdez oil spill trustee council has agreed to fund five research projects based at the SeaLife Center and the EPA has set up a sixth

In addition, a $1 million federal program to study the beleaguered Gulf of Alaska Steller sea lion population may bring more researchers to the center, which has room for about 12

Before long, researchers will be watching how harbor seals react to certain foods, how river otters respond to oil tainted foods and how genetic codes affect pink salmon survival

While they work, scientists also will be on display

We're basically a research facility that's open to the public for viewing " said Kim Sundberg the center's executive director Sundberg is a former state fisheries habitat biologist who guided the facility's design "There isn't anything like this in Alaska " he said There isn't anything like this in the Western Hemisphere

The center's senior marine mammal scientist Don Calkins [illegible]

with visitors and waves of schoolchildren pressed to the glass while scientists work. Researchers will retain some privacy Offices most labs and the utilitarian holding pools will be off limits to the general public

Early in the planning stages proponents knew they had to create a self sustaining facility or state leaders would shoot down the idea The exhibits, the windows into labs and the gift shop were born from that notion

The facility will rely almost completely on sales receipts And it takes a lot of money to power what will be the Western Hemisphere's first cold water marine lab Salaries, computers, tanks, pumps, water filters and all the other equipment involved in keeping exotic animals healthy means a lot of overhead, its managers say

The first year budget of $6 25 million — which also helps subsidize the costs of visiting researchers — is based on 275,000 visitors showing up Sundberg said

WILL VISITORS COME?

Will people pay $12 50 to stand before wide windows built below the water line to watch marine mammals glide by?

Early indications suggest they will, according to hotel owners and tour company operators — people who put their money on the line

Hotel owner Paul Carter predicts the SeaLife Center will add a lucrative twist to Seward's already robust summer tourist season

We're looking to the SeaLife Center having a tremendous impact " Carter said

Carter, who owns Denali River Cabins just outside Denali National Park, recently purchased several downtown lots about a block from the SeaLife Center There he plans to build the three-story Hotel Edgewater which when it opens next April will become Seward's largest hotel and feature a central atrium a fountain and rock lined fireplace It will add 75 rooms to the 590 hotel motel or bed and breakfast rooms for rent between Seward and Moose Pass

Market research on the hotel began before the SeaLife Center [illegible] Carter said

but a huge visitor magnet next door won't hurt business.

For the last decade, he noted, summer visitors have fueled robust retail sales in what Carter predicts will become Alaska's second most-popular destination, behind Denali National Park.

Seward has a 3 percent sales tax, and revenues from it have doubled since 1988, when tourism sharply increased. About two-thirds of the city's $61.7 million in taxable sales last year occurred in the summer months, according to Kenai Peninsula Borough figures.

The SeaLife Center, a nonprofit corporation, won't add directly to the taxable sales figures, but the same downtown merchants who worry about parking also anticipate spillover spending.

But how much?

Martin, the city's development director, cautions against assuming 275,000 visitors to the SeaLife Center will be a new crowd, distinct from the visitors who normally flock to Seward each summer.

Rather, he said, the SeaLife Center may create a shift in behavior.

Some of the more than 200,000 cruise ship passengers who once jumped on a bus to Anchorage may spend a night in Seward, said Tom Tougas, president of Kenai Fjords Tours.

Between the growing number of wildlife-viewing tour boats that ply Kenai Fjords National Park, hikes to Exit Glacier, summer sled-dog rides and the new marine research center, visitors have more than enough to fill a day, he said.

"So clearly it's having a positive impact," Tougas said. "It isn't going to triple the business in one day. I look at it as adding an incremental 10 percent to the visitor expenditures in Seward, and I think I'm being conservative."

Tougas is a member of the SeaLife Center's board of governors and acknowledged he's a big booster. His company has bought tickets and offers them free to people who take the wildlife boat tours, and he said Seward's other boat tours have followed suit.

Last summer, Kenai Fjords Tours ferried 150,000 people at $70 apiece on tours out to view rookeries, glaciers and whales, Tougas said.

"So to sell 300,000 people on a $12 product ... I don't see it as unachievable."

The series

TODAY: What does the Alaska SeaLife Center mean to Seward's economy?

MONDAY: He talks to the animals. The center's Steller sea lion trainer is a kind of pinniped Dr. Doolittle.

TUESDAY: Seward's beloved four-lane bowling alley, Dreamland Bowl, was sold because it sits on prime land next to the SeaLife Center, where developers will build a hotel.

WEDNESDAY: The success of the SeaLife Center may well hinge on whether it can attract thousands of schoolchildren and whether the experience makes them want to return — again and again.

THURSDAY: The push to open the SeaLife Center on Saturday means long, frantic workdays and a million loose ends.

Center lets visitors see creatures from all angles

JON LITTLE
Daily News reporter

The highlight of the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward may well be a passing fancy — catching the eye of a Steller sea lion or harbor seal as it swims past a large picture window.

"They are such graceful creatures under sea," said Donna Harris, the center's marketing director.

Huge windows on the bottom floor of the center put three 90,000- to 162,000-gallon pools at eye level, where visitors can watch marine mammals swim and seabirds catch fish. The pools are the centerpiece of the center but not the first thing visitors see.

Just inside the front door are hand-carved, life-size models of Dall's porpoises chasing herring and squids, hanging from the ceiling just above the Kenai Peninsula's first escalator.

After taking the escalator, stairs or elevator to the second floor, visitors will see an exhibit illustrating the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

A large hallway then opens, where people can look at the Alaska Waters Gallery, a series of tanks containing such things as a kelp forest and some of the fish that inhabit it.

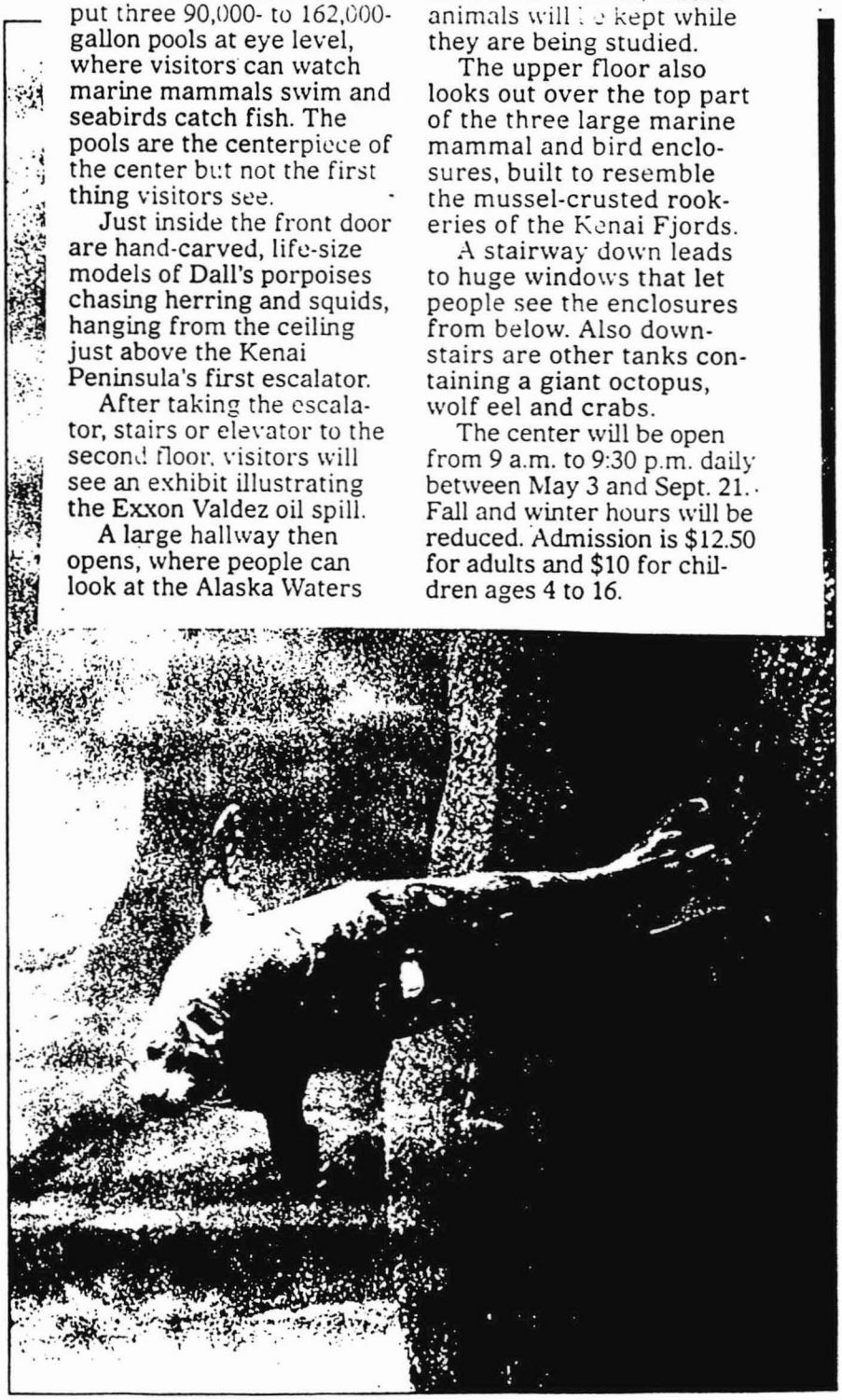
Another tank contains starfish, sea urchins and other intertidal animals. Called the Discovery Zone, it is where schoolchildren will touch the animals and examine them with magnifying glasses.

From there, visitors can look down on the pools of the research deck, where animals will be kept while they are being studied.

The upper floor also looks out over the top part of the three large marine mammal and bird enclosures, built to resemble the mussel-crusted rookeries of the Kenai Fjords.

A stairway down leads to huge windows that let people see the enclosures from below. Also downstairs are other tanks containing a giant octopus, wolf eel and crabs.

The center will be open from 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily between May 3 and Sept. 21. Fall and winter hours will be reduced. Admission is $12.50 for adults and $10 for children ages 4 to 16.



A seal swims in front of a window for underwater viewing of its habitat.

Call him Dr. Doolittle

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 4/27/98

FRAN DURNER, Anchorage Daily News

Trainer Dennis Christen uses hand and voice commands to train Woody, a 4-year-old Steller sea lion, to cooperate with physical exams. Christen accompanied three sea lions from the Vancouver Aquarium to the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward

Sea lion trainer breaks trail

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau
Second of five parts

SEWARD — Dennis Christen opened a wrought-iron gate, shut it behind him, then clicked open a thick steel door at the other end of the hallway. He casually stepped onto the artificial rocks of the Alaska SeaLife Center's Steller sea lion habitat and raised a hand. Hanging from the other hand was a metal pail full of herring on ice.

"Hey, Woody, come in," Christen said in the kind of sing-song baby voice used by parents and pet owners.

SEA CHANGE
SEWARD

Woody splashed out of the water and was there in an instant, scooting his chocolate-brown-colored frame over the concrete. Huge flippers jutted out, slapping the floor as he lifted his whiskered head. Big round eyes focused on Christen. Woody was eager, like a hunting dog poised for action. Christen, dressed in a blue wind-breaker and rubber boots, tossed a couple of herring into Woody's mouth.

"G-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-d boy, that's a good boy," he said.

Woody bellowed, a coarse baritone.

For the next 10 minutes, the 2[illegible]-pound man and 550-pound adole[illegible] sea lion performed a morning ritual, face to face. Christen would gesture with an arm, give a command or sim-

Please see Page A-7, SEA LIONS

Continued from Page A-1

ply display his palm, raising his fingers and lowering his thumb as if working a hand puppet.

The cue prompted the sea lion to open his mouth, allowing Christen to poke around inside to make sure Woody's teeth and gums were healthy.

Woody rolled over and held out one flipper after another for inspection, each time earning "good boy" and another herring. Christen asked Woody to get in a wheeled cage, then get out again — practice for the next time he would be carted to another pool.

By the time it was over, Christen had accomplished several things. He'd given Woody a physical, reinforced the sea lion's training, provided a mental workout for the animal and fed him.

He performs the same routine with the SeaLife Center's two other Stellers, females Sugarloaf and Kiska, who are the same age as Woody and come from the same Canada rookery.

For Christen, the morning exercise was routine. But other people training Steller sea lions at aquariums worldwide view him as a pioneer.

Because Stellers are unpredictable, few humans venture right up to Steller sea lions, most keep an electric fence between them. And the animals aren't expected to learn much.

"They have a pretty harsh reputation," Christen said.

Most of the world's captive Steller sea lions are kept at aquariums in Japan, according to the SeaLife Center. A marine park in Holland has six Stellers, and another in Connecticut has six more. Four pups are being raised at the Vancouver Aquarium in British Columbia.

Most marine parks work with California sea lions, the other member of the sea lion family. Christen calls them the border collies of sea lions — alert animals that don't mind hands-on training.

"Stellers are more like a bull mastiff," he said. They're not as quick to catch on but still capable learners, he said. They're also more inclined to challenge for dominance and fight.

Adult bulls weigh more than 1,500 pounds, and that can pose a problem.

Woody, now 5, should reach that weight within four years, Christen said. A sea lion can reach 30 years of age.

"He can be stubborn," Christen said of Woody. "He's got his days when he doesn't want to participate."

When Woody is slow to respond, he sometimes closes his eyes and lifts his head. Christen usually calls the session off. That way, good behavior wins happy talk and herring while a bad attitude earns nothing. Christen said he's convinced even big aggressive creatures like Woody will cooperate with humans.

Christen has proven his point, other trainers say. He has taught Woody to lie down and, occasionally, allow blood to be drawn from a needle jabbed into his rump. Christen even brushes the sea lions' teeth.

"That's something really incredible," said Gwyneth Shephard, who replaced Christen as head marine mammal trainer in Vancouver after the Alaska SeaLife Center hired him away.

Christen, a biologist, moved north to continue working with Woody, Sugarloaf and Kiska, who he raised from pups in Vancouver.

Now 25, Christen is something of a Steller sea lion Wunderkind. He began working at the Vancouver aquarium as part of a high school science honors program. That led to a job at the aquarium, which studies juvenile sea lions. He was one of the first marine mammal keepers convinced that Stellers could be trained to cooperate, Shephard said.

"He has introduced a lot of ideas," Shephard said. "He led the way."

Researchers who hope to unlock the mystery of why populations of Steller sea lions have dwindled along the Pacific Rim are relying on Christen's husbandry skills to gain access to sea lions such as Woody. They want to take blood, check weight and monitor blubber thickness.

Alaska's Steller population west of Cape St. Elias has been declared endangered, and nobody knows why they sea lion numbers are dropping. In a region south of Kenai Peninsula, the population has fallen from 150,000 in the 1970s to 25,000 now, researchers say.

Above: Woody is moved from the outdoor holding tank at the SeaLife Center to an indoor tank in preparation for his release into the sea lion habitat. Trainer Dennis Christen, left, and Vic Aderholdt, director of animal husbandry at the center, move his cage. Right: Christen uses voice and hand commands to train Woody.

THE SEALIFE SERIES

SUNDAY: What does the Alaska SeaLife Center mean to Seward's economy?

TODAY: He talks to the animals. The center's Steller sea lion trainer is a kind of pinniped Dr. Doolittle.

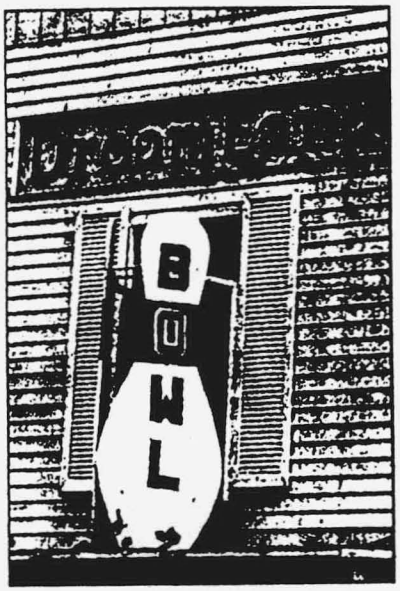
TUESDAY: Seward's beloved four-lane bowling alley, Dreamland Bowl, was sold because it sits on prime land next to the SeaLife Center, where developers will build a hotel.

WEDNESDAY: The success of the SeaLife Center may well hinge on whether it can attract thousands of schoolchildren and whether the experience makes them want to return — again and again.

THURSDAY: The push to open the SeaLife Center on Saturday means long, frantic workdays and a million loose ends.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 4/28/98

Stepping aside for the cause



Dreamland Bowl has been a Seward institution since it opened its four-lane alley in 1948.

Dreamland Bowl closes doors to make room for hotel

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau
Third of five parts

SEWARD — Dreamland Bowl has been a downtown fixture here since it opened in 1948. The popular four-lane alley survived the massive 1964 earthquake and one fire. But tourism will prove its undoing.

The city's only alley was recently sold because it sits on prime land near the Alaska SeaLife Center. Developers will tear it down to build a hotel.

"A bowling alley doesn't have to have this kind of a view," said Darrell Rogers, who is half of the husband-wife team that owns and operates the alley near the city's waterfront.

He had to raise his voice over the din of cheering bowlers, falling pins and John Fogerty's "Centerfield" thumping out of the alley's old jukebox. It was 3 p.m. on a Friday afternoon, and teams from Eagle River were hurling 15-pound balls and drinking dollar beers in Dreamland Bowl's final tournament.

Teams from all over Southcentral have descended on Seward for years to test their skills in what are considered four of the toughest lanes in Alaska.

"It's more or less a tradition for us," said Roger Roth of Eagle River.

Despite the tradition, Rogers and his wife, Kim Kowalski-Rogers, recently agreed to sell the faded green, steel-sided Dreamland Bowl — and the four 30-by-100-foot city lots it occupies — to a Fairbanks hotel owner.

"It was time for a change for the wife and I," Rogers said.

Kowalski-Rogers grew up with the alley. Her father, Marty Kowalski, and his wife, Donna, bought it in 1966 from Donna's parents, Gordon and Gladys Black, the founders. Kim and Darrell took over in 1983. The alley closes for good Sunday, a day after the SeaLife Center opens.

> *"There are people disappointed the bowling alley's going away, but there hasn't been any opposition."*
>
> **— Paul Carter, investor**

By this time next year, the old lanes where off-duty longshoremen once bowled the night away may be gone.

Expected to rise in its place will be Hotel Edgewater, with 75 rooms spread over three stories. It will cater to conventioneers and weekend tourists cruising Kenai Fjords, fishing for silver salmon or viewing exhibits at the nearby Alaska SeaLife Center.

"There are people disappointed the bowling alley's going away, but there hasn't been any opposition," said Paul Carter, who owns Denali River Cabins near Denali National Park. He said he's investing several million dollars to build what will be Seward's largest hotel.

By Sunday, Seward's 200 bowlers won't have any place to go.

One of them, former Seward fire chief Oscar Watsjold, 80, has bowled at Dreamland nearly every day since the lanes opened in 1948 and the pins were set by hand. Like clockwork, he and a couple of buddies arrive every afternoon about 1 p.m. and quietly bowl three games before tournament madness takes over.

Watsjold said he'll miss Dreamland Bowl, but he and the other diehards figure some entrepreneur will pick up the slack.

Carter has offered the 1915-era building and its circa-1968 pin-setting machines and hardwood lanes to a nonprofit group, but nobody's taken him up on it so far, he said.

"There seems to be a quiet resignation," said Seward Mayor Bob Satin.

Satin, who has a background in urban and regional planning, chalks up the end of Dreamland Bowl as one more sign of change as the city shifts from a blue-collar town to a major Alaska tourist destination.

"The concept of family businesses seems to be fading," he said.

He noted that Anchorage-based Spenard Builders Supply recently bought Seward's locally owned hardware store. And, he said, Kenai Fjords Tours, which leads wildlife viewing cruises, started as a mom-and-pop outfit before it was sold a couple of years ago to Cook Inlet Region Inc.

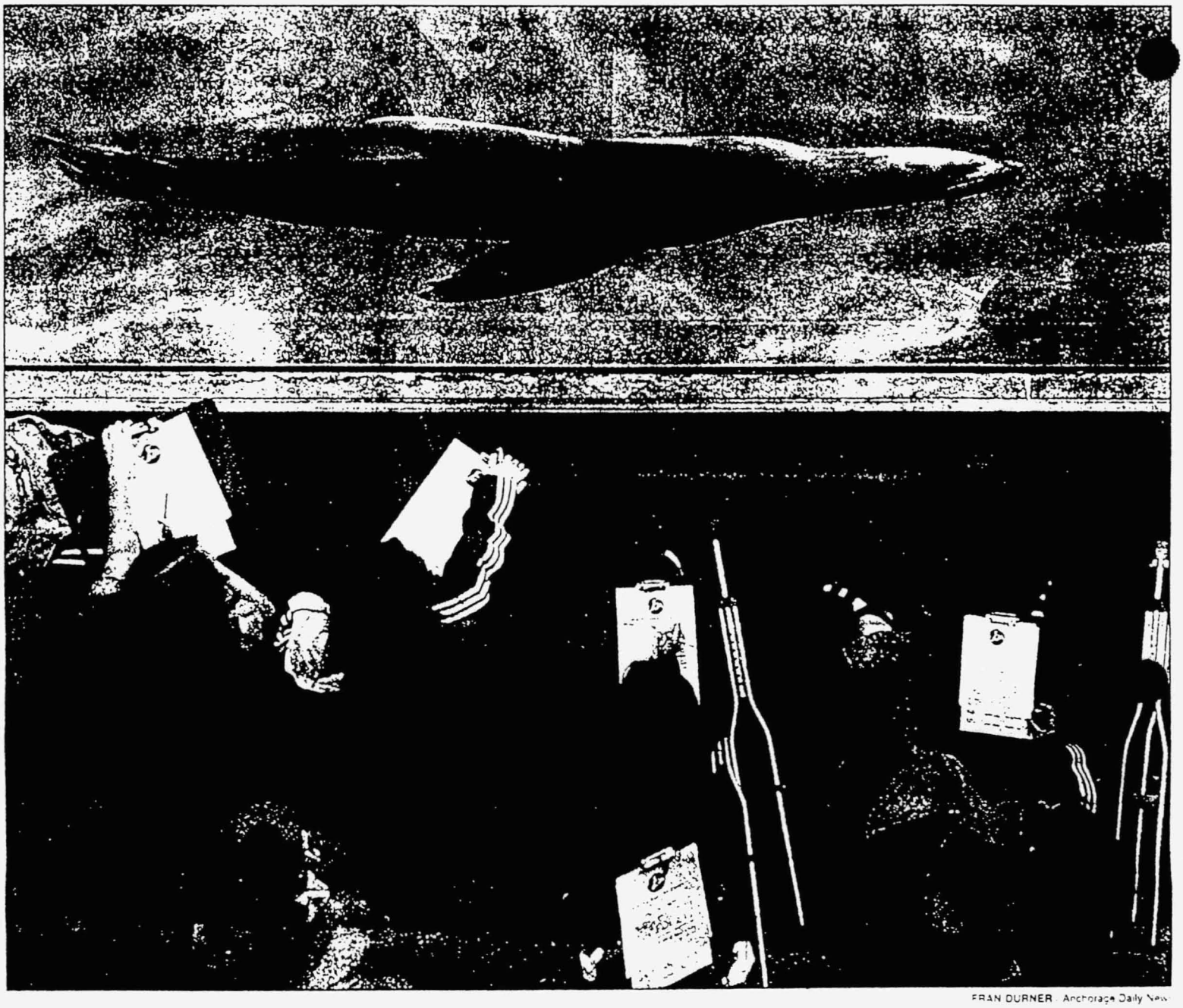
At the same time, Satin said, Seward's sense of community remains strong.

"This is a nice place to live, and the people who are here know that," he said. "They want to preserve the best qual of the town. They don't want to become ries of T-shirt shops. That's not the kin town we are."

50 CENTS
VOL. LIII, NO. 119

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1998

Steller show and tell



FRAN DURNER / Anchorage Daily News

Kenai High School students watch Woody, a 4-year-old Stellar sea lion, swim in his underwater habitat at the Alaska SeaLife Center. The students were trying to calculate Woody's respiratory rate as part of an educational program at the center.

Students get hands-on education

By ROSEMARY SHINOHARA
Daily News reporter
Fourth Of Two parts

SEWARD — Sitting on the shore of Resurrection Bay with huge windows into underwater rookeries, the new Alaska SeaLife Center offers educational classrooms with extraordinary show-and-tell power.

The center, home to Steller sea lions, harbor seals, puffins, urchins and others [illegible] pools [illegible] from [illegible] tanks [illegible] the dark, deep cool [illegible]

SEA CHANGE
SEWARD

triguing titles as "pinniped picnic," "bird brains," and "noc turnes." The latter is a program that allows kids to sleep on the top floor of the center overnight, not far from sea lions and seals.

The students already have started coming through the official opening isn't until this weekend.

Education specialist Joan Brindle was about to explain to [illegible] how sea [illegible]

year-old female sea lions, suddenly amended the syllabus. They started leaping and cavorting in a large outdoor swimming pool. It was feeding time.

Brindle adapted. Time to learn about sea lion behavior. The kids watched as trainers made the 350-pound animals work for herring, commanding them to roll over, get in and out of the pool, and once, soar straight up out of the water in graceful leaps.

The tricks performed by the sea lions are [illegible] they need to know for working

Page A-5 STUDENTS

Anchorage Daily News

STUDENTS:
Hands-on learning at SeaLife center

Continued from Page A 1

with researchers who are trying to determine what is endangering them Brindle explained

The SeaLife Center s mission combines education with research and wildlife rehabilitation For instance researchers are trying to determine why the Steller sea lion population is crashing In a region south of Kenai Peninsula some 150 000 sea lions in the 1970s have dwindled to 25,000 researchers say Scientists suspect nutrition is to blame Some researchers already are at work at the center others will join them soon

Leslie Peart the center s education director said the scientists experiments will become part of the lesson plans Students will watch and hear what scientists are doing, and they ll get a chance to explore careers outside the classroom In one class earlier this month students analyzed how many calories of herring squid or pollock the center s 550 pound male sea lion Woody, needs to sustain himself The answer around 23 000 calories or 100 turkey sandwiches

Between the animals the activities and the exhibits children s senses are all stimulated Everything s going, Peart said 'They re like sponges '

Donna York science coordinator for the Anchorage School District said she thinks the center will offer great opportunities for students when all the exhibits and research are in place Allowing students to watch biologists work will grab their attention and give them insight into scientific research she said

"This is something that doesn t occur anywhere else in the country, York said ' It s fantastic I walked away really excited looking at the potential

Continuing research will give students a reason to keep coming back York said

York toured the facility Saturday with middle and high school science teachers from around Southcentral Alaska

Some 3 500 children from schools and youth groups in Anchorage the Kenai Peninsula Matanuska Valley and Fairbanks already have signed up for the classes which are filled through early June

Groups can still register for self guided tours this spring as well as for classes this summer fall and winter The prices for each class vary from $7 per student for self guided tours up to $35 per student for the sleepover The center also will design programs to fit teachers requests

Recently Liz Burck s freshman biology class from Kenai High School sampled a few of the SeaLife Center s lessons — a drawing session an experiment centered on sea lion metabolism and a study of the skulls of Gulf of Alaska animals and birds

Center artist Vicki Siegel gave quick instructions on drawing sea mammals a sure way to increase observational powers Look for ovals circles triangles, she said, demonstrating with quick crayon strokes on a drawing board An oval and two triangles — voil a seal

Moments later seven boys lay on their stomachs nearly nose to nose with two harbor seals the kind with big dewy eyes Sydney and Pender orphans rescued off the coast of British Columbia swooped through the water on the other side of the Plexiglas seemingly as curious about the children as the children were about them The boys made rough drawings and put them on the window for the seals to see

Nearby center zoologist Tim Rennick led an experiment in which students timed how long Woody the male sea lion could stay underwater Woody s heartbeat slows as he dives in cold water, Rennick said, which allows him to stay under longer

Upstairs, naturalist Jim Pfeiffenberger gathered another group around a table filled with skulls and asked students to check out the teeth

Which are meat eaters and which dine on veggies?

Sea lions and harbor seals have teeth with sharp serrated edges and big muscles to close their jaws ' Why do they need the muscles? Right! Their food is trying to get away Pfeiffenberger said

York said she liked the questioning style teaching that center staff use in their presentations They didn t give answers first They asked questions and asked questions until people started to come to their own conclusions

Fifteen year old Mike Brown of Kenai said he got a sense of how animals adapt to survive

It s fun Brown said adding that if he can t race snowmachines or dirt bikes for a living he might become a wildlife biologist

Burck the Kenai biology teacher agreed that adaptation was the main lesson of the day — how a sea lion s lungs and heart rate allow it to breathe and still travel underwater how a seal s skull shape can help it hold and devour its prey

' We ll get to this stuff later on in class she said They ll remember it — it will be nice to refer back to

Residents settle in at SeaLife Center

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau
Last of five parts

SEWARD – Plastic tarps, sawdust and the metallic ring of circular saws have been a fact of life for the Alaska SeaLife Center's 50 or so employees since they descended upon their new building about a month ago.

They've dodged ladders, detoured around wet paint and ducked packs of touring schoolchildren while trying to figure out how to convert an ambitious concept into hard reality.

"We had to quickly shift from construction to operations," said Pat Albaugh, the center's chief financial officer.

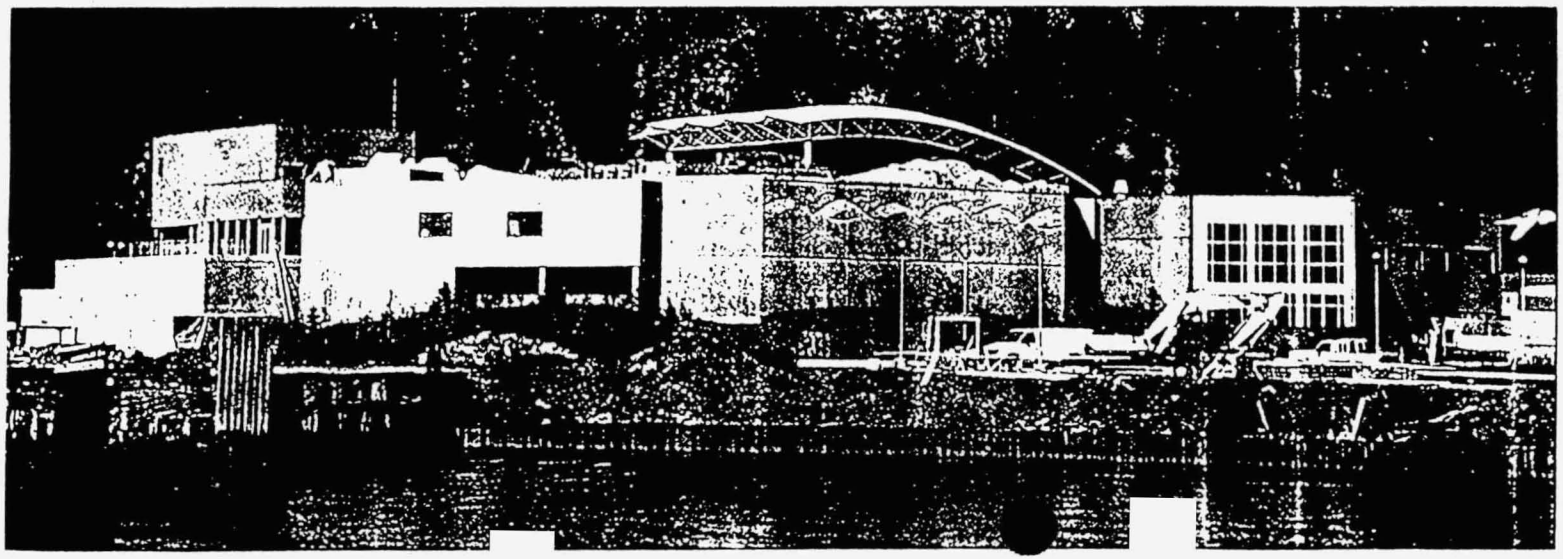
Albaugh, a former Subway of Alaska financial controller, stood in a large carpeted hall next to a towering window overlooking the center's research deck, where a female sea lion sunned herself next to a pool. He compared the last month to a juggling act in which as many as eight events are going on at once.

Construction workers continue working, new employees are setting up offices and learning to use equipment, researchers are moving in and children from schools across South-central Alaska already are visiting — with some camping out at the center overnight.

"All these things didn't exist a month ago," Albaugh said. "At the same time, we've got animals flying

Please see Page A-9, SEALIFE

A male golden king crab explores its new home just after being released into an aquarium at the center.



LEFT: The Alaska SeaLife Center sits on the waterfront in Seward. The center, a $56 million facility, is funded in part by the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement.

Continued from Page A 1

in from all over the country "

Some of those animals, such as three Steller sea lions newly arrived from Vancouver, British Columbia, occasionally had a difficult time with construction crews working nearby, said marine mammal keeper Dennis Christen When frightened, their eyes would bug out, and they would swim deep in the outdoor pool, only coming up to breathe

He would load them into wheeled cages and move them to alternate pools farther from the noise

On the whole, he said, they've handled it well "These guys are getting desensitized to jackhammers and grinders," Christen said, shaking his head

Most of the other adventures of moving in have been traumatic to humans On the first day the center's telephone system was installed, for instance, every new call would ring at a different desk, said Donna Harris, marketing director

Most of that craziness has calmed down, she said

Come Saturday, the scene will be one of balloons, live music and food booths as a daylong festival kicks off the opening of the Western Hemisphere's first cold-water marine research facility

Most of the SeaLife Center's premier exhibits featuring marine mammals and sea birds will be up and running — some just barely — in time for the party, said Kim Sundberg, the center's executive director

As might be expected in a new building housing tens of thousands of gallons of water, the biggest single technical glitch has been plumbing, Sundberg said

Besides the center's three core habitat pools, there are smaller tanks containing most of the life found in Resurrection Bay, such as flatfish, jellyfish, octopus, crab and starfish

A spaghetti-like maze of pipes, computer-controlled pumps and filters keeps the water circulating

"Anyone who's done a plumbing job knows the task is 40 percent construction and 60 percent fixing leaks Going around and fixing the leaks is a big effort right now"

— Kim Sundberg, executive director for the center

"Anyone who's done a plumbing job knows the task is 40 percent construction and 60 percent fixing leaks," Sundberg said The SeaLife Center is no different "Going around and fixing the leaks is a big effort right now," he said

Perhaps the most troublesome leak has been in one of the three premier tanks, the 105,000-gallon sea bird habitat When it works, murres and pigeon guillemots will nest in its rocks and dive in its deep pool

Birds destined for the habitat have been kept in a temporary aviary near the center while construction crews pinpoint pesky leaks Parts of its massive concrete tub may not have sealed correctly, Sundberg said

Staffers hoped the birds will enter that habitat today

"It's a late go, but it's a go," Harris said "We're still considering it a work in progress "

Construction crews were supposed to be mainly finished on the SeaLife Center by Feb 5 But the detail work and complexity proved overwhelming By the end of March, the center staff began moving in while construction still was going on

With the Saturday opening date approaching, they just worked around the clutter, Sundberg said

The SeaLife Center has been a juggling act from the beginning, said its architect, Tom Livingston, of Livingston Slone Architects of Anchorage

Architects know how to design research labs, and they can plan visitor centers But blending the two in one facility proved to be a challenge, Livingston said

The result is a space in which researchers' offices open into public hallways Visitors will be able to look directly into a laboratory Some have compared it to a live version of Discovery Channel

The center is "almost a 50-50 split" between a research and visitor facility, Livingston said "And that, to the best of our knowledge, is totally unique on the planet "

That odd concept has helped lure some creative and experienced people who enjoy the challenge he said Albaugh, the financial controller, said some employees have taken pay cuts to work at the SeaLife Center

This is a dream" he said Where else can someone take a coffee break by watching seals and sea lions? 'It's not your regular nine-to-five grind This is fun "

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
Thursday April 23 1998 75 cents

SeaLife Center asks locals to help celebrate

By Colleen Kelly
LOG Staff

It s celebration time the next two weekends at the Alaska SeaLife Center and Kim Sundberg the facil ity s executive director is inviting the local populace to get a sneak pre view this Saturday

Seward Celebration activities begin with the 11 30 a m perfor mance by the Seward High School ensemble on the front steps of the SeaLife Center, followed by a dedi cation program Other activities include free tours of the facility, a street fair free food and a street dance

The following weekend features a public grand opening that begins with May 1 events for the board of governors May 2 activities for an invited guest list of 5 000 and a May 3 opening to the general public

Mike Olson of Seward chairs the program and entertainment committee for all the grand opening activities

See SeaLife, Page 23

SeaLife...

From Page 1

He said the one-hour dedication ceremony for this Saturday's Seward Celebration, emceed by television weatherman Cary Carrigan, begins at noon in the SeaLife Center parking lot The Seward Chamber of Commerce will give the welcome The Seward American Legion color guard will present colors and the high school ensemble will perform the national anthem

The program, tentatively includes remarks by former Gov Walter Hickel, according to Olson Seward Mayor Bob Saupe will discuss what impacts the community has experienced with the construction of the $56 million research facility on the downtown waterfront.

There will be introductions of SeaLife Center staff, members of the SeaLife Center board of directors and Alaska state legislators in attendance

After the official dedication of the facility, there will be an unveiling of the Circle of Honor and a blessing of the building and animals by the Rev Terry Doane from the Seward Assembly fo God

Beginning at 11 a m , people can get tickets for the free SeaLife Center tours at the signup booth near the main entrance The one-hour tours don't start until 1 p m and then every 15 minutes a new tour group will set out. Tours end at 5 30 p m

"While waiting for your tour, you can watch performances on Stage 3 (at the center's front entry)," Olson said

In addition to the street fair activities, there will be a murder mystery dinner theater on Saturday "Murder at the SeaLife Center" begins at 7 p m in the SeaLife Center Members of the local acting troupe, Port City Players, will perform the two-hour play under the direction of Jim Hitchcock

The production was written specifically by Elisa Hitchcock Conley and Kimberley Gray for the facility's grand opening For tickets, contact Resurrect Art Coffee House

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
APRIL 23, 1998

Editorial

Don't rattle the cages

Some folks ought to be ashamed of themselves If you've got nothing better to do than prowl around the Alaska SeaLife Center in order to sneak up on caged animals, then you really should have your head examined

Mayor Bob Sain issued a plea during last week's Seward City Council meeting asking the public to stop trespassing onto SeaLife Center property and bothering the animals Citing an incident where someone had rattled the marine mammals' cages, the mayor sought the public's cooperation in avoiding such behavior in the future

His words went unheeded by some and there was a repeat scenario last weekend City police collared a couple of young males and warned them against climbing over the fence and shaking the Steller sea lions' cage The officer's message was don't do it again because such behavior frightens the animals

Is this what SeaLife Center officials had in mind when they chose public education as part of their three-pronged approach? Are people really so incognizant they need to be told not to harass the animals living at the SeaLife Center?

Could it be that in today's ultra-modern, sophisticated world we have to teach something as basic as "Don't bully the animals"

It brings to mind the incident a couple of years ago when a teen-ager sneaked into Binky's cage at the Alaska Zoo in Anchorage The guy was lucky to emerge from that encounter alive He suffered some bodily injury, all right, but what do you expect when you invade the living space of a 1,600-pound animal not exactly known for his ability to cuddle

Who knows? Maybe a future headline in the Phoenix LOG will read "Woody the sea lion packs 1-2 punch against late-night intruders"

You remember the hats depicting Binky chewing on a tennis shoe We could sell T-shirts emblazoned with the image of Woody Instead of twirling a striped ball on the tip of his nose, Woody could use some stupid human as his toy

More cruise ships to land in Seward than last year

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Cruise ship landings for Seward are up this year, with 110 expected between May and September

There were 102 calls last year, with 228 000 passengers crossing the dock according to Jack Goodwill of Northern Stevedoring (North Star)

The slight increase in landings should bring more people across the dock and that should be a plus with the SeaLife Center and an added boost to the local economy if those passengers decide to have a look around town before leaving, he said

Because Seward is a terminal point for cruise ships, businesses were hard pressed to attract ship passengers People who came to town early to meet a ship they would depart on did not have much time to explore Seward

And of those who had just finished a cruise most were hustled onto tour buses and whisked out of town

But this year, with the opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center, many merchants are hoping a good portion of those cruise-ship passengers spend some time in Seward

But this year, with the opening of the Alaska SeaLife Center, many merchants are hoping a good portion of those cruise-ship passengers spend some time in Seward

Bob Arts, the port manager of Cruise Line Agencies in Seward, said the SeaLife Center offers Seward the outstanding possibility of retaining passengers

It'll be a huge benefit if it can keep people here a day or so," Arts said

Arts said an average of $129 per passenger is left in Southeast Alaska communities with ports of call And although Seward is not a port of call to most vessels, ticket sales to ships' passengers indicate that between 5 percent and 20 percent of the passengers crossing the dock here will stay a little longer

Of the 110 landings this year, 92 will be turn-around landings But even though most of those ships leave town within 12 hours, they still provide work for more than two dozen residents Many are International Longshore Warehousemen Union Local 60 jobs

Depending on the size of the ship that comes in and the type of baggage compartment it has, up to 22 workers are called out to handle the four phases of an arrival and departure tie up, take the baggage off, load baggage or let go of the ship

When a ship comes in, Goodwill calls the union hall for Northern Stevedoring and lets the union know how many workers it needs

They call union workers based on their position on one of four lists, which corresponds to one of the arrival or departure phases

Union bookmen get the first calls, followed by the casuals if they are needed

"It depends on where you are on the list what you get to do bookman Richard Hibbetts said

Hibbetts started out as an ILWU casual and after 22 years, became a bookman He was voted in four years ago

He said, ' one to six is a good number because there's six on a tie up ' Tie ups are the best work to draw because they offer more hours and none of the drudgery that comes with baggage handling And if you are between one and four you also get to work the let go

But because there are 15 bookmen You're not always at the top of the list he said

VALDEZ VANGUARD
APRIL 22, 1998

How Would You Like To Spend $140 Million?

CITY HALL--The agency charged with dispersing almost $1 billion in Exxon Valdez oil spill restoration funds wants to know how you feel about setting aside a $140 million reserve fund

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trsutee Council will meet in the Valdez city council chambers Thurday night of this week (April 23) at 7 p m to take local comment

While none of the trustees will be present, several staff members, including executive director Molly McCammon, are scheduled to attend

While the $140 million Restoration Reserve fund is the only agenda item, the staff will also here comments on other issues relating to the dispensing of the $1 billion trust fund

Restoration meeting rescheduled

The public meeting on the Restoration Reserve has been rescheduled for 7 p m tomorrow (Thursday) in Valdez City Council chambers The original April 14 meeting was canceled due to bad weather

The Restoration Reserve a $140 million savings account by the year 2002, will be spent by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to fund long term restoration activities in the spill area Public input on how that money should be spent will be considered at the meeting

The reason for the reserve fund, according to Trustee Council Executive Director Molly McCammon, is that the future consequences of the oil spill are still unknown, even nine years after it happened

A lot of the species injured by the spill have long lives salmon, harbor seals, sea otters herring and many seabirds We don t know in some cases the long term prognosis,' McCammon said "We don't know exactly what all the injury is and what the possibilities for recovery are "

For more information, contact the Restoration Office at 907 278-8012 or 1-800-478 7745

VALDEZ VANGUARD 4/22/98

State grants go to 10 new technology projects

The Associated Press

ANCHORAGE — Testing oysters to see which grow best in cold Alaska waters and efforts to bring glass recycling to Anchorage are among projects awarded new technology grants

Ten proposals won funding last week from the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation

The Seward based oyster project received $18 000 while Anchorage entrepreneur John Dean won $266 000 — the largest grant — to design and assemble a recycled-glass plant

A grant totaling $200 000 went to an Anchorage company planning to manufacture a dual-tracked all-terrain vehicle ∏

The North Slope Borough received $150,000 — the foundation s third-largest largest award — to test vacuum valves that could reduce sewer construction costs

The Anchorage-based science and technology foundation is a state agency set up by the Legislature in 1988

The foundation also set aside $150 000 to continue wiring Alaska schools to access the Internet

PENINSULA CLARION
4/23/98

Oil, timber, shellfish projects win ASTF grants

Recent Alaska Science and Technology Foundation grant awards include

- $20,000, matched with $57,171, to K2 Technology in Anchorage to develop software to manage nondestructive test inspection data on petroleum industry pressure vessels, tanks and pipelines
- $15,225, matched with $28,200, to the Mat-Su Resource Conservation and Development Council to develop a low-cost mobile kiln to help local sawmills produce better lumber
- $18,185 to David Sczawinski, who must provide a $7,950 match, to conduct tests on oysters to find out which strains grow best in cold Alaska waters
- Up to $227,073 to Iceberg Seafoods, with a $201,200 match, to test a new seawater holding tank to improve survival of shellfish shipped by air
- $266,000, matched with $235,600, to Anchorage entrepreneur John Dean to design and build an Anchorage plant to process recycled glass

KODIAK MIRROR 4/22/98

ASTF Funds fisheries projects

Last week the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation funded several seafood related projects around the state

They granted $18,000 to a fellow who s researching which strains of oysters grow best in Alaska waters $227 000 went to Iceberg Seafoods to test a new type of seawater holding tank that would increase the survival rate of live shellfish that are air freighted out of state

The University of Alaska s Institute of Marine Science got $20 000 to investigate a new method of detecting paralytic shellfish poisoning in Alaska waters

Last residents of the Bristol Bay village of Levelock got $11 500 to research how to produce cold smoked Native-style salmon strips that don t need to be refrigerated

Herring nets come up nearly empty

by Joel Gay
Managing Editor

The herring fishery in Kamishak Bay failed to materialize last week, yielding less than one-fourth the expected harvest and leaving fishermen and biologists wondering about the future

Unlike salmon, herring return year after year to spawn, and the goal of fishermen is to catch the roe-bearing females at the last possible moment before they release their eggs along the shore Timing is critical, because to wait too long is tantamount to not fishing at all

The fleet arrived on schedule, said Wes Bucher, who manages the Cook Inlet fishery for the Department of Fish and Game Unfortunately, the fish didn't "It just never happened"

Preliminary data suggests fishermen caught about 300 tons This year's quota was 1,930 tons

Because herring fisheries always occur in the spring, weather becomes a major issue in the management, and Kamishak Bay, located across Cook Inlet from Homer, has a reputation for dealing up some of the worst This year was no exception, as a steady stream of storms blew through the area, keeping the fleet tied up in Homer until about two weeks ago As soon as the weather allowed, the fleet steamed across

In some years, the fish seem to be waiting for the weather too, Bucher said, and will pop up and spawn with little notice That appeared possible last week. After five straight days of 30- to 50-knot winds, the weather calmed down, the sun came out and the water warmed up

"It was unbelievable Bucher said Fishermen were water skiing around Nordyke Island and having picnics on the beach

The clear skies also allowed him a perfect opportunity to view the fishing grounds from the air As he had hoped, he saw no signs that the fish had spawned 'Nothing would lead you to believe we missed the fish"

Based on that survey and the results of test fishing, he allowed the fleet 30 minutes to fish on Tuesday of last week To everyone's surprise, fishermen netted only 166 tons Though the herring were the large size seiners had wanted, average roe content was below the industry standard of 10 percent

"At that point everything looked normal," he said

He gave the fleet two hours the next day hoping to mop up the rest of the quota In the world of herring fishing, two hours can be an eternity A few years ago in Togiak, the fleet caught more than 20,000 tons in 20 minutes

But when Bucher flew another aerial survey during that opening, "That's when I started scratching my head" He should have seen most of the 50 seine boats with their nets around schools of fish Instead, most were driving around helter-skelter searching for fish

"I was worried then,' Bucher said "When you turn 50 of the best seine fishermen in the state loose for two hours and they only come up with less than 150 tons,' you know something is wrong'

Preliminary catches totaled even less than the day before, just 135 tons Many skippers could see the writing on the wall, Bucher said, and left for Togiak Others stuck around hoping that a big school of fish would swim in, but they never did Bucher closed the fishery for the rest of 1998 last weekend

In one sense, Bucher said he s not surprised by the no-show of larger, older fish Most of the early run should have been 10-year-old fish, and it was questionable last year whether they would survive another winter

What is a concern however, is the lack of 5-year-old fish Biologists had expected a strong return based on last year's results When they didn t appear as expected either it calls into question the department's entire estimate

The department will continue to monitor the Kamishak Bay fishing grounds by air and with a chartered fishing boat throughout May in hopes of figuring out what happened and what the true strength of that herring stock is, Bucher said

HOMER NEWS
4/30/98

Herring fishery a bust

By DOUG LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

— Commercial fishers hoped to harvest 1,780 tons of herring from Kamishak Bay this spring, but they took just 300 to 400 tons before state biologists closed the fishery Saturday for lack of returning fish

Only about 50 of the 75 permits for Kamishak herring were represented on the grounds, and only about a third of the number squadron of spotter planes appeared, said Wes Bucher, area management biologist for the Department of Fish and Game in Homer

Bucher blamed the bust on a failure of 10-year-old herring — expected to comprise the majority of this year's catch — to return to the spawning grounds Even before the season, he said preseason harvest estimates were questionable, because by the time herring are 10 years old, their survival from year to year is difficult to predict

With the 10-year-olds apparently dying off, prospects for next year's harvest look dismal, he said That's because the present 7-, 8- and 9-year-old age groups are very weak and won't likely support the fishery Biologists believe the present 4- and 5-year-old classes are strong But even if they are, Bucher said, they won't likely support fishing next year

Herring don't spawn until about age 6, he said, so biologists managing fishing to avoid taking herring age 5 and under That's possible because the older fish generally arrive first

This year's 5s will mature next year, but it's questionable whether they'll arrive enough earlier than the immature herring for commercial fishers to catch them without taking immatures, too, he said It's also questionable whether they'll arrive before fishers want to move to the far more lucrative fishery in Togiak So, this year's 5-year-olds won't likely contribute much to the fishery for a couple of years

Meanwhile, Bucher was still wondering Monday whether the 4- and 5-year-old groups are as strong as he previously thought The 5s were well-represented in this year's catch, but no herring of any age have yet arrived in significant numbers

The water was clear during aerial surveys Saturday and Sunday, but Bucher said he still hasn't seen even enough herring to make a reasonable estimate of the total biomass in Kamishak Bay It's something less than 200 tons, he said

There's still time for the younger fish to show Biologists wouldn't ordinarily expect them in force until May They'll continue to watch with aerial surveys, Bucher said They've hired a seine boat to search with sonar for seven to 10 days in May and sample herring to determine ages If those efforts don't locate the younger fish, Bucher said, he'll question the health of the stock.

Before the season, biologists had expected roughly 19,800 tons of herring on the Kamishak grounds Of those, they expected 10-year-olds to comprise about 17 percent They expected 7s, 8s and 9s would each comprise 3 or 4 percent, 5s about 35 5 percent, and 4s roughly 14 4 percent.

In general, the fishery occurs earlier during warmer years In 1993, when the April 18 water temperature was 4 5 degrees Centigrade, the Kamishak fishery was over by April 21 In 1994, when the April 18 temperature was 0 degrees, fishing didn't end until April 29

This year, the water has been warm 4 5 degrees Centigrade at Iniskin Bay April 19, and 6 degrees at Nordyke Island April 25 Bucher said some fishers questioned whether the older fish spawned and left the area without being spotted

But he doesn't believe that happened The state's boat arrived in Kamishak by April 15 this year, and commercial boats were there before that. Conditions were good for an aerial survey April 15, he said, but there were no signs of spawning herring

Then stormy weather kept boats and survey planes off the grounds until April 20, when an aerial survey located small schools of herring Fishers landed between 300 and 400 tons during openings April 20 and 21

Since then, neither aerial surveys nor the fleet has located significant numbers of herring

Generally, after herring spawn, seabirds and sea lions feast in the area for days, he said. If large numbers of herring had spawned, they'd have been found, he said

PENINSULA CLARION
4/28/98

Dear Shorebird Festival Friend,

It all started when...

Six years ago a group of Homer residents representing environmental, economic and cultural organizations and interests got together to dream up an event. They envisioned a festival that would both educate the public about shorebirds and wetlands and benefit the local economy by extending the visitor season into early May. The Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival was born. Since then the festival has played a significant role in building awareness for and understanding of the importance of wetlands and their preservation.

Education paid off!

Invaluable steps have been taken to protect critical habitat, even though Homer has continued to grow and develop. Mud Bay and other sites around Kachemak Bay were internationally recognized by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. City owned land in the Beluga Lake vicinity was permanently protected as wildlife habitat, as were a number of properties on the Spit, at Beluga Slough and Overlook Park (below Baycrest Hill). This land was purchased with Exxon Trustee Council funds under the administration of the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust and the Trust for Public Lands. The City of Homer and the Alaska State Legislature were very actively involved in these conservation efforts.

Let's celebrate spring!

Large flocks of shorebirds have always come to Homer and have been greeted as messengers of spring by those who were familiar with their fascinating migration. Now the whole community and large numbers of visitors from around the State and the Country gather every year to witness the return of the shorebirds and to take part in the festivities. Some people that come to party at the festival get hooked on the miracle of shorebird migration and become birders for the rest of their lives. Please come and join us for the 6th annual Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival.

Sincerely,

Dorle Scholz, Festival Coordinator

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 1998

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT OF THE ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Field Events

Dress warm, bring mud boots & binoculars!

1 Guided Shorebird Viewing Station Mud Bay. Thu 1 pm, Fri 1:30 pm, Sat 2 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Meet at the base of the Spit, where guides will help you locate and identify shorebirds as they feed in the mud flats around high tide. Look for guides wearing orange vests.

2 Family Shorebird Viewing Station Mud Bay, Sat 2 pm. Guided kid-friendly shorebird viewing with kid sized spotting scopes and other activities. Park at airport long term parking lot on Kachemak Drive and follow signs to the beach.

3 Guided Bird Walk Beluga Lake Meet at the Homer News parking lot on Landing Street, Thu, 5pm, to search for migratory waterfowl and other birds. Eurasian Wigeons and Tufted Ducks possible. Look for guides wearing orange vests. Be prepared to carpool to other locations.

4 Overnight Birding Hike to Fox River Meet at Seaside Farms, 4.5 miles East End Rood. Thu. Fri. Sat. 4 pm. $ 50pp. Stay at the historic Swift Creek Log Cabin located on the beach and watch thousands of shorebirds. Dinner, breakfast, sauna and campfire included. Steep 1/2 hour hike in, additional hiking opportunities. Bring a sleeping bag. Limited to 10, Sponsored by Seaside Farm

5 Guided Bird Walk Beluga Slough Bishop's Beach, Fri 10am. An easy walk to look for a variety of birds including shorebirds, waterfowl and Sandhill Cranes. Geared towards beginners and families.

6 Birding by Ear Alaska Maritime Wildlife Refuge, Sat & Sun 8am. Local ornithologist Rich Kleinleder will help you learn to identify the most common local songbirds by their songs and calls. A short classroom session followed by walking field trip. Limit 25, registration required.

7 Guided Bird Walk Homer Spit Mariner Park, Sat 9 am. Guides from the Anchorage Audubon Society will help you look for marine birds and shorebirds. Be prepared to carpool to other locations if time allows. Sponsored by Anchorage Audubon Society

8 Outdoor Children's Activities Mariner Park, Sat 9 am. $5pp Fun environmental awareness games and art activities for children ages 6-12. Participation certificates will be awarded. Sponsored by Ctr. for Alaskan Coastal Studies

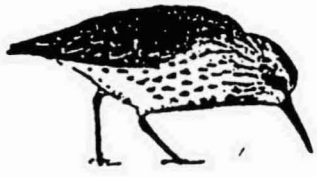
9 Beluga Slough Marsh Walk Bishop's Beach, Sat 10am. Join naturalists Carmen and Conrad Field in an exploration of one of southcentral Alaska's most accessible salt marshes, a critical habitat for migrating birds. Shorebirds and waterfowl make this a great outing for bird watchers.

10 Shorebird Habitat Preservation Program Mariner Park, Sat 4 pm. Join Homer Mayor Jack Cushing, Exxon Trustee Council Representatives, the Trust for Public Lands and Kachemak Heritage Land Trust for a presentation on the recent land conservation efforts and techniques to protect the Homer Spit and Beluga Slough. Refreshments will be served.

Kachemak Bay focus of fete

Stewardship and protecting Kachemak Bay and the life it sustains are the goals of the Kachemak Bay Conference, which gets under way Saturday at Land's End Resort.

User groups from wide and diverse backgrounds will come together to begin a dialogue on their vision of what the future holds for Kachemak Bay. The conference runs from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.



The first three programs, with presentations and interactive discussion, will involve Bay users. Representatives from Old Believer and Native communities plan to take part, along with students, scientists and humanists.

A final section will bring all groups together for an exchange of ideas used both in the visioning process and to plan for future programs.

Featured presenters will discuss topics relevant to the biology of the Bay, including water monitoring efforts, the effects of disturbances in intertidal zones and ecological trends. Other experts will discuss fish forage populations, a report on the shellfish nursery project in Halibut Cove, and reports on sea bird populations.

Featured speakers included representatives from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Cook Inlet Keeper, the University of Alaska Institute of Arctic Biology, U.S. Coast Guard, area science teachers and biologists, as well as Chief Eleanor McMullen of Port Graham.

She will give the opening remarks for the citizen and user workshop. She will talk about people of different cultures, interests, and professions, along with current issues and problems.

The conference concludes with a Celebration of the Bay potluck dinner and entertainment from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Homer Elks Club.

Conference to focus on Kachemak Bay

By SHANA LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion 4-22-98

Understanding Kachemak Bay's resources and working together to plan its sustainable use are the themes of the 1998 Kachemak Bay Conference — Shaping the Future with an Eye on the Past The free event runs all day Saturday in Homer at Land's End Resort

Resource uses, public concerns, education, scientific research and the historical context of current Kachemak Bay resource issues will be addressed in a manner designed to reach the widest possible audience

The event has four main parts

In the morning, beginning at 8 30, scientists and organizations will describe studies and projects dealing with the Kachemak Bay ecosystem Participants include the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Arctic Biology and the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council from Kenai Topics include shellfish mariculture, seabirds, tidal organisms and ways of detecting oil pollution damage

Education projects from around the region, emphasizing marine ecosystems, will be highlighted in a series of presentations from 12 45 to 2 30 p m Topics include high school DNA studies, the Globe project for ecology education and the Youth Area Watch, a program based in Southcentral Alaska Native villages that brings together high school classes, traditional subsistence knowledge and biological research

Presenters include Homer-area teachers, the head of the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission and Alden Ford from Nikiski, the 1997 winner of the Caring for the Kenai contest

At 3 p m the public is invited to take part in a workshop and brainstorming session about past and future uses of the bay Elenore McMullen, chief of the village of Port Graham, will be the featured speaker

That evening, everyone is invited to a casual potluck dinner "Celebration of the Bay" at the Homer Elks Club, beginning at 6 30 Entertainment will be provided

During the day, displays will be on hand about the CIRCAC computer model for tracking oil spills, the Cook Inlet Keeper's geographic information system (GIS) atlas (now being developed), the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies education programs and a new project from the Pratt Museum that transmits live video from the Gull Island seabird rookery People will have opportunities to learn more about the museum's Kachemak Bay Discovery education programs and about the proposal to designate Kachemak Bay as an official National Estuarine Research Reserve

Sponsors of the Kachemak Bay Conference are the Pratt Museum, the Cook Inlet Keeper and the University of Alaska's Marine Advisory Program and Alaska Sea Grant Program This is the second Kachemak Bay Conference, the first was in 1995

The goals include acquainting a broad and diverse audience with the status of Kachemak Bay, stimulating dialog and community involvement, expanding education and developing concrete recommendations

Admission is free, but seating is limited, so people wanting to attend are asked to sign up in advance To register or for more information, call Pam Chavious at 235-4196

Military waste cleanup resumes

By RUSS GRIMM
Mirror Writer

Kodiak Mirror 4/20/98

The Army Corps of Engineers soon will be directing the second year of military waste cleanup on Kodiak Island

This year at the Buskin Beach site Jacobs Engineering will be removing 40 more fuel storage tanks and another 1 000 cubic yards of fuel contaminated soil

Back in 1996, under the Federal Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP), preliminary studies revealed contamination in several locations around Kodiak

In 1997 the Corps of Engineers contracted Jacobs Engineering to remove the accumulations of toxic waste

Jacobs Engineering will begin this year's remediation in two or three weeks,' said Pat Richardson of the Army Corps of Engineers public relations department The project which will cost $2 million to $3 million, has already removed tons of contaminated soil and equipment

Last year, Jacobs removed 1 000 cubic yards of PCB contaminated soil from Long Island and sent it to a hazardous waste collection area in the Lower 48 she said

According to Richardson most of the other activity in 1997 was at the Buskin River site Workers dug up 79 fuel storage tanks and shipped them off the island

About 3 000 cubic yards of fuel contaminated soil were excavated, stockpiled and treated by burning off the fuel

That much soil would fill a space the size of a football field 30 feet high

Jacobs also removed 14 PCB-contaminated transformers 20 lead batteries and cleaned out two military grease pits using the burning treatment

On Long Island, the engineering group will continue remediation of PCB and fuel-contaminated soil Richardson expects another year of work on the several Long Island sites

Cape Chiniak will see continued removal of PCB and fuel contaminated soils

Finally, the Corps will be doing preliminary assessments on five other sites Lazy Bay, Chirikof Island, Afognak Island, and Burma Road

Expected completion date for Long island is one year, Buskin will be two to three more years, Cape Chiniak could finish this year

The Coast Guard Base cleanup will take four to five years to complete, considering the number of fuel contaminated areas

Richardson cautioned that completion dates assume continued funding from the Federal Government

A public meeting with Jacobs Engineering and the Army Corps of Engineers will be held tonight at 7 p m in the Buskin River Inn This will be an information session for small companies who may be interested in working on the project

Art show gives locals chance to own a piece of the Copper River Delta

CORDOVA TIMES
APRIL 23, 1998

By Jennifer L Strange
The Cordova Times

Cordova residents and visitors can peruse and even purchase works of original art featuring the Copper River Delta and Prince William Sound while an Artists for Nature Foundation art show is on display at the Forest Service building until May 10 The unsold pieces will then move to Orca Book and Sound

The 30 pieces of art were created by a group of artists from nine countries who came to Cordova in 1995 and 1996 to interpret the environment through a variety of media They are all members of the foundation, whose mission is to highlight the natural diversity of the world's richest habitats that are threatened by development and to draw attention to the need for conservation of globally significant wetlands

Although larger collections of the body of work are now being exhibited at museums in Anchorage and Juneau Cordova has its own piece of the pie, said coordinator Rikki Ott

"We wanted the works to be accessible to Cordova and they will be really easy to look at over at the Forest Service and at the bookstore," Ott said

Susan Ogle, local participating artist and co-owner of Orca Book and Sound, is looking forward to hanging the works in her establishment She also hopes that locals recognize what an opportunity this is to buy a piece of the delta

'You re talking some of the best artists in Europe and by and large they're very reasonably priced,' Ogle said "And the cool thing about this show is that the buyers get their artwork right away artwork in the traveling shows won't be available for a couple of years '

Orca Book and Sound will also be featuring watercolors by local artist Erin Cooper and acrylic aerials by New Zealand artist David Barker during Shorebird Festival, Ogle said

Having already worked in Biebrza Valley in Poland, the Extramadura steppe of Spain, the North Sea island of Schiermonnikoog and the Loire estuary in France, the group of artists learned about the Copper River Delta through local activist Rikki Ott and the area fit the foundation s requirements

The delta's abundant ecosystem provided plenty of fodder for the artists who used watercolors, pens, pencils, woodcuts, engravings and other media to capture its ambiance The delta hosts 235 species of birds and more than 20 million migrating shorebirds, con tains 70 miles of continuous wetlands, is the nesting habitat for the only knows population of breeding dusky Canada geese and the largest concentration of trumpeter swans in the world, and is home to 40 species of mammals and one of the most active red salmon runs on the continent

In the fall the Juneau exhibit will go to the Santa Cruz Art Museum and then onto the Frye Art Museum and the Pratt Museum in Seattle next year

The Anchorage portion will be added in Seattle, after having visited the Fairbanks museum

The exhibit s stay at the Pratt Museum will be part of an Exxon Valdez Oil Spill tenth anniversary show that is to focus on how communities are recovering and rebuilding after the tragedy," Ott said

"I suggested they do something positive, something that shows that there's life after the oil spill," Ott said

Don't eat the clams

Even sea otters know better

By SUE JEFFREY
Mirror Writer

State officials say clam diggers and mussel gatherers should leave the shellfish harvesting to the sea otters

The Dept of Environmental Conservation is concerned that many people will want to head for the beaches and dig clams and harvest mussels with the series of minus tides beginning this weekend But until humans develop the ability sea otters have to detect the presence of paralytic shellfish poisoning, or PSP, in shellfish, state officials are warning us not to eat clams and mussels off Alaska's beaches

Unless they are from DEC-certified beaches, that is But that leaves Kodiak residents out of luck because all of the state-certified beaches are in the Cook Inlet and Kachemak Bay areas

There is good reason for Kodiak residents especially to take DEC's advice Some mussels taken from Kodiak beaches in 1994 contained the highest PSP toxins ever recorded, according to the Alaska Dept of Fish & Game

An Old Harbor woman in the spring of that year died six hours after eating mussels Four days earlier a 28-year old man lost consciousness and was unable to breathe on his own after eating 50 raw mussels from Kalsin Bay

Death can result from respiratory paralysis within 12 hours of eating PSP contaminated clams, says Mike Ostasz DEC s shellfish program manager

Not all PSP cases are fatal, of course But initial symptoms such as tingling or numbness in the lips, tongue, fingertips and toes should alert the person to get treatment immediately Advanced symptoms, including loss of muscle coordination dizziness, weakness, drowsiness and incoherence experienced within an hour after eating a hot ' clam or mussel should send up a red flag

' While there is no antidote for the PSP toxin, it is important that vomiting be induced at the first sign of symptoms," Ostasz says

Unfortunately, the old rule of thumb which says a person should eat one mussel or clam and wait to see if symptoms occur is not good to follow because one clam or mussel could be toxic enough to kill a person, scientists say

And butter clams can remain toxic up to two years after contracting PSP so the absence of a red tide is no guarantee the beaches are safe either

Sea otters residing in the Kodiak Archipelago however appear to know the difference between hot and non-toxic clams Scientists observed during a study in 1991 they will generally avoid the toxic ones or the toxic parts of the butter clam their main diet

That year a team of marine biologists captured five sea otters released them into two floating mesh and wood framed pens and fed them non toxic and then hot clams Then from the top of a 300 foot cliff ledge overlooking the pens biologists observed all five otters feeding vigorously on the safe clams

Otters are voracious feeders consuming 16 percent of their body mass per day and eat whatever is available because they have a high metabolic rate marine biologists believe

But their feeding patterns changed dramatically when fed the hot clams First the otters simply ate less and opened fewer clams Secondly if they did open the hot clams they discarded a greater percentage of the meat — primarily the siphons and gills which contain the highest concentrations of toxins (60-80 percent) — before eating them

Otter 4 began discarding siphons after eating three whole highly toxic clams within five minutes they reported

Within one hour all five otters had changed their feeding behavior but only one showed visible symptoms associated with PSP contamination

Otter 3, which ate the most toxic clams seemed very agitated 19 hours after first feeding on them frequently hauling out chewing on wood torn from her pen and screaming Her movements and swimming seemed labored and less fluid than before and her forepaws were often twitching even at rest

Screaming — a behavior exhibited by otters only when in mortal distress — was most frequent after retrieving and eating or discarding the highly toxic clams both her vocalizing and hauling out stopped abruptly when she was again given low toxicity clams Her behavior and movements returned to normal before she was released from the pen

The study funded by the National Science Foundation and U S Fish & Wildlife Service concluded otters sense PSP toxins orally quickly discarded the heavily toxic siphons and gills when fed the contaminated butter clams The fact that they retrieved fewer clams with every dive when fed the hot ones also suggest they can detect toxic clams below the water surface

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Villages organize to stop pollution at its source

After the T/V *Exxon Valdez* dumped 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound, public attention focused not only on the cleanup effort, but also on the sources of pollution in the spill area

In Prince William Sound the process of cleaning up the existing sources of pollution got under way in 1996 Communities around the sound joined forces to deal with common problems such as overflowing landfills, inadequate sewage systems, scrap metal and household hazardous waste disposal under a regional plan The plan they created the Sound Waste Management Plan has inspired Kodiak communities to do the same thing

Practically all manufactured goods make it to Kodiak Island on a plane or a barge When the life of freezers, washers, batteries and paints, is over, they're usually tossed in the landfill or down the drain That translates to overflowing landfills and sewage systems, and ocean and stream pollution from runoff

Recently Jeff Petersen of Old Harbor witnessed the waste disposal problem first hand The Kodiak Island Housing Authority was putting in new boilers and furnaces for about a hundred houses Instead of taking away the old appliances, after the barge delivered its cargo it left and all the old appliances were taken to the dump

Petersen was annoyed 'Why are all the water tanks and furnaces up at the dump Why can t we just put them on the barge that brought the new ones he asked "There s a hundred houses up there! That s 200 big bulky things up at the dump '

The seven Kodiak Island communities of Larsen Bay Old Harbor Akhiok Port Lions Ouzinkie Karluk and Chiniak are each part of the Kodiak Waste Management Plan

The borough would like to see these communities team up to deal with their waste disposal problems said Ron Riemer Environmental Engineer for the Kodiak Island Borough Villages that are relatively connected to each other by air can exchange operation and maintenance personnel, conduct training together and solve some problems together, he said

Besides being more efficient it's cheaper 'Anything that is purchased can be purchased in quantity, [and] if these communities start getting equipment that is similar in all the facilities operation and maintenance can be cheaper," said Riemer

According to Petersen, coordinating services and supplies with the other remote villages around the island makes sense because they face similar problems with transportation, shipping, on site disposal and training as well as purchase and maintenance of equipment and supplies

One of the most common problems, waste oil may soon have a solution The Smart Ashe" incinerator takes wastewater bilgewater and burns off the oil and water

The used oil is placed in the drum and ignited and in about an hour 20 gals of used oil has been eliminated said Riemer

Education and public awareness are important components of the planning effort

"The public needs to learn how to manage the various problems — what should go into a landfill and what should not what should go into the sewage system and what shouldn t said Riemer

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

PENINSULA CLARION 4/19/98

Kodiak launches effort to stop marine pollution at its source

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 provid ing this column focusing on the ongoing recovery within the spill region

By JODY SEITZ

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Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

The seven Kodiak Island communities of Larsen Bay Old Harbor, Akhiok, Port Lions, Ouzinke Karluk and Chiniak are each part of the Kodiak Waste Management Plan

The borough would like to see these communities team up to deal with their waste disposal problems, said Ron Riemer, environmental engineer for the Kodiak Island Borough

Villages that are relatively connected to each other by air can exchange operation and maintenance personnel, conduct training together and solve some problems together ' he said

Besides being more efficient, it's cheaper Anything that is purchased can be purchased in quantity, (and) if these communities start getting equipment that is similar in all the facilities, operation and maintenance can be cheaper,' said Riemer

According to Petersen, coordinating service and supplies with the other remote villages around the island makes sense because they face similar problems with transportation, shipping, on-site disposal, and training, as well as purchase and maintenance of equipment and supplies

One of the most common problems waste oil, may soon have a solution The Smart Ashe ' incinerator takes waste water and bilge water and burns off the oil and water

"The used oil is placed in the drum and ignited and in about an hour 20 gallons of used oil has been eliminated said Riemer

Education and public awareness are important components of the planning effort

"The public needs to learn how to manage the various problems — what should go into a landfill and what should not what should go into the sewage system and what shouldn't ' said Riemer

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

Oceanographers adapt underwater video to science

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Coastal currents

It is estimated that 250,000 seabirds were killed by the Exxon Valdez oil spill Today, many injured species including marbled murrelets pigeon guillemots and cormorants have still not recovered from the spill Other species of seabirds, such as glaucous-winged gulls, arctic terns, and tufted and horned puffins also have been in decline some since the 1970s

One reason often suggested for these declines is that their prey base has changed To test the idea, scientists are studying the fish populations of Prince William Sound using a simple underwater video camera Oceanographer Lew Haldorson came up with the idea in 1996 and it worked so well they've been using it ever since

"We use a relatively-inexpensive video camera that we lower and tow directly beneath the boat," said Haldorson It provides visual confirmation of the fish and schools identified through sophisticated sonar "And if you have a good skipper, he can usually guide the boat over the fish, and if you have any luck at all you have a good chance of getting a good video recording of the species that are there

They ran transects back and forth across bays and passages The 1996 transects revealed that most of the fish were near the shore so the next year they changed their sampling pattern to focus more on those areas

Herring were the most abundant fish they found, and of these, most were one- and two-year-olds Occasionally they'd run into schools of adults Haldorson s camera has recorded massive schools of jellyfish, salmon and salmon sharks More commonly he sees capelin sand lance, pollock and smelt Instead of seining up the fish to sample and identify them, they use the camera It's much more efficient

"This can be a lot faster and easier to do than making a purse seine set," said Haldorson It also works on schools of fish that are too deep for some of our gear'

The video technique helps the scientists judge how well their sonar equipment allows them to estimate the density of schools

We can come up with an estimate of how dense the schools are he said 'We can compare that to the estimate of the acoustic equipment When we look at the video we can tell how close together they are

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

Cordova Times 4/23/98

Lucky lottery

photo courtesy of Belle Mickelson

Nancy Bird was the lucky lottery winner at this year's ~~Future Fish~~ermen of Alaska Filipino dinner fund-raiser. Bird (left) won a quilt made by FFA member Melissa Chamberlain (right), who is a senior at Cordova High School.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Kodiak Island Borough has a progressive program to effectively manage the solid wastes in the Borough. The key to managing wastes in an environmentally sound manner is through reduction/reuse and recycling, followed by treatment and disposal of the residual solid waste. Source Reduction/reuse means simply making an effort to produce less waste. For example, used fishing gear is segregated at the landfill and is available to Borough residents. Used lumber and other wood products (pallets, cabinets, etc.) are also segregated for the public's reuse. Paints collected under the household hazardous waste program are also available to the public. The Borough utilizes used oil in a special heating unit for the baler building to save on utility bills for the building.

Recycling is even more effective than reuse because the wastes are reprocessed to make new products. Office paper, cardboard, newspapers and magazines are collected in the Borough by Threshold Services and shipped to Seattle to be turned into pulp and then new paper products. Metals, such as aluminum cans, junked vehicles and scrap steel, are melted down and made into new cans, cars, and other metal products.

Treatment is the process of modifying wastes to make them smaller, less hazardous or easier to dispose of. The Borough operates a small incinerator to reduce medical wastes and dead animals to ash. The wastes are less dangerous and the quantity is greatly reduced through incineration. Household and commercial trash is compacted into bales before being placed in the landfill. The bales take up much less room than normal landfilling methods. Wood materials that are not scavenged are burned at the landfill to reduce the volume to ashes.

Disposal refers to the final placement of the wastes. For Kodiak Island Borough, the landfill becomes the final place for most of the waste not reused or recycled. Household hazardous wastes are shipped off the island to regulated disposal facili-

NEW MASTER WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE BOROUGH

The *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council provided the Borough with a grant to develop a master waste management plan focusing on the remote villages. A committee, comprised of representatives from each of the villages, KANA, USCG, ADEC and the Borough, made decisions on waste management priorities, solutions, and funding. Assisted by environmental consultant, Montgomery Watson and Alaska Village Initiatives, the Committee will issue a final report in Spring 1998, with implementation starting in Fall 1998. Environmental concerns being addressed are landfills, sewage systems, used oil, household hazardous wastes, scrap metals and fuel storage tanks.

Seward Phoenix Log 4/16/98

Murre deaths could escalate

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Water temperatures one to two degrees higher than normal, caused by El Nino may be to blame for the large number of common-murre deaths being reported throughout the Gulf Alaska, said resource management specialist Mike Tetreau of the National Park Service

And with warmer weather on the way, ' We re anticipating this could get worse as the spring progresses,' he said

Tetreau said mass starvation of murres and other diving birds, such as the shearwater, may occur by summer Surface feeders such as kittiwakes may also be in trouble

Murres ...

From Page 1

Most of the dead or dying murres found in Seward appear to be young birds, suffering from starvation They depend on schooling fish such as herring, sandlance and silversides, which may be responding to warmer water temperatures by going deeper, in search of cooler water, out of reach of the murres

Murres need to eat about half their weight in fish each day to survive If they don't get enough to eat for a day or two, their bodies start to digest muscle tissue When that happens, the birds weaken and are unable to dive for food

Tetreau said nothing can be done to help the birds, but it is a phenomenon people need to be aware of.

And the death spiral begins

Tetreau said nothing can be done to help the birds, but it is a phenomenon people need to be aware of

Tetreau and others in Seward are monitoring what is happening, collecting dead birds and freezing them for examination They're also trying to get a good estimate of how many birds are turning up dead each day

Tetreau said it's important to figure out how long carcasses remain on the beaches and how many arrive each day ,

He is in the process of tagging dead birds and leaving them on the beaches, and urges people not to pick up dead birds on the beach

"We're surveying the beaches and it's important to leave the carcasses where they are, he said

By tagging the carcasses and recounting them later, he can get an idea of how many birds are dying each day

Those wishing to volunteer for the tagging project can call or stop by the NPS office, or call the SeaLife Center

Tetreau said that if a tagged carcass is found anywhere other than the beach, the number on the wing tag should be written down and called in to 224-3175

ALASKA BUSINESS DIGEST
4/10/98

ON THE MOVE

■ Steven Pennoyer of Juneau has been named to a two year term as a U S commissioner of the International Pacific Halibut Commission, according to the White House Pennoyer is one of three U S commissioners on the panel He is the regional administrator in Alaska for the National Marine Fisheries Service, which manages the largest bottom-fish fishery in United States The commission's purpose is to manage the halibut stocks in the Pacific Northwest, British Columbia and Alaska waters to achieve maximum sustainable yield from the fishery

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
4/16/98

Sundberg is SeaLife executive director

Kim Sundberg's appointment as executive director of the Alaska SeaLife Center is permanent, according to an announcement last week by the Center's board of directors

Sundberg, a retired habitat biologist with Alaska Department of Fish and Game, was named interim director last November following the resignation of the previous executive director

Sundberg was Fish and Game's lead representative to the SeaLife Center from December 1993 until his retirement in 1996 During that time he helped to develop and manage the project description, budget and funding for the Center, according to a Sea Life Center press release

The Seward Association of Marine Science recognized him in 1996 for his commitment to the Center

ALASKA JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & COMMERCE
APRIL 13, 1998

Oil spill trustees approve $70 million for Afognak

Alaska's oil spill trustees April 2 approved $70 million to acquire nearly 42,000 acres of old-growth spruce on Afognak Island, by far the council's most expensive purchase

The pending agreement — which took four years to negotiate — goes next for approval to landowner Afognak Joint Venture, a Kodiak-based Native unit which said it could act as soon as April 16

Trustees are charged with spending the state's $900 million settlement from the Exxon Valdez oil spill The panel said Afognak tracts offer prime habitat for a range of wildlife hurt by the tanker wreck

If approved, the deal would add tracts to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and Afognak State Park while permitting the joint venture to log roughly 2,200 acres

Jay Bellinger manager of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge has been chosen the national refuge manager of the year by the National Audubon Society Bellinger was instrumental in acquiring additional Kodiak brown bear habitat

PENINSULA CLARION
4/16/98

SeaLife Center names director

The Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward has named Kim Sundberg as its permanent executive director Sundberg, a retired habitat biologist for the state Department of Fish and Game, has been interim director since November Sundberg was Fish and Game's lead representative to the SeaLife Center from December 1993 until his retirement in August 1996 During that time, he helped to develop and manage the project description, budget and funding for the center

$7.3 million in federal grants head to Alaska

By the Journal Staff

GOVERNMENT

The Alaska congressional delegation announced that several state agencies and departments have received federal grants and awards totaling $7 3 million with contracts worth $28 4 million

Department of Commerce

• The state Department of Fish and Game received $129,563 from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration to study crab and groundfish off Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula, and $719,878 to study Steller sea lions

• The city of Kaltag received $901,000 to build a seafood processing plant

Department of Labor

• The U S Department of Labor has awarded several Alaska villages funds for the welfare-to-work program They include $412,379 for the Association of Village Council Presidents in Bethel, $20,723 for the Chugachmiut/Copper River Native Association, $361,756 for the Cook Inlet Tribal Council, $15 394 for Metlakatla, and $133,216 for the Tlingit and Haida Central Council

Department of Transportation

• The state of Alaska received $2 5 million to build a new airport in Noorvik

Department of Justice

• Skagway received a $67,330 grant to hire two part-time law enforcement officers

• The state Corrections Department received $1 62 million to lease bed space and reduce prison overcrowding

• The Alaska State Troopers received $338,428 for substance abuse programs in state prisons

Environmental Protection Agency

• The EPA awarded the state Department of Environmental Conservation a $76,500 grant to develop a hazardous waste program

Department of Defense

• The Army awarded a $5 47 million contract to Janssen Contracting Co of Anchorage to build a squadron operation/aircraft maintenance facility at Eielson Air Force Base Work could be completed by fall 2000

• The Defense Department awarded a $4 77 million contract to Alaska Mechanical for installation of a potable water filtration and storage facility at Eielson

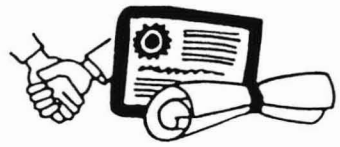
• The department awarded a $1 84 million contract to Linder Construction to repair containment pumps and drainage facilities at Alaska bases

• The Defense Department awarded a $9 92 million contract to the Nova Group of Napa, Calif, to build three new jet fuel tanks and facilities at Elmendorf Air Force Base

• The Defense Department awarded a $1 23 million contract to DOWL/OGDEN Inc to study problems at the Mountain radio relay site south of Lake Iliamna

• The Defense Department awarded a $5 14 million contract to Interstate Construction Inc of Rancho Cordova, Calif to design and build overhead and underground electrical transmission lines at Elmendorf

Achievers



Kodiak High School teacher **Stacy Studebaker** received Tandy Technology's 1998 cash award of $2,500 as an outstanding math, science, and computer science teacher.

The Tandy Technology Scholarship program is open to all accredited high schools in the United States. Each certified school may nominate an outstanding teacher in those areas of expertise.

These teachers receive a certificate of recognition and are eligible to compete for one hundred cash awards presented annually.

Tandy Prize recipients were selected by a panel of educators and approved by the National Advisory Council. This year, the 100 teacher recipients who will receive cash awards represent schools in 41 states.

Radio Shack will sponsor the trophies presented to the prize recipients' schools for the fifth time.

Each school may also nominate a senior who is outstanding in mathematics, science, or computer science. These students receive a certificate recognizing them as a Tandy Technology Scholar.

In addition, they are eligible to compete for one hundred $1,000 scholarships awarded annually. Outstanding Kodiak student **Kyle Marie Wood** was awarded a certificate for her achievements.

Steve Avery photo

Award winner Stacy Studebaker is presented a cake decorated with a microscope during a Kodiak High School faculty meeting. Ready to cut is Dr. Mike Settevendemie,

 Seward Phoenix Log

Rangers to share 'untold stories' during open house

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Untold Stories is the theme for the fifth annual National Park Week April 20-26. To celebrate, Kenai Fjords National Park will host an open house April 24 from noon-4 p.m. at its visitor center in the harbor district.

Refreshments will be served at the open house and posters listing all the nation's national parks and monuments will be handed out while supplies last.

Videotapes of the Grand Teton, Yosemite and Yellowstone national parks will play in the center's theater, as well as videos of Alaska parks.

Park Ranger Elsie Dillewaard, the visitor center's manager, said National Park Week gives her an extra opportunity to impart upon visitors the park service's mission and let them know what's available to them. That mission she says, is to "protect and preserve" the resources within national park boundaries.

National Park Week also offers early season visitors a chance to meet the people behind the scenes at Kenai Fjords National Park before the summer rush.

Managing the rangers

Ten years ago Kenai Fjords National Park had six full-time employees and a handful of seasonal helpers. Today there are 17 full-timers and 37 seasonal workers. Coordinating their activities is Chief Park Ranger Peter Fitzmaurice.

Fitzmaurice said one of the biggest projects he is working on is getting the park's new fee program up and running, which he expects will raise $175,000 annually.

He explained that 80 percent of the money raised will be kept for use at Kenai Fjords, with the remaining 20 percent going into a special projects fund that all parks in the country contribute to.

He is the lead person in the park for easement negotiations and has been involved in land and mining issues.

He said he is working on getting two unpatented mining operations cleaned up. Weather and logistical problems have prevented the mines' owners from cleaning up arsenic deposits, but work to correct the messes should be under way soon.

The radio system is also his responsibility. Kenai Fjords has 50 hand-held radios used to communicate with other rangers and maintenance personnel all the way out to Nuka Bay. He said there are repeaters on Rugged Island, Seal Rocks and McArthur Pass that relay the radio signals. The radios can also be used with the park service phone patch to make telephone calls.

Fitzmaurice has worked at Kenai Fjords for 10 years. He has also worked at Lassen Volcanic and Yosemite National Parks in California, Crater Lake National Park in Oregon and Zion National Park in Utah.

He said the biggest challenge he faces as chief ranger here is "keeping everything going at once. Coordinating people, keeping everything running and making sure everyone has completed the necessary training."

Eyes on the future

Kenai Fjords Superintendent Anne Castellina began her career as a park ranger on the East Coast and said she swore she'd never work west of the Mississippi River.

That was 10 years ago and she has been in Alaska ever since.

When Castellina left West Virginia with her three daughters, bound for Seward, she said she "just knew it was the right thing to do."

She's seen Kenai Fjords change a lot over the last 10 years and has been instrumental in expanding the park. She said acquiring fee title to 32,470 acres of critical habitat once owned by English Bay Corp., was the biggest challenge she faced as superintendent. That land was paid for with Exxon Valdez Oil Spill-settlement money, totaling $14.1 million.

Castellina said one of the exciting challenges she faces is creating a partnership with the Port Graham Corp. to work out management strategies for land the corporation owns, which is surrounded by park service land.

"If we don't work together it's going to be difficult for them and difficult for us," she said.

The biggest challenge for her in Seward is creating an interagency visitor center and convention center.

She said the forest service, park service, Alaska Division of Parks and the city of Seward have made good progress on the project.

The next step will be to evaluate a feasibility study once it is made public.

Estimated cost of the facility is $10 million, with the park service paying $5 million, the forest service funding $2.5 million and the city of Seward paying the remaining $2.5 million.

Paving hassles continue to tie up Soldotna council

PENINSULA CLARION
4/10/98

By SHANA LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

Alaskans love paving projects

Paying for them is less popular The Soldotna City Council meeting Wednesday was the latest installment in the ongoing saga of controversial road upgrades

No one objects to the upgrades themselves, but the details of who pays how much and which rules apply are causing heartburn

The issue of paving Porcupine Court, a proposal which has been before the council repeatedly for more than a year, has come full circle to square one The council turned down the latest plan to get the road fixed after one of the property owners advocating the original request withdrew his support

After voting down a local improvement district for the road as inappropriate and too costly, the city worked out a cheaper alternative that garnered wide support But when Tim Cashman, one of two property owners along the affected portion, asked the council to rezone his five lots in Smith Acres subdivision from single-family to multi-family, neighbors protested and the council nixed the proposal

Cashman sent a letter to City Manager Tom Boedeker after the vote, saying without the rezoning he would not be able to develop the property enough to recoup his share of the improvement costs He also had recently learned the water main did not extend to one of the lots, so utility work would be required to finish building in the area

Boedeker recommended the council turn down the ordinance

"It's just not feasible without a full buy-in by the property owners," he said

The council agreed to reject the proposal on a 3-2 vote Roger Laber and Larry Yocom dissented, in the past they have urged the city to not only pave Porcupine Court but pay to construct its incomplete cul-de-sac

The negative vote assures that the small road next to the waste water treatment plant between Kobuk and the Kenai River won t be paved this year

Another frustrating paving scenario developed with reference to North Aspen Drive The segment from Marydale Avenue to Knight Drive is scheduled for 1998 street improvements A public hearing to set up a special assessment district to finance the neighborhood's 25 percent of paving costs will be held May 13

The issue before the council Wednesday was how to distribute the costs to the property owners The norm is to prorate the costs based on the square footage of the lots adjacent to the road Original calculations sent to the property owners were based on that criterion

However, based on requests from several property owners, the city recalculated the assessments by another method basing them on linear footage of road front

"There are some startling changes here," Boedeker warned the council "I think it brings up serious questions about fairness"

Using the front footage tends to shift the financial burden from the commercial properties onto residential landowners City Engineer Steve Bonebrake said One owner would see the assessment rise $3,000, another would get a $5,000 break

The council finally decided upon the linear footage model

Paving assessments for Riverview Avenue also are scheduled for public hearing May 13 but that listing received unanimous council approval without comment

In other Soldotna council business -

■ Fees for water and sewer hookups would be simplified under a proposed revision to the city code, introduced Wednesday

The present method of billing is "unwieldy and confusing to property owners," according to a memo from City Finance Officer Joel Wilkins Under it, some bills are carried for years, racking up huge interest charges and distressing citizens who learn of their obligations only when they apply for building permits

The proposed method would send out bills in a timely manner and mark them clearly as due

The ordinance is set for public hearing April 22.

■ The third phase of the Centennial Park Upland Trail Project may qualify for some funding from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council The work would reduce damage from foot traffic and provide a public toilet.

Some members of the council expressed concerns about how the project and its funding fit into the larger scheme of riverbank restoration But on a 5-1 vote (Laber dissenting) they recommended the city proceed with the EVOS grant application

The next meeting of the Soldotna City Council will be April 22 at 7 30 p m. in the city hall on Birch Street For more information, call 262-9107

PENINSULA CLARION 4/13/98

Amended regs help Alaska's aquatic farmers

Shellfish growers may long celebrate March 20, 1998, as the real birthdate of a promising new industry in Alaska. It was on this date that John Shively, commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, signed a rewrite of the state's tideland lease regulations, effectively ending a decade-long entanglement of red tape that ensnarled farmers and state regulators alike.

REP. GAIL PHILLIPS
Juneau Update

The revisions allow the state to effectively monitor tidelands leased to aquatic farmers, while allowing shellfish growers to develop high-quality seafood products and create new jobs, exports and business opportunities for Alaskans. The regulations implement legislation approved in 1997 to correct problems created by a state Supreme Court decision.

Throughout this review process, I have encouraged Commissioner Shively to seriously consider the needs of Alaskans who are investing in this promising economic opportunity. Commissioner Shively and his staff are to be commended for responding so favorably to the input of the shellfish farmers and members of the public. The Department of Fish and Game, throughout the development of this industry, has been most helpful with research data, ongoing surveys and encouragement. The officers and members of the Alaska Shellfish Growers Association also deserve a good share of the credit for working with the department for many, many months to develop a workable set of regulations.

Alaska's original aquatic farming legislation was enacted in 1988 under new laws in Title 38 and Title 16. These laws required the DNR to hold annual filing periods in which farmers could apply for aquatic sites. After review by state and federal agencies and the general public, the DNR would grant a nontransferable permit to successful applicants. The ADF&G would issue a separate regulatory permit. Permit holders were required to develop a successful farm site within a three-year term, after which they would be entitled to a 10-year lease.

A 1997 lawsuit over farm site permits in Kachemak Bay resulted in a court ruling that the DNR had not properly identified application filing districts, thus threatening the validity of all existing farm site permits and leases. The 1997 Legislature responded by repealing the laws dealing with district leasing. This streamlined process eliminated the need for reissuing the permit every three years and freed the DNR from other unnecessary and burdensome paperwork requirements. For farmers who have existing permits and leases, a special clause in the new legislation gave them a preference right to one of the new leases if they applied by Oct. 20, 1997, and have developed the farm site by Oct. 1, 1998.

The amended regulations also addressed many of the requirements that were proving difficult for the growers. Regulation changes that benefit the farmers include reasonable production requirements, flexibility to make operational changes, lease renewal preference rights, prior site inspection notice, sales from research permits, and survey criteria.

The mariculture industry promises exciting economic potential for Alaska's many coastal communities. Our pristine waters and climatic conditions are ideally suited for oysters, clams, mussels and other shellfish. In fact, a recent Department of Fish and Game study shows that as of this year, 15 million Pacific oysters are being grown for markets around the world. This number is up from a 1995 survey count of 10 million. During this time the price has increased 30 percent. With the new regulations allowing production and stock diversity and streamlined permitting procedures, these numbers should dramatically increase.

In just this decade, the aquatic farming industry has made important strides. The Department of Fish and Game, with industry input, constructed the state's first shellfish hatchery in Seward with full production expected in the year 2001. The Qutekcak Native Tribe operates the hatchery under a contract with the Department of Fish and Game. Oyster spat grown there had the advantage of consistent and predictable quality, which will eventually lead to farmers attracting and maintaining a good market base. Additional research on perfecting the product will take place in the state-of-the art research center housed in the Seward hatchery.

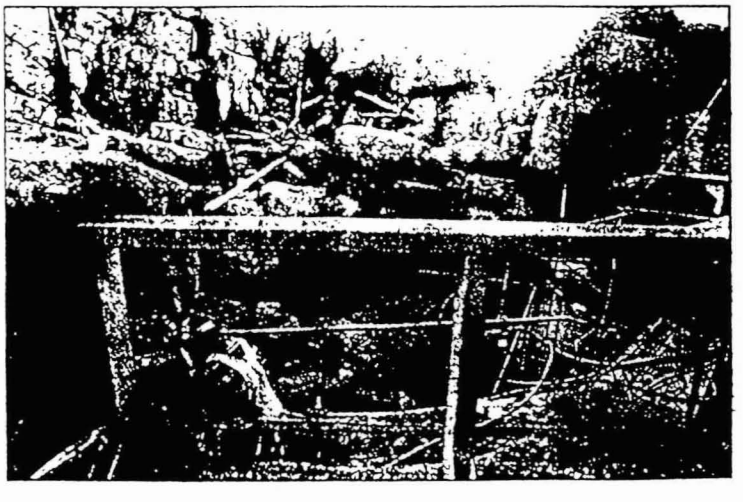
At the present time, shellfish growers just can't produce oysters fast enough for market demands, but with the recently completed shellfish nursery in Kachemak Bay larger, faster growing seed of a consistent quality will be available. This summer, the nursery plans to produce two seed crops.

With a continued partnership between state government and private enterprise, we will soon be able to meet the growing demand for our excellent Pacific oysters and Alaska clams, mussels and other shellfish.

Rep. Gail Phillips, R-Homer, is Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives.

Swimmingly

Photo by FRAN DURNER/ Anchorage Daily News



Above. Donna Harris, marketing director for the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward, watches female sea lions Kiska and Sugarloaf explore their tank last week. At right, workers put finishing touches on the seabird habitat in preparation for the center's May 2 opening. The center, dedicated to research and rehabilitation of Alaska marine wildlife and ecosystems, will include outdoor viewing areas and windows for observing animals under water. The $52 million facility was funded in part with money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement.

THE SEWARD PHOENIX LOG

Seward Alaska | Volume 32 Number 32 | Thursday April 16 1998

Meter's running on downtown parking

By Colleen Kelly
LOG Staff

The city's special meeting next week to deal with parking issues promises to be a barn-burner if Monday s Seward City Council meeting is an indicator

The topic got air time as the mayor council members and city administration hashed out the details of scheduling a 6 p m work session and an 8 p m council meeting on April 20 both dedicated to downtown parking issues

Some people hear a clock ticking as the Alaska SeaLife Center's May 2 grand opening approaches Others caution against making changes before there's sufficient chance for public input

Council member Nathan Orr contends there hasn't been adequate effort to study the issues ' (A decision now) would be a quick fix that works for one or two merchants on main street, but not for everyone he said

Orr recalled the public outcry to last year's hasty decision on the Tot Lot and said he d prefer to avoid a repeat

Councilman Stu Clark thought that a day devoted to talking about the parking issue would allow interested parties to come to city hall with ' fists flying " Once the air clears the council can make a decision, he said

Clark has sat in on meetings of the Downtown Business Association and said the group s one page proposal on the topic might be a good starting point for Monday s work session

Fellow council member Pat Callahan dis agreed saying that other downtown business owners not belonging to the association should also have an opportunity for input

Not all council members favored conven ing a special meeting following the work session and that's OK with acting city manager Rick Gifford

"Our main priority is to have an exchange of ideas," he said in an interview "This will be the first opportunity for the general public to give its input."

Gifford said if council members don't reach a consensus, nothing forces them to take official action at the special meeting

City administrative staff has attended DBA meetings and thus has a pretty good idea of what that group wants, Gifford said

The administration has some ideas of its own, he said, which will be part of a draft resolution the council will work from at the April 20 session The draft will spell out the timeline required to enact or amend a city statute

"The real debate that will be coming down is whether there will be parking limits," Gifford said "That comes down to a public policy issue and (the decision) has to come from the council "

The city administration's viewpoint ' leans toward the idea of a time limit," he said

Gifford said the following has to be considered

- Predicting the Alaska SeaLife Center traffic volume
- Determining how many of those vehicles will use the paid parking lot at the Center (at a cost of $1 an hour or $6 a day)
- Calculating how many spaces are needed by downtown business owners and their employees

Some businesses plan to provide employee parking and they're the ones who'll probably push for time limits to make sure other employees don't use spaces intended for the public, Gifford said

Despite plenty of discussion on the issue, DBA had a mixed reaction on its one-page parking proposal, according to the group's president, Hugh Darling

"Some people say, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it,'" he said. It's difficult to determine just what the impact of the SeaLife Center will be

Almost everyone agrees the major issue is the desire to impose a parking time limit in the downtown area

' We want a two-hour limit just to keep the traffic turning around," Darling said.

Another major proposal is to provide off-street parking for downtown business employees Darling said his organization has located spots at the fire station and has a few leads on others that may be a little closer "

City OKs permit for hotel

Developer must provide parking

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

The developer of the proposed Edgewater Hotel downtown, Paul Carter of Fairbanks, limped out of the city Planning and Zoning Commission meeting April 1 frustrated and a little angry at some commissioners' apparent opposition to his project

And not only was he facing a critical planning commission, he took some heat from concerned private citizens as well

One such detractor was Carol Pruitt She told the commission that she is pro-development, but that this project is too big and that she thinks it should be scaled down

Her fear is that the city will 'sell out the charm of our city to the almighty dollar," she said

After the public hearing to decide the fate of his conditional use permit, Carter stood on the steps outside City Hall and said his first impression was that 'it went terrible "

'The intent of the (conditional use permit procedure) is to allow flexibility But they made it more restrictive," he said

The commission approved the permit according to most of the city administration's recommendations

But the commission rejected the administration's parking recommendation, which would have allowed Carter to provide half of the parking spaces on site or at an off-site lot with the remaining parking spaces to be leased at the Alaska SeaLife Center for use during its off-peak hours

Commissioners instead decided that Carter should provide one parking space per guest unit for the three-story, 70-room hotel, and that he not be allowed to count spaces in the SeaLife Center's parking lot.

The commissioners were skeptical that those spaces would always be available And if they were not, they feared downtown parking spaces, which are already a scarce commodity, would be consumed by hotel guests

Regardless of where his guests parked, Carter said, "We will have enough parking for the hotel He said he had a purchase agreement in place to acquire six vacant lots on the 400 block of Fifth Avenue which he intends to use for parking

Carter told the commissioners that because the lots are 775 feet from the hotel site he would pro-

See Hotel, Page 4

over →

Seward Phoenix Log
4/9/98

Hotel ...

From Page 1

vide valet parking

Carter said the site measures 100 feet by 180 feet and that between 77 and 117 cars will fit In the 18,000 square-foot space

Commissioner Tom Smith worried that it would be difficult to access the parked vehicles because the lot would be crammed with cars

Speaking Tuesday about the meeting, commissioner Hugh Darling said he had been surprised when he heard Carter had purchased six city lots for parking and didn't quite know how to respond

' It was a shocker It certainly was to me And I hate those situations where you really don't have time to think things through But I felt really good when we got through talking ' Darling said

Also speaking Tuesday, Carter said he felt a little more at ease, but that he was waiting until he knows positively what the commission decided before he makes any more plans

He said the city administrators he has dealt with, Engineering Manager Dave Calvert and Community Development Director Kerry Martin, have been far more understanding of his hotel concept and have been much easier to deal with than the commissioners

He said he doesn't know why the commissioners weren't more supportive of a plan that he said will put hundreds of thousands of dollars into the city coffers

Carter informed the commission that his project would provide year-round employment for three people and seasonal jobs for five to 20 people He said the hotel will make a significant financial impact on the city and other businesses in town, as he expects to pay $25,000 in property taxes and $150,000 in bed taxes He anticipates 35,000 visitors per season

The city collected $128,188 in bed taxes in fiscal year 1997 from all lodging in Seward

And even though commission

'My concern is for the health and welfare of the whole downtown area. The only reason for my concern is that the quickest way to kill a downtown area is to eliminate downtown parking.'

— Hugh Darling

ers were aware of the potential economic boon to the city Carter said he felt a lack of support from them for the 'multi million dollar development he has planned for Seward

While commissioner Darling may have seemed harsh at the meeting asking many questions and amending motions, he said he was just being thorough

'Believe it or not, I'm very definitely a supporter of the project I think the downtown area needs hotels But I'm concerned that he doesn t have enough space for loading and unloading ' Darling said in an interview

My concern is for the health and welfare of the whole downtown area The only reason for my concern is that the quickest way to kill a downtown area is to eliminate downtown parking," he said

The city's passenger-loading-zone recommendation was amended to give Carter the option of putting a passenger loading area on his property something he does not want to do

Immediately after the meeting, Carter was unsure of what had happened and was afraid the commission had required him too provide a loading zone on his property, which would require him to scale back his plans

And after two hours of debate over the conditional use permit, and a few amendments, and a couple of amendments to amendments, it's no wonder why he left the meeting confused and frustrated as did a number of people in the audience

The passenger-loading zone recommendation was finally amended to require it be located either on site, or along Railway or Fifth avenues subject to approval by Police Chief Tom Walker

After hearing all new comments, commission chairman Wayne Carpenter opened the comment period to people who had spoken at the March 4 meeting He said anyone who had already spoken and had taken advantage of the five-minute comment period would be allowed only one minute to speak

Jolene King implored the council to impose the same parking requirements on Carter that she had to meet for her hotel, the Harborview Inn on Third Avenue

When her minute was up, King was not finished reading a prepared letter and reluctantly relegated herself to the audience She was asked to return to the podium for questions She did, but no one had any questions for her and she asked for more time to speak

She finished the letter and said ' it is not fair" for Carter to provide a valet service to and from the parking lot he wants to build, when a scheduled shuttle service is required by code

Carter was disturbed by the energy directed toward changing the Central Business District into an extension of the Auto Commercial District, which has more stringent parking requirements

He said if those efforts had succeeded, property values in the CBD would have suffered

The commissioners also voted to require Carter to install historic light posts that are compatible with the existing historic lighting downtown

Carter also must have a 10-foot setback on his northern property line and erect a fence at least four feet high to protect his neighbor's home from the impact of his commercial development

Carter will have to vacate all interior lot lines and turn the five city lots into one Sidewalks curbs and gutters must be constructed to city standards along Fifth and Railway avenues and solid waste containers must be provided and placed in an approved location

Play takes on real-life backdrop

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
APRIL 16, 1998

By Colleen Kelly
LOG Staff

It'll be a case of art imitating real life — at least to some extent — when the Port City Players perform a murder mystery dinner theater as part of the Seward Celebration April 25 at the Alaska SeaLife Center.

The play's story line gets its beginning at the SeaLife Center grand opening and unravels a tale that anticipates what will happen. Of course, no one is predicting a murder will happen during the May 2 grand opening, says Elisa Hitchcock Conley, who co-wrote "Murder at the SeaLife Center" with Kimberley Gray.

Among the cast of characters are staff members and scientists from the center, a Seward socialite, a newspaper reporter, an attorney, a few doctors and an eccentric woman. An actor from Big Lake and an actor from Anchorage will join Seward's community theater troupe to form the cast.

Audience participation is allowed, even encouraged, in a typical murder mystery performance, Conley said. "It's a great time for the audience. They should come in expecting to have fun."

The way the play works, audience members will meet in the main lobby of the SeaLife Center where they fill out a name tag (using either their name or a pseudonym if they so choose) and get a chance to munch on hors d'oeuvres and sip wine and punch while checking out the waterfront view.

"Name tags are required so actors can ask attendees questions to include them into the thickening plot," explained producer Michael Olson.

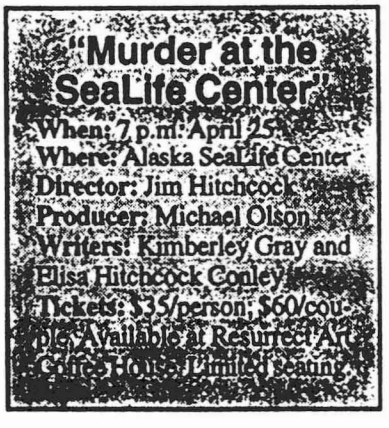
Action moves upstairs at 7 p.m. when audience and cast members alike get a chance to view the animal exhibits and choose tables at which to dine.

"People will look for a stage and there won't be one," Conley said.

The performance is semi-improvisational; that is, it will follow a story line developed by Conley and Gray while at the same time taking twists and turns along the way as the audience interacts with cast members who are performing undercover. Each table will have a clue sheet.

"Everyone is going to be a suspect at first," Conley said.

As the night progresses, audience members will pick up on clues from their table conversations as the mystery plot plays itself out. By 9 p.m. the murder should be solved.



The Peters Creek resident said she and Gray have been collaborating on murder mysteries since 1993. They present at least one performance a year and have played at venues in Anchorage, Wasilla, Palmer and Big Lake.

"I've directed all of them until this one," Conley said. Although her father, Jim Hitchcock of Seward, is handling directing duties for this production, Conley still has had a chance to work with the Port City Players and said she "really loved it."

And by picking producer Olson's brain, "we've got a pretty good idea of what the SeaLife Center is about," she said.

Ray's Waterfront Restaurant will cater the event. The restaurant's Leslie Simutis is donating half the catering costs, according to Olson.

Opinion

Letters

SeaLife Center thanks volunteers

With National Volunteer Recognition Week taking place next week, the Alaska SeaLife Center would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the many people who have given generously of their time and talents to serve as volunteers at the Center. From those who worked in our "Blue Tent" and gave hard hat tours last summer to those who have helped out in our marketing, operations and education departments these past few months, we extend a hearty thank you for helping us get ready for our grand opening May 2.

We hope our volunteers, as well as all Seward and surrounding area residents, will be able to join us April 25 for our Seward Celebration Day when we will recognize our volunteers, along with the whole community, for their support.

We invite anyone who is interested in volunteering at the Center to call Jim at 224-6343. It's not only an opportunity to take part in our important mission of protecting and advancing our marine ecosystem, but it's also a great learning experience and a lot of fun! Interested persons may wish to attend our volunteer training session from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. April 18 at the Center.

Hats off to all volunteers — you're special people!

Jim Fredrickson
Volunteer coordinator
Alaska SeaLife Center

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR

VOL. 58 NO. 70 THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 1998 KO

Exxon trustees seek ideas for spending last $140 million

ANCHORAGE (AP) — The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is looking for ideas on how to spend $140 million that will be left over in 2001 when the last of the $1 billion oil spill settlement is spent

The state and federal governments settled lawsuits against Exxon in 1991 when the oil company agreed to pay $1 billion in 10 yearly installments

Since that time the bulk of that money, nearly $400 million, has been spent or earmarked to buy land and protective easements in the spill area

The council has also been setting aside $12 million annually in a reserve fund since 1994 The reserve money could be spent on one project or divided up among many

Some ideas offered so far Buy more land Do more research Monitor the environment Endow a university chair

The trustee council is seeking public comment on what to do with the reserve funds Public meetings are being held around the state and written suggestions will be accepted until the end of the month

Several dozen people have testified at the public hearings held in March and earlier this month in coastal communities affected when the tanker Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of oil in Prince William Sound in 1989 About 90 people have submitted written comments, according to Molly McCammon executive director of the Trustee Council

I think there has been a lot of support expressed for doing some kind of endowment rather than spending it all in a fixed period of time," McCammon said

The coastal communities support continued research and monitoring as a way to better understand the marine environment, she added

Others have supported using the money to buy more land, McCammon said People in the coastal communities support buying smaller parcels, but "there's been a mixed bag on whether there should be any more large parcel purchases "

Many environmental organizations want the council to keep open the option of using some of the money for more land purchases, said Pamela Brodie of Homer who represents the Sierra Club and sits as one of 16 public advisers to the Trustee Council

James King a retired waterfowl biologist in Juneau and another public adviser to the council said there is strong support for establishment of endowed chairs at the University of Alaska so that researchers could continue to study resources damaged by the spill

The Trustee Council also must decide if it should stay in existence to make and oversee spending decisions or whether a new oversight structure should be established

THE VALDEZ VANGUARD 4/9/98

Trustees consider future of restoration in oil spill area

By Jody Seitz

In 1991, the state and federal governments settled their claims against Exxon, resulting in the largest-ever civil settlement in the U S over damages from an oil spill The historic $900 million civil settlement is being paid out over a 10-year period with the last payment due in September 2001 However that won't necessarily mean the end of restoration

Following an extensive public outreach effort, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council adopted a long-term restoration plan in 1994 which focused on research and monitoring, habitat protection, and general restoration projects The Council also established a savings account or reserve to keep the option of continuing restoration well into the next century With $12 million being set aside each year, by 2002 the Restoration Reserve is expected to be worth about $140 million

The reason for the reserve fund, according to Trustee Council Executive Director Molly McCammon, is that the future consequences of the oil spill are still unknown even nine years after it happened "A lot of the species injured by the spill have long lives salmon, harbor seals, sea otters, herring and many seabirds We don't know in some cases the long-term prognosis,' McCammon said We don't know exactly what all the injury is and what the possibilities for recovery are '

The question is what sort of restoration activities should be continued over how long and how should it be administered? To help answer these questions, the Trustee Council is holding public meetings in 22 spill area communities as well as in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau This will give everyone in the spill region a chance to tell them how they've been doing and what should be done in the future

Coastal currents

In Valdez, the Restoration Reserve meeting will be held April 14 at 7 p m in city council chambers

The court settlement requires the money to be used to restore rehabilitate or enhance injured species but the Trustees want to know more than just how it should be used or where it should be spent, according to McCammon

"They're also looking at how long a restoration program should last Should all the funds be spent over a 10- or 20-year period or should some kind of permanent endowment be set up, similar to the Permanent Fund," she said ' They re also looking at governance issues Should the Trustee Council stay in existence and continue to oversee restoration as is currently required under the court settlement or should the fund be given to some other entity to govern how it is used?"

Under the current process, the Trustee Council solicits a lot of public input to make its funding decisions There are public meetings, a 17-member public advisory group and facilitators in 10 spill area communities That process is expensive Should it change in some way?

For more information, or to express your opinion about this issue, contact the Trustee Council office in Anchorage toll free at 800-478-7745 You can also write to the EVOS Trustee Council at 645 G Street Anchorage Alaska 99501 or send e-mail to kerrh@oilspill state ak us Deadline for written comments is April 30, 1998

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

Critical wildlife habitat wins protection in Homer

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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

Anyone who's ever driven down Baycrest Hill leading into Homer knows the majesty of Kachemak Bay The thin arm of the Homer Spit cradles the windswept bay against a panorama of snowy mountains

For many Alaskans the spit holds fond memories as the place they got their foothold in Alaska. For migratory birds and intertidal life, the five-mile-long spit is critical terra firma It's also the best access to the bay for shipyards logging companies fishers and tourists — all important to the local economy

On Oct 3, 1997, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council agreed to provide nearly $1 million to protect 116 acres of critical tidelands on the spit and at nearby Beluga Slough through their small parcel habitat protection program The small parcel program provides funds for protecting private property of less than 1,000 acres which aid the recovery of resources injured by the oil spill

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

The agreement cleared the way to protect the habitat for resident and migratory wildlife in perpetuity The city of Homer will own and manage the property

When the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust took stock of local habitat needing protection, Mud Bay at the base of the Homer Spit stood out, according to Barbara Seaman director of the land trust

"It is really valuable intertidal habitat," she said "Without protection it would be lost There are lots and lots of building projects boardwalks, lumber storage lots chip yards and barge basins Things are happening at a pretty rapid clip out there and we saw that (Mud Bay) as being pretty seriously threatened

Beluga Slough is a stretch of urban tidelands lying between the spit road and the city center Moose bear and birds all share the area About 38 acres of Beluga Slough wetlands were slated for development as an RV lot.

The Homer Spit package was one of the most popular habitat protection projects considered by the council, which received hundreds of letters, phone calls, e-mails and faxes in support Protecting these habitats was viewed by many as a way of keeping tourism strong in Homer Supporters ranged from businesses the Homer Chamber of Commerce the city of Homer and the Kenai Peninsula Borough to tourists and birders from around the country

'People called in from across the nation to support the purchase,' said Chris Rogers of the Trust for Public Land a San Francisco based non profit that helped put together the land package

The spit has a constituency Each May the city of Homer hosts hundreds of visitors who come from across the nation and the world to witness and celebrate the annual migration of more than 20 species of shorebirds as they rest and refuel on their way to nesting grounds further north The annual Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival has become a big pre-season attraction for birders and other visitors

Seaman sees the current investment in conservation as protection for the local economy I think people are drawn to Alaska and to Homer because of a chance to see semipalmated plovers and bears and moose and catch a salmon And unless we take care of those things they come to see we'll stop seeing the tourist industry grow and develop ' she said

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

THE PENINSULA CLARION
4/21/98

Critical habitat saved in Homer

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

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KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
4/10/98

CORDOVA TIMES
4/16/98

Harbor seal decline in Sound remains a mystery

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Harbor seal numbers in the Gulf of Alaska began dropping about 20 years ago In Prince William Sound, biologists noticed seal numbers were declining about 1985 While the negative population trends continue in the Sound, their populations are thriving in southeast Alaska and the population is showing signs of stabilizing in Kodiak

About two years ago, Alaskan biologists Mike Castellini and Brian Fadely met another seal researcher who had found some interesting patterns in the blood of harbor seals from the North Atlantic Dr Paul Thompson, of Scotland, found the blood chemistry of seals changed with their diet

In particular, the size of red blood cells increased when they shifted from eating high fat content fish such as herring, to pollock and cod

Thompson wanted to know if biologists found the same thing in harbor seals here The collaborative effort has helped eliminate some reasons for population declines and has helped scientists focus more closely on the exact nature of the problem

Fadely, now with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau, said at first he didn't find anything exceptional

On the whole, the harbor seal blood looked healthy "Any veterinarian looking at the blood of these seals would say they are healthy,' said Fadely

And he found no serious differences in the health and condition in seals from southeast Alaska from those in Prince William Sound

Then he analyzed the blood data of harbor seals from the Montague Strait area and the central area of Prince William Sound

What he found were trends that are considered "subclinical" They do not represent a lack of health but are changes in the blood chemistry that occur according to where the seals live, the time of year, and between years

"We see this change throughout several years, which is consistent with what the fisheries biologists are saying about the relative abundance of pollock and herring in that area," Fadely said

To better understand what they are seeing in the wild, studies of captive animals are needed, Fadely said 'That way we will know what the animals are being fed," he said ' We can take continuous measurements of its health and fatty acids accumulations based on diet, learn how stable isotopes change based on diet, what diets are best for the animals, and how well they assimilate them "

The puzzle still exists If the animals are in good condition, and their blood looks healthy then what is wrong? According to Fadely, it could be a number of things

'It might be our sampling, that we're missing the animals that are compromised, or we have it in our data and haven t seen it yet," he said, "or another possibility is that it isn't health-related at all "

Scientists hope to get a better understanding of how diet affects the seals, especially pups and juveniles, in studies at the Alaska SeaLife Center beginning this year

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

Oceanographers adapt underwater video to science

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

It s estimated that 250,000 seabirds were killed by the Exxon Valdez spill

Today many injured species including marbled murrelets, pigeon guillemots and cormorants have still not recovered from the spill Other species of seabirds, such as glaucous-winged gulls, arctic terns, and tufted and horned puffins also have been in decline, some since the 1970s

One reason often suggested for these declines is that the birds' prey base has changed To test the idea, scientists are studying the fish populations of Prince William Sound using a simple underwater video camera Oceanographer Lew Haldorson came up with the idea in 1996 and it worked so well they've been using it ever since

"We use a relatively inexpensive video camera that we lower and tow directly beneath the boat," said Haldorson It provides visual confirmation of the fish and schools identified through sophisticated sonar

"And if you have a good skipper, he can usually guide the boat over the fish, and if you have any luck at all you have a good chance of getting a good video recording of the species that are there "

They ran transects back and forth across bays and passages The 1996 transects revealed that most of the fish were near the shore, so the next year they changed their sampling pattern to focus on those areas

Herring were the most abundant fish they found and of these, most were young of the year or 1- and 2-year-olds Occasionally they'd run into schools of adults Haldorson s camera has recorded massive schools of jellyfish salmon and salmon sharks More commonly he sees capelin sand lance pollock and smelt Instead of seining up the fish to sample and identify them they use the camera It s much more efficient

This can be a lot faster and easier to do than making a purse seine set, said Haldorsen "It also works on schools of fish that are too deep for some of our gear"

The video technique helps the scientists judge how well their sonar equipment allows them to estimate the density of schools

"We can come up with an estimate of how dense the schools are," he said "We can compare that to the estimate of the acoustic equipment When we look at the video we can tell how close together they are

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

PENINSULA CLARION 4/5/98

METRO

THURSDAY, April 9 1998 ★ ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Council mulls use of oil spill money

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

How do you spend a leftover $140 million?

Some ideas offered so far Buy land Do more research Monitor the environment Endow a university chair

The money will be what's left, in the year 2001, after the rest of the $1 billion Exxon oil spill settlement has been spent Between now and the end of the month, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is seeking public comment on what to do with it

The money has been set aside in a reserve fund, a combination of annual payments and whatever interest it earns between now and the year 2001 Public meetings are being held around the state, including one in Anchorage at 7 tonight at the Restoration Office at 645 G St Written suggestions will be accepted until the end of the month

Several dozen people have testified at the public hearings held in March and earlier this month in coastal communities affected when the tanker Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of oil in Prince William Sound in 1989 And about 90 people have submitted written comments, according to Molly McCammon, executive director of the Trustee Council

"I think there has been a lot of support expressed for doing some kind of endowment rather than spending it all in a fixed period of time," McCammon said The coastal communities support continued research and monitoring as a way to better understand the marine environment, she added

Others have supported using the money to buy more land, McCammon said People in the coastal communities support buying smaller parcels, but "there's been a mixed bag on whether there should be any more large parcel purchases "

In 1991, the state and federal governments settled lawsuits against Exxon when the oil company agreed to pay $1 billion in 10 yearly installments Since that time, the bulk of that money, nearly $400 million has been spent or earmarked for purchasing land and protective easements in the spill area The council hopes that the protected land will provide habitat and give some of the species injured by the spill a chance to rebound About $150 million has been tapped for scientific studies

In 1994, at the urging of former state Sen Arliss Sturgulewski and others, the Trustee Council began setting aside $12 million annually to establish a reserve fund

"Right from the beginning, I wanted to see a foundation set up that would do basic research as well as applied research " Sturgulewski said "At the time of the Exxon Valdez spill, we had very little information on the status of the marine environment I kind of kept at it "

The reserve money could be spent on one project or divided up among many The Trustee Council also has to decide whether it should stay in existence to make and oversee spending decisions or whether a new oversight structure should be established

Many environmental organizations want the council to keep open the option of using some of the money for more land purchases, said Pamela Brodie of Homer, who represents the Sierra Club and sits as one of 16 public advisers to the Trustee Council

James G King, a retired waterfowl biologist in Juneau and another public adviser, said, "I think it would be a good idea to put a major portion into the University of Alaska for the establishment of endowed chairs who would continue the study of the damaged resources "

King said there is considerable support for this idea, including from a number of conservation groups But the parties interested in buying more land are more organized in their lobbying efforts, he said

But some are not anxious to spend more for land

The most vocal opposition has come from U S Sen Frank Murkowski and state Sen Loren Leman, R-Anchorage

"My preference is that we not be investing so much money in buying land unless we have a plan for it," Leman said "I would prefer to see legitimate marine research that can help benefit the affected area There may be some cases of property or habitat that need to be purchased in the future

'I am not willing to slam the door completely, but by and large, I think we have spent an incredible amount of money buying up property "

Joyce, Narrance elected to council

By Jennifer L. Strange

The Cordova Times

CORDOVA TIMES APRIL 2, 1998

"I thank all the people who voted for me twice — it's kind of like being in Chicago, where certain people get to cast more than one vote," said a tongue-in cheek Tim Joyce, who took 239 of the 403 votes cast at the March 31 run off election for City Council Seat B Contender Don Narrance garnered 164 votes, but was appointed by Mayor Ed Zeine at the April 1 city council meeting to the seat left vacant by Ed Maxwell

Joyce won't be officially sworn in until the city's 38 absentee ballots are counted on April 7, but he has already started to attend community meetings and hopes to get the word out that his primary goal is to represent the interests of Cordovans

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologist campaigned by talking with residents one-on-one and over the phone about pressing issues He said the campaign hasn t changed his political views which remain somewhat liberal, fishing-oriented and cost-minded

I m really excited about helping the city move forward," Joyce said "We have some serious issues facing us, such as the landfill, borough formation and the civic center"

In reponse to the March 31 Rise Alaska meeting regarding funding and construction for the potential civic center Joyce said he thinks the project design team is a bit too optimistic The team has a two-week EVOS Trustee Council application deadline to meet in order to be eligible for funding, and it doesn't look like they can make it, Joyce said

Council, in conjunction with the Prince William Sound Science Center, hired the design team for $50,000 to come up with a plan for a center, which will be given to the trustee council in hopes that the council will fund the construction of the facility If a civic center is built, maintenance and operation costs will be the responsibility of the city

"I'm not sure they have their ducks in a row; we'll have to see what comes of their presentation to city council," Joyce said

Although Narrance lost the run-off election, his interest in city politics won him the appointment.

"He's shown that he wants to be involved by running twice," Zeine said. "And it's only right that he was given first consideration for the position"

Council ...

'I'm really excited about helping the city move forward. We have some serious issues facing us, such as the landfill, borough formation and the civic center.'

— Tim Joyce

THE HOMER NEWS APRIL 2, 1998

Oil spill council here Wednesday for input

Though the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council will continue to dole out criminal settlement funds until 2001 it is taking suggestions now on how to spend an estimated $140 million savings account that it hopes will last long into the next century

Council representatives will be in Homer on Wednesday to hear public comment in a process similar to the one that determined how to spend the original $900 million Exxon paid to the state The coun l will also take comment in 25 other coastal communities

The council has spent most of the settlement money on habitat protection and research It now wants to know if that s how people want to spend the savings — $12 million a year since 1994 plus interest

We re treating it as possibly the last money we'll have said council spokesman Joe Hunt

The money is currently invested in a federal program, as required by the settlement that gets a dismal 5 percent interest rate The council hopes Congress will change that and allow the money to be invested where the highest return can be found simi lar to the Alaska Permanent Fund

The savings could be used to set up a similar permanent fund for ongoing habitat purchases in perpetuity Or it could all be spent in a 10- or 20-year period

Alaskans might want less habitat protection and more research

When it comes to habitat there's no way we ll have big amounts of money for large purchases ' said Hunt

Should then the focus be on smaller community based restoration projects? That's what the council wants to know

In addition, laws will have to be changed from the original settlement on what entity governs the account a decision that will also be based on public comment

The meeting is scheduled for 7 p m at the Homer City Council Chambers The deadline for written comment is April 30 For information call the council, 278-8012

Exxon trustees offer $70 million to buy Afognak Island land

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
APRIL 3, 1998

By SUE JEFFREY
Mirror Writer

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Trustee Council Thursday offered Afognak Joint Venture $70 5 million for 41 750 acres on the north end of Afognak Island

The proposal now goes to AJV s board of directors April 16 The trustee council already has made other purchases in the region — $40 million for the 42,000-acre Seal Bay parcel and $36 million for 26,000 acres on Shuyak Island If accepted, this will be the trustees' most expensive purchase

But the big price tag does not seem out of line when considering the value the trustees placed on the land, primarily old growth spruce Before purchasing the wildlife habitat, the trustee council conducted an extensive survey of available parcels in the spill area. From Prince William Sound to the Kodiak Archipelago and Alaska Peninsula, the north end of Afognak Island ranked highest in terms of restoration of species injured in the 1989 oil spill

"The package provides a management plan that protects the resources while allowing some limited timber harvest," said Molly McCammon, EVOS trustee council executive director

State and federal biologists and forestry experts have worked with AJV to ensure that large tracts of the highest value habitat are protected "

The value of the timber was too high to be able to protect the entire area but Pauls and Laura Lakes will have large buffer zones between them and any timber activity she added

Howard Valley chief operating officer of AJV — a partnership of Koniag Inc Afognak Natives Uyak Natives Inc Ayakulik Inc Anton Larsen Inc Bell s Flats Natives Inc and Litnik Inc — agreed the deal is a fair one

The agreement will provide both long term conservation of Afognak Island's outstanding natural resources and a secure future for our partners," he said

Negotiations the last two months have been difficult but they worked out

The 41,750 acres are adjacent to Afognak Island State Park, the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and on Shuyak Strait across from Shuyak Island State Park

The purchase includes 300 acres of timber rights on Delphin and Discoverer Islands in Perenosa Bay The trustee council also negotiated an agreement which requires AJV to leave a 200-foot buffer around Pauls and Laura Lakes Under terms of the agreement, AJV could build up to two lodges and an unspecified number of cabins in the buffer zone But AJV would need to maintain a 200-foot buffer behind the lodge if it built on the lakefront

Before voting, the trustee council added two conditions to the agreement First, the council requires AJV to specify any and all logging routes in the area adjacent to the Tonki Cape Peninsula. Secondly, the council wants AJV to be more specific about its plans for cabins in the buffer zone around Pauls and Laura Lakes

Greg Petrich, spokesperson for the Alaska Rainforest Campaign who has followed the habitat acquisition process for the past seven years, said he is pleased with the outcome adding 'All the primary pieces we were hoping to be in there were included they (the negotiators) really did an excellent job "

Craig Tillery, chair of the trustee council also gave a nod to the negotiators

I have been watching this process for years ' he said 'and am extremely impressed with the trustee council and Alaska Joint Venture negotiators who have helped us put this package together sometimes acre by acre to make a reasonable compromise

Kodiak fisherman Stosh Anderson, who testified in favor of the purchase via teleconference yesterday, agrees the deal is good for the landowners and the public

'Land acquisition has been a real boon for Kodiak ' he commented after the council meeting It s provided habitat protection for resource and recovery and funds to provide economic development and stability for village corporations

Brent Baker a fisherman who has owned and operated a salmon setnet site in Prince William Soun since 1988 was the only perso to dampen the otherwise congratulatory spirit of the day

His fish camp is located on property which the Chenega Corporation owned until the trustee council purchased it last summer

Prior to the sale, Baker had a contract with the Native corporation allowing him to have a cabin and use the land to run his fishing operation But the state, which now owns the land, has no mechanism to allow him to run his fish camp on state land, he said Moreover the state wants to tear down his cabin

I m asking the council to make sure that if there are any pre-existing uses on the land they purchase, that the council makes sure the uses are protected, ' he said

' I also am asking the council to help protect and preserve my ex isting use "

Exxon trustees will decide on Afognak purchase today

By SUE JEFFREY
Mirror Writer

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is close to making a deal to purchase about 40 000 acres on Afognak Island

The trustee council will take action on the deal this afternoon AJV will present the agreement to its board of directors for final approval April 16 The Afognak Joint Venture executive committee reached an agreement with trustee council negotiators earlier this week to sell lands, timber and an easement on the north end of Afognak Island

"We've always been looking at acreage on northern Afognak Island somewhere between 38 000 and 40 000 acres, basically as much as we could buy with the $70 million that the trustee council has earmarked for this acquisition," said Molly McCammon, EVOS Trustee Council executive director

Preliminary talks included land in the Pauls and Laura Lake systems, Blue Fox and Red Fox Bays and a parcel on the west side of Tonki Bay which would connect the Tonki Peninsula portion of the state park with the Seal Bay portion

But Howard Valley, AJV chief operating officer would not discuss the location or amount of land being sold or the price tag He confirmed, though, that the agreement allows AJV to continue logging acreage not included in the sale

"The sale of these assets will allow the AJV to maintain timber harvest operations on its remaining land as well as provide its partners with income with which to diversify their operations through investments

In addition, Valley said 'AJV will explore opportunities for low-density recreation and ecotourism on its remaining lands adjacent to Afognak State Park and the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge'

Afognak Island is 700 square miles and around 2 000 feet above sea level at its highest elevation Most of the land is private Native claim land About 50 000 acres in the northwestern corner from Foul Bay to Blue Fox Bay and including Ban Island belong to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge

Another 45 000 acres including most of the Tonki Peninsula and lands adjacent to Seal Bay comprise Afognak Island State Park

If the deal goes through and the Legislature transfers the land to the state as the Trustee Council hopes the new purchase would become part of the state park

The sale will be the largest amount the trustees have spent on land acquisition, McCammon said If approved, AJV will distribute to its partners — Koniag, Inc Afogak Native Uyak Natives Inc., Ayakulik Inc., Antone [illegible] Inc and Litnik Inc

The AJV executive committee and negotiators for the trustee council reached an agreement hours before the timber appraisal period ended If a deal had not been struck before the deadline, the sale would have required another long, timber appraisal process

"Determining the proper value for a sale of assets of this magnitude and complexity is not easy," Valley said "AJV has worked actively with the Trustees for more than three years to determine both an appropriate package of lands and a fair value for the assets

"The EVOS negotiators have been diligent and our discussions have been long, frank, and at times difficult we believe the agreement we have reached will provide both long term conservation of Afognak Island's outstanding natural resources for the public and a secure future for our partners"

McCammon said the Afognak purchase will greatly enhance restoration in the spill area.

"This is anticipated to be an addition to the Afognak Island State Park," she said "They're prime habitat for marbled murrelet pigeon guillemot salmon'

The EVOS Trustee Council manages a $900 million settlement paid by Exxon following the Prince William Sound oil spill in 1989 The largest oil spill in the U S, the Exxon Valdez oil tanker dumped 11 million gallons of crude which spread from Prince William Sound through the Kodiak Island Archipelago to Chignik south of Kodiak Island on the Alaska Peninsula

THE PENINSULA CLARION MARCH 31, 1998

EVOS considers purchase

ANCHORAGE (AP) — The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council is on the verge of what could be its most expensive land purchase, a $70 million deal for up to 40,000 acres on Afognak Island

The council apparently reached a conceptual agreement Friday with the landowners, the Alaska Public Radio Network reported Monday

Council Executive Director Molly McCammon said the spill council may meet Thursday to take action on the deal

"We've always been looking at acreage on northern Afognak Island, somewhere between 38,000 and 40,000 acres, basically as much as we could buy with the $70 million that the trustee council has earmarked for this acquisition," McCammon said

The landowner, Afognak Joint Ventures, and the trustee council must give final approval to the purchase agreement.

McCammon said the Afognak land would greatly enhance restoration in that part of the spill area

"This is anticipated to be a state acquisition These would be additions to the Afognak Island State Park," she said "They're lands that are prime habitat for marbled murrelet, pigeon guillemot, pink salmon, sockeye salmon," she said.

Trustees manage a $900 million settlement paid by Exxon following the Prince William Sound oil spill in 1989, which dumped 11 million gallons of crude into the water

Price per copy: $1.25 US • NEWSPAPER / DO NOT DELAY
Second Class Postage

Alaska's Paper of Record • Week of April 6, 1998
Vol. 22, No. 14
Mailed: April 2, 1998

PROFILE

Kris Kantzen, president, KO Productions Inc.

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ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE • ESTABLISHED 1976

JOURNAL OF ALASKA BUSINESS

Russian Far East still enticing

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Coming Attractions

Alaska SeaLife Center leads lineup of new visitor facilities on the Kenai Peninsula

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Beyond center, Peninsula's booming

By Nancy Pounds
Journal Reporter

Early indicators from various industries on the Kenai Peninsula forecast a strong year for 1998, especially in the tourism and oil and gas sectors

"We've heard from many small businesses that they are booming because they're taking money earlier," said Stefanie Gorder, executive director of the Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council

In Soldotna, some tourism companies also have seen increases in early season or May and June bookings, said Justine Polzin, executive director of the Soldotna Chamber of Commerce

"July is still our busiest month, but we try to spread it out," she said

The town also is slated to host the state high school hockey championships for the next three or four years, she said. Ten teams plus their fans and families will be in Soldotna for the weekend tournaments Also, the state high school cross-country running championship will be in Soldotna this fall

In retail, Soldotna remains strong with several major stores that attract shoppers from as far as Homer and Seward, she said Retail business also is on the rise in the city limits, coinciding with population increases in the area, Polzin said

In Kenai, two new training facilities, totaling $15 million for construction, are expected to attract more people to the area, said Richard Ross, Kenai city manager The airport regional firefighter school, paid for by the city and the Federal Aviation Administration, should be open by August A nearby industrial firefighter school is to open in May he said

The projects are jointly called the Pacific Rim Institute of Safety Management and include a company, Engineering Systems Inc of New Jersey, running the private center, said Kenai Mayor John J Williams

"This will probably be the most high-tech fire training center in the country," he said

The fire training centers could bring people from across the Pacific Northwest, said Laura Measles, executive director for the Kenai Chamber of Commerce

"We're looking forward to keeping our hotels and restaurants full through the tough times of the year when tourism isn't a reality," she said

The mayor also is encouraged about oil exploration in the Inlet and reopening of the Sunfish oilfield He also touted Alaska Petroleum Contractors' module construction for the Alpine project, to begin this spring, as beneficial to the area

Another source of nontourist income comes from Alaska Petroleum Contractors and Natchiq Inc , who are building modules in Nikiski to be shipped to the North Slope for oil-field service work, she said The project, set to start in May, should bring 200 jobs to the area for up to three years, she added

Harry Eaton, president of the North Peninsula Chamber of Commerce in Nikiski, believes the $750 million module project could benefit local businesses Other companies, like Forcenergy Inc, Phillips and Marathon, are currently exploring the Cook Inlet for oil which could be a positive economic sign for the area, he said

In Kenai construction, work is scheduled to begin this summer on the Challenger Learning Center, which is expected to open in December 1999 Measles said

Although the town hosts the only Carrs and Kmart stores on the Kenai Peninsula, retail strength could use improvement, Measles said "Kenai is more of a business hub than a retail hub," she said "We hope to enhance a specific area for a retail community since our area is so spread out "

Kenai mayor Williams also said commercial fishing is expected to be comparable to last year, totaling 3 million sockeye salmon caught at $21 million in gross revenue

Eight major fish processors and six smaller ones contribute significantly to the Kenai economy, he said

At the Kenai Visitors and Convention Center, visitor inquiries about the area are up from 635 for the first three months last year to 1,121 for the same period in 1998, said center executive director Kathy Tarr "It's a strong indicator that there's a lot of interest in Kenai," she said

In the Kenai timber sector, one problem for three small-sized sawmills is finding a steady supply of stock, he said

Al Poindexter, president of the Anchor Point Chamber of Commerce, expects logging to hold steady compared to last year as work continues on harvesting spruce bark beetle infested trees

Tourism and sport fishing for Anchor Point should prove strong for 1998, although commercial fishing for the area could falter, he said Housing construction for the community also is up this year he said

Seward gears up to capitalize on SeaLife Center's success

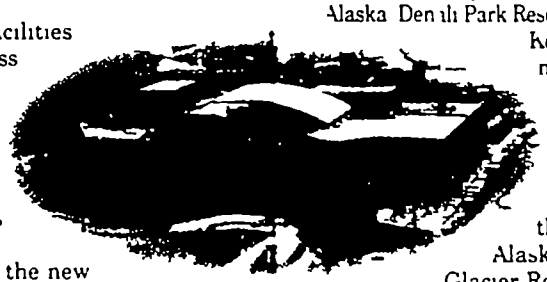
By Nancy Pounds
Journal Reporter

Many businesses and tourism operators in Seward are banking on the success of the Alaska SeaLife Center And tourism officials on the Kenai Peninsula believe the center — the first to open of several planned educational facilities in the area — will bring more Alaskans and visitors to the Peninsula year round

"Seward is going to see a huge increase in Alaskan visitors " said Stefanie Gorder executive director of the Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council

"For us this is the first step " she said The Challenger Learning Center in Kenai is scheduled to open in December 1999 and the North Pacific Volcano Learning Center in the Anchor Point area could open as early as 2002 she said

Developing these similar and new facilities has encouraged Kenai Peninsula businesses to work together to bring more visitors to the area she said



The Chugach Heritage Center owned by Chugach Alaska Corp and housed in the historic train depot in downtown Seward also is to open this spring

Downtown Seward merchants hope the new aquarium will attract more people to the city center which usually receives less traffic than the small boat harbor

"We re expecting it to redistribute the people who already come here " said Hugh Darling operator of Brown and Hawkins and president of the Seward Downtown Business Association

At least one cruise ship company Holland America Line plans to bring visitors to the SeaLife Center and spend more time in Seward rather than departing immediately to Anchorage he said

Also more developments like a possible three story hotel have been proposed for downtown Seward than ever before he said

The center probably will bring more visitors to the town but the result may bring downtown parking problems or other problems "Nobody knows what to expect to be honest Darling said

Future tourism shows enough promise that a lodge that opened last spring plans to add more rooms and a restaurant

The 5 500 square foot Resurrection Roadhouse overlooking the Resurrection River on Exit Glacier Road is scheduled to open June 1 The restaurant and bar should seat 140 people and serve about 20 Alaska beers a front desk and small gift shop also would be in the same building

Swenson Construction of Seward serves as the general contractor for the restaurant The building also features two outdoor decks that Seward residents consider unusual for the area she said Seward resident Robin Bolton has been hired as roadhouse chef She recently participated in a Sunset magazine cooking contest in San Francisco

Seward Windsong Lodge is adding 24 rooms for a total of 48 rooms this summer said Justin Ripley of Anchorage one of four partners for Alaska Windsong Lodges Other partners are Ripley s brother Jeff Maggie Kelly of Seward and Tom Tougas who operates Kenai Fjords Tours The company also operates lodges in Denali and Moose Pass plus bus service between its properties

All four have logged numerous years with large tourism companies in Alaska Denali Park Resorts Princess Tours or Holland America

Kelly believes visitors most want to see Alaska s natural splendor and even Alaskans enjoy Windsong s trademark lodge-style decor she said

Next winter the company plans to build another lodge building with 24 rooms she said Kelly hopes to operate the lodge year round in Seward catering to Alaskans winter recreation activities on Exit Glacier Road She plans to stay open until at least October this year

Kenai Fjords Tours also hopes to couple SeaLife Center tours with sightseeing cruises of Resurrection Bay Construction of a $360 000 floating dock to be moored adjacent to the center is in progress said Tim Lowe Kenai Fjords Tours project manager Measuring 116 feet by 30 feet the dock could serve as a tie up for company boats and other tour operators

The dock due to be completed May 20 also features a 20 foot by 50 foot covered passenger waiting area and walkway to the center he said The passenger pavilion should be completed by May 1 he said

Princess Tours and Holland America officials encouraged the company to build the facility so passengers could spend more time in Seward on the two tours he said

Kenai Fjords also is adding a 150 passenger vessel the Coastal Explorer to its fleet of 11 boats The new tour boat is due to operate in Alaska May 20

Seals, sea lions settle in at SeaLife Center

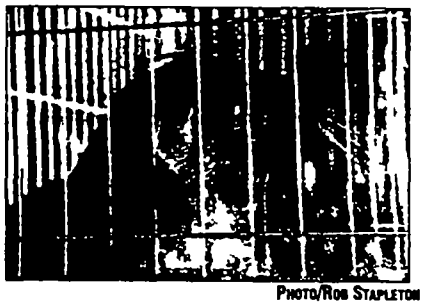
By Nancy Pounds
Journal Reporter

SEWARD — Anticipation is cresting like a wave for the opening of the $52 million Alaska SeaLife Center, which promises more visitor traffic and business for this community

"It's an exciting time to be here," said Donna Harris Sea-Life Center director of marketing

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. May 2 at the Resurrection Bay research and visitor facility. Center officials expect about 5,000 people to be in Seward for the opening which also will feature a street dance, entertainment and food vendors

Seward residents will get an earlier peek than other Alaskans at a special community celebration 1-6 p.m. April 25, featuring a barbecue to thank residents for their support, Harris said



PHOTO/ROB STAPLETON

Harbor seal, Sydney, was transported to Anchorage then Seward via Air National Guard C-130

A black tie gala is slated May 1 for the SeaLife Center Board of Governors

Admission to the 115,000 square foot facility is $12.50 for adults and $10 for children ages 4 to 16. From May to September the center will operate daily from 9 a.m.-9:30 p.m. From Oct. 30-April 30, the center will be open Wednesdays to Sundays from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. A typical tour could last up to two hours, Harris said

Numerous businesses in the state — from large cruise ship companies to local merchants — are hoping the new facility will score big with visitors and Alaskans. The project has been in development since 1990 when the fund-raising arm of the center, the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science, was formed

"My measure of success is to achieve and surpass our goals," said Kimbal Sundberg, executive director for the SeaLife Center

One goal for the first year of operation, Sundberg hopes to attract 275,000 people to the center. About 90 percent of those visitors will come in summer and could be mostly Alaskans rather than cruise ship passengers, Harris said

Another goal for the center is to bring 8,000 Alaska schoolchildren on educational tours in 1998. So far about 3,000 students are scheduled to visit the SeaLife Center until the school year ends and bookings are being accepted for the fall term, Sundberg said

The center also will strive to operate a marine mammal rehabilitation program, including radio tagging for later studies and supported by visitor ticket sales, he said

The first marine mammals arrived at the center March 30 aboard an Alaska Air National Guard C-130 from the Vancouver Aquarium in British Columbia. New SeaLife Center creatures are three Steller sea lions, Woody, Sugarloaf and Kiska, and two harbor seals, Pender and Sydney. The center also expects to receive six more harbor seals before the grand opening, two from the Seaside Aquarium in Oregon and four seals from Mystic, Conn., Harris said. A seabird exhibit features the deepest pool in North America, suited for diving Alaska birds

The center also has a tank to hold other marine mammals as large as a walrus or beluga whale, Harris said

Students will be some of the first visitors to see SeaLife exhibits. Seward elementary students were expected to take test tours at the facility in early April, Harris said. Other schoolchildren are scheduled to run through educational programs beginning April 9. The nocturne program, a youth overnight learning session, is set to begin April 15, and is sold out through the school year, Harris said

In late March, contractors were adding finishing touches to the center while staff members moved into their completed offices. Marine mammal tanks were filled with water, and work continued on other exhibits, like the tidal touch tank, which remained to be completed

During construction, the center employed about 100 people at any time, Sundberg said. The center should employ 55 full-time employees and up to 20 part-time seasonal workers, he added

"We've had a tremendous impact already on the Seward area," he said

Another 35-40 Seward residents have volunteered to lead tours or clean sea lion or seal tanks, Harris said

Five research projects will be under way by mid-April at the center, ranging from fish genetics to Alaska's decline in Steller sea lion populations, she said

Sea lions, seals move into new home in Seward SeaLife Center

By MAUREEN CLARK
Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Like a weary traveler who s spent hours in the air Sydney the seal grunted and stretched in her cage Monday afternoon, settling in for the last leg of the journey to her new home at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward

Sydney was one of two harbor seals and three Steller sea lions aboard an Alaska Air National Guard C-130 transport plane that carried the animals from Vancouver B C to Seward Dur ing a stopover in Anchorage, the animals lolled in their cages showing only mild interest in the customs inspectors and TV news crews that greeted their arrival

The five marine mammals were joining 22 sea birds as the first permanent residents of the SeaLife Center which will open its doors to visitors May 1

They are extremely well trained and used to us humans said Dr Michael Castellini re search director at the center Bi ologists hope the sea lions and har bor seals will help them learn more about declines in both species

The four-year-old Steller sea li- ons — Kiska Woody and Sugarloaf — came from the Vancouver Aquarium where they were outgrowing their hold- ing tanks They are named for islands along the Alaska coast that have sea lion breeding rook eries

We probably have the best habitat in the world for these ani mals Everything s been designed to accommodate full sized adult Steller sea lions, said Kim Sundberg executive director of the SeaLife Center

Woody the male already tips the scales at 550 pounds and could grow to about 1,000 pounds over the next five years Sundberg said Females Kiska and Sugarloaf weigh 350 pounds and could grow to 500 pounds The sea lions will be the largest animals at the center

Harbor seals Sydney and Pender were orphaned pups res cued off the coast of British Co- lumbia The 18 month-old seals have been living at the Univer sity of British Columbia Six more harbor seals are scheduled to arrive at the center over the next month

Steller sea lions in western Alaska were put on the list of endangered species last year There were as many as 140 000 in 1960 but that count fell to about 18 000 by last year

Harbor seals in Alaska also have seen steep declines since the early 1980s Sundberg said

The SeaLife Center will give scientists the opportunity to do controlled studies over a long pe riod of time in an effort to pin point the causes of those declines

We re trying to find the smoking gun Why aren t these sea lions surviving in the North Pacific? Sundberg said One theory is that it s a food-related problem

We re going to feed them dif- ferent diets and measure their blood and blubber content and overall fitness he said

In addition to helping research ers, the seals and sea lions are expected to be a major attraction at the SeaLife Center which is expected to draw about 200 000 visitors in its first year officials said

The sea mammals will live in outdoor tanks designed to re semble rocky coastal areas The habitat areas will have large glass windows so visitors can watch the animals

The arrival of the animals in Seward Monday marked a mile stone in the eight year develop- ment of the $55 million center

It s one of a series of big deals Mayor Bob Sato said ' It reaffirms that we re a can do city It s a dream come true for us '

roving i

Spring Break, Alaska Style

South to Seward for beach parties and fun in the sun

by Susan Beeman

Working stiffs as well as students need a spring break this time of year So while thousands of kids and college students celebrated a week of sleeping in every morning or took off to some trendy paradise I hit the road south, to Seward

Seward, not exactly famous for sunny coastlines greeted us with balmy overcast skies and no wind — a good day there! After sitting scrunched in the car for over two hours, we decided to first take a stroll around town to stretch our legs and enjoy the beach smells along the coastal bike path leading from the boat harbor to down town

Dainty waves nudged at flat disc shaped gray stones covering the shore Bird skeletons littered the rocks beside the path, some still partially cloaked in wet clingy feathers Little snow remained on the city park s picnic tables and landscaped grounds A young boy rode his bike unsupervised along the trail It felt good to be away from the rat race of Anchorage and I relaxed into the small town feeling

The off season peace won t last for much longer though as Seward is a popular destination for locals as well as visitors during summer The new Alaska SeaLife Center will most likely draw newcomers from both camps to view marine life in a grand endeavor that s been several years in the making The center is scheduled to officially open May 3, but hard hat tours are being offered now while the finishing touches are installed We peeked into huge salt water tanks still devoid of sea life but I could easily imagine a sea lion gliding gracefully past at eye level or a puffin diving down for its lunch trailing bubbles toward the surface of the water

For now visitors have to settle for fake starfish and mussels glued onto rocks and wandering through mostly empty alcoves and rooms A little imagination goes a long way in envisioning the final creation This institute hopes to educate the public and establish itself as a research center on the marine life of Resurrection Bay and the ecosystem of the Gulf of Alaska as a whole Once officially open the hefty admission price of $12 50 per adult should be worth the money

After checking out the Alaska SeaLife Center we meandered up through Seward s downtown area I was dying for a mocha so was undeniably bummed upon discovering that the Resurrect Art Coffeehouse was closed for the entire week of Spring Break Whaaa! Its lofty stained glass windows and inviting courtyard enticed me into planning another trip south in the near future

The museum however was open It is a conglomeration of disorganized yet interesting stuff of the past with a decidedly local flavor I leafed through a collection of photos from the 1964 earthquake including before and after shots of Seward s waterfront showing the damage done by the massive tidal surge spawned by the quake Also intriguing were fossilized woolly mammoth teeth photos of scraped up racers in the Mount Marathon Race held in Seward every Fourth of July, and the cross section of a tree nearly 400 years old

We awoke the next day to typical Seward weather: Drizzle fogged up the view across the bay toward the prison, and a nasty wind escalated as we ate an artery-clogging breakfast ...

We awoke the next day to typical Seward weather Drizzle fogged up the view across the bay toward the prison, and a nasty wind escalated as we ate an artery clogging breakfast in the hotel s cafe What to do but don our raincoats and stroll around the boat harbor?

No sooner had we begun our nautical tour when a young man aboard a Coast Guard vessel invited us all up for a look around their ship We filed through the wheelhouse and down a narrow ladder to the galley and mess and into the spotless thrumming engine room We crammed into the claustrophobic sleeping quarters then hoisted ourselves back up the ladder to the foredeck outside where our guide explained that even though the Coast Guard never uses their huge gun, which looked like a mini cannon under wraps the gunner s mate cleans it regularly He said Coast Guard personnel are always armed when boarding another vessel at sea

Our last effort at seeing Seward was a slow jouncing ride out to Miller s Landing where the reward for surviving the potholes was the discovery of a few incredible beach houses built on stilts We dodged newly fallen rocks in the narrow road on the way back to town then called it a day and headed back to the big city My spring break was over

THE SEWARD PHOENIX LOG

Seward Alaska | Volume 32 Number 30 | Thursday April 2 1998

EXXON VALDEZ
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Welcome to your new home

Roger Kane/LOG photos

Above Mike Castellini checks on Pender and Sydney, 18-month-old harbor seals and Kiska, a 4-year-old female Steller sea lion after they were loaded aboard a flatbed semi trailer Monday at Seward Airport Below Woody, a 4-year-old male Steller sea lion, has a look around on the outdoor labratory deck after his arrival at the SeaLife Center Monday

Mammals arrive at SeaLife Center

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

After roughly eight hours aboard an Alaska Air National Guard C 130H Hercules airplane Steller sea lions Woody Kiska and Sugarloaf along with harbor seals Pender and Sydney

See SeaLife Page 15

SeaLife ...

From Page 1

arrived in Seward on Monday

Capt Brent DeMoss, of the 144th Air Lift Squadron from Kulis Air Guard Base in Anchorage, piloted the plane and said not only were the seals and sea lions his most famous cargo to date, "they were certainly the loudest and stinkiest "

They are the Alaska SeaLife Center's first permanent residents

They're doing awesome " said SeaLife Center Mammal Supervisor Dennis Christen on Tuesday "They all came out of their cages real well They're eating and responding well and are getting back into their daily routine."

Christen has been the sea lions' trainer at the Vancouver Aquarium since they were brought into captivity four years ago He said the sea lions may have been a little frustrated, being in cages on an airplane all day, but other than that they traveled well

SeaLife Center Veterinarian Pam Tuomi also flew up with Christen and the marine mammals from Vancouver and said it was a long trip

She said the C-130 they flew on was able to fly low, which prevented the seals and sea lions from experiencing any of the ear popping associated with higher-altitude flights They were also able to maintain a temperature the pinnipedian passengers were comfortable with, about 50 degrees

After clearing U S Customs in Anchorage and allowing the media to photograph, videotape or film the five-star attracuons, the C-130 headed for Seward

Roger Kane/LOG photo

University of British Columbia researcher Sheila Thornton greets Pender, one of the 18-month-old harbor seals she accompanied to Alaska from Vancouver She has worked with the seals since they were pups

Christen said he was happy the weather was cooperating with the transport and they were able to fly into Seward, otherwise they would have had to board cargo vans and drive the Seward Highway

After landing at the airport here, where they were greeted by a couple dozen spectators, the SeaLife Center staff used a forklift to load the sea creatures aboard a flatbed trailer attached to a semi tractor and drove to the center

Whether they were standing outside at the SeaLife Center s Outdoor Laboratory or riding on the semi trailer, staffers shivered in the crisp temperatures and a brisk wind The animals on the other hand, greeted many an onlooker with a roar and paced their cages excitedly

The first one off the truck was Woody the largest of the sea lions The four-year-old male weighs in at about 550 pounds and will grow to about 1,000 pounds

When the gate on his cage went up, Woody came out and plunged into the pool on the outdoor lab, where he will be staying for a few days

The other animals were all taken to quarantined areas behind the artificial habitats they will soon call home

Tuomi said, the seals are already delighted with their new digs, as they have much more space than they did at the University of British Columbia The seals are about 18 months-old and were found abandoned on an island in British Columbia

Sheila Thornton a researcher from the university, accompanied Pender and Sydney to the SeaLife Center Thornton was conducting diving physiology research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the development of the seals' diving response She said the seals are now in Seward because they have outgrown the program they were involved with in Vancouver

Public Hearing Is Second Step...

Residents Discuss Options For Duck Flats

by Jan Thacker
Staff Writer

DUCK FLATS--Despite the small number of people attending the March 23 public hearing on the Valdez Duck Flats--less than 10--opinions were forthright, firm and varied

The public hearing was the second step after the release of a Dames & Moore report outlining options for improving the area Dames & Moore, an architecture and engineering firm based in Anchorage, was retained by the Prince William Sound Economic Development ncil at a cost of $63 400 to duct a comprehensive study of the Duck Flats

The series of plans outlined in the report vary from elaborate construction of an elevated boardwalk visitor center and viewing areas to simply doing nothing to the area and leaving it as it is

If it is decided to proceed with development, funding would come, for the most part, from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill trust which is earmarked for projects which preserve, enhance and recover lands damaged by the 1989 spill The Duck Flats area meets this criteria

The public hearing led by Dames & Moore representatives Jon Isaacs and Katrina Moss, drew comments on all aspects of development or non-development

Land needs

Isaacs discussed the need for land acquisition prior to any projected enhancement A hitch to any development he said may come due to the private ownership of some of the Flats, the economic development in other areas and obtaining title to land owned by the University of Alaska and the Galena-Nikolai Holding Company

"This could all be shot down if the university doesn't turn loose with the property" said Herb Hirsch Isaacs confirmed the statement

According to Nancy Lethcoe, the University has been approached with five offers and refused all of them "The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill trustees have spent more time negotiating on this land than any other" she said

Citizen comments

"Some people don't think the Duck Flats are valuable They just aren't aware of how they function," said Lethcoe, adding that more public education is needed

Some of the attendees noted that Potter's Marsh in Anchorage is a popular tourist attraction and is used an educational resource for school children

"That's a good place to start, with the young people and then it just sort of trickles along" commented Herb Hirsch

Lethcoe questioned whether local schools would use the Flats as a teaching tool "The school has an interesting bias on anything local," she said

Gregg Knutsen questioned upkeep and continued care for any facilities built "What would happen if a facility was damaged by an earthquake or catastrophic event? If we're going to be spending oodles of money to build whatever, some money needs to be set aside to remove it (the facility) if necessary"

Katherine Walters' comments advising to start small and move on slowly, were echoed by many at the hearing "Lots of times a community will develop a white elephant Not that Valdez would" she said which brought a burst a laughter "I like it the way it is knowing the little creatures are over there and I'm here and it's great I just get nervous when people get out into the environment I get real nervous"

"It's a very difficult issue Some of us are very torn on it" agreed Lethcoe "There's something to be said for starting simple, starting small with educational things"

Ecological concerns

Residents voiced concerns on ecological problems such as vehicle pollutants and chemicals used by DOT on the highway skirting the Flats However, comments weren't limited to this area "At Alyeska if someone spills a drop of oil they are about hanged But go to the Small Boat Harbor and it floats on oil and no one cares," said Knutsen

Participants in the hearing concluded that it is premature to discuss options until land acquisition is resolved, that viewing center, boardwalk, and visitor center options need further exploration, and that the next phase is to attempt to appropriate Exxon Valdez Oil Spill funding for further study

Isaacs expressed disappointment that more people didn't participate in a survey concerning the Duck Flats Only 155 people responded to the survey which went to local boxholders

Oil spill exhibition to open in Seward

The Pratt Museum's award-winning traveling exhibition, "Darkened Waters Profile of an Oil Spill," opens in Seward Saturday at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Seward Marine Science Education Center, adjacent to the new Alaska SeaLife Center

The exhibition examines the chronology of the grounding of the Exxon Valdez, initial responses, efforts to clean up and environmental impacts of America's worst oil spill "Darkened Waters" also explores the impact of the spill on people's lives Finally, "Darkened Waters" focuses on the continuing problem of oil spills and oil transportation worldwide by posing the question to viewers "Can people make a difference?"

A special reception is planned for local residents Monday Residents may attend the exhibition at no charge on Saturday, Sunday and Monday The center will be open from 3 30 to 9 30 p m on these dates In addition to the "Darkened Waters" exhibit, the Seward Downtown Business Association will show historic films of Seward in the center's auditorium

During the month of April, the exhibit will be open for visits by school groups Arrangements should be made directly with the Seward Marine Science Education Center by calling 907-224-5261

"Darkened Waters" will open to the general public May 2 with an admission charge of $3 for adults, $1 for children and families for $9 The exhibition closes Sept 13

ComFish jam-packed: Something for everyone

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
MARCH 30, 1998

By STEVE AVERY
Mirror Writer

By all accounts this year's ComFish hauled in a net of plusses. The free admission event running Thursday through Sunday was a solid bargain for locals, other Alaskans and folks from elsewhere.

A stroll around Hangar 3 on the Coast Guard base revealed a relaxed atmosphere laced with a steady hum of voices as a slew of visitors, exhibitors and vendors

Wayne Stevens, Kodiak Chamber of Commerce executive director and show manager expressed his satisfaction and took opportunity to "thank the community for their support and participation - which can make or break a show."

Stevens stressed exhibitors appreciation of the younger set's good behavior both this and last year.

Attendance was up from last March, he added, things ran smoothly, the weather cooperated and the exhibitors were pleased.

Among them on the back side of the hall were the fellows from National Weather Service.

Gary Ennen, official in charge of NWS Kodiak, reported several stoppers by who provided "a lot of feedback" on their services.

With him were Andy Brewington, marine forecaster from the Anchorage center, Ernie Salas, meteorologist tech in Kodiak, and Reuben Eaton III, producer of the TV show Alaska Weather.

The U.S. Coast Guard was there in force, occupying several booths.

One was devoted to describing CG distress communications.

TC3 Jamie Crockett of Commsta said her organization maintains a high frequency sideband for emergencies while Air Station runs on low frequency FM.

Together they provide weather forecasts, aides to navigation and emergency broadcasts.

Occupying the booth with Crockett were TC3 Carrie Dixon of Air Station Kodiak and TCC Jeff Slocomb of CommSta.

Along with high tech marine gear and equipment, insurance companies, concessionaires and volunteer organizations was a gallery of artwork, part of the Coast Guard art program. Priscilla Messner, noted aviation artist, served as curator.

Out of town exhibitors and vendors were well represented.

Jim Pruitt, representative of Seward Ship's Drydock, Inc., said his organization hits the show every year. "It's a good show for us."

He said they do significant business with neighbor Kodiak (175 miles south of Seward), citing the 10 foot extension of Al Burch's dragger "Dawn" and the Tusty's refurbishment nearing completion.

The full service company is busy building a 120-foot floating dock for the new attraction, "Seward Sealife Center," said Pruitt.

Kodiak's revitalized American Red Cross chapter occupied a prominent spot at ComFish.

CleeAnn McAllister, office assistant, said they were having a good time and their ongoing membership drive got a lift from ComFish exposure.

"Dozens of people have signed up for our CPR and first aid courses," she added.

McAllister was joined by Sheryl Palmer, disaster action team volunteer and John Palmer, chairman of the board.

A fun booth feature was the chapter's "Swedish Fish Contest," which invited visitors to guess the number of candy fish in a jar for a dollar a pop. $100 will go to the winner. The Kodiak Daily Mirror will provide a photo of the winner in a future issue.

Marty Owen, harbormaster, had an intriguing topic on hand at his booth related to Kodiak's hot harbor.

His intent was to educate the fleet about stray currents and how they lead to wastage of metal parts in water.

Many boats are improperly wired, he explained, releasing electrical current into the surrounding water (hence, hot harbor). The result is galvanic corrosion of props, rudders and rudder shoes, drive shafts and even engines.

He offered precautionary measures to reduce that damage, among them an "isolation transformer," which provides a "clean break" between the electrical power on a boat and A/C power from shore.

For more information, contact the Harbormaster's Office, 486-8080.

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
MARCH 30, 1998

Fish Tech Center gets $120,000 from Premier Pacific

By SUE JEFFREY
Mirror Writer

The University of Alaska Fisheries Industrial Technology Center is in further its mission to help build a partnership between the [illegible] industry and Alaska educational institutions thanks to a $120,000 donation from Premier Pacific Seafoods

David Galloway president of the company which operates a floating processor and eight trawlers in the Bering Sea made the presentation Thursday night during a reception for Gov Tony Knowles at the Fish Tech Center A strong supporter of developing new job opportunities in Alaska Knowles applauded the generous contribution from an industry leader who is concerned about maintaining quality product and skills workers in the seafood industry

As he presented the check Galloway explained that his company made the contribution to underscore its commitment to commercial fisheries which he said is Alaska s most valuable renewable resource the state s largest private sector employer and the second largest source of state revenues behind oil

The Partnership is very proud to be able to support the development of educational and research programs that will help guide the Alaskan industry into the 21st century ' he said

First off Galloway donated $20 000 to the University of Alaska to help fund research teams this summer who will try to identify the reasons why section populations in Alaska waters

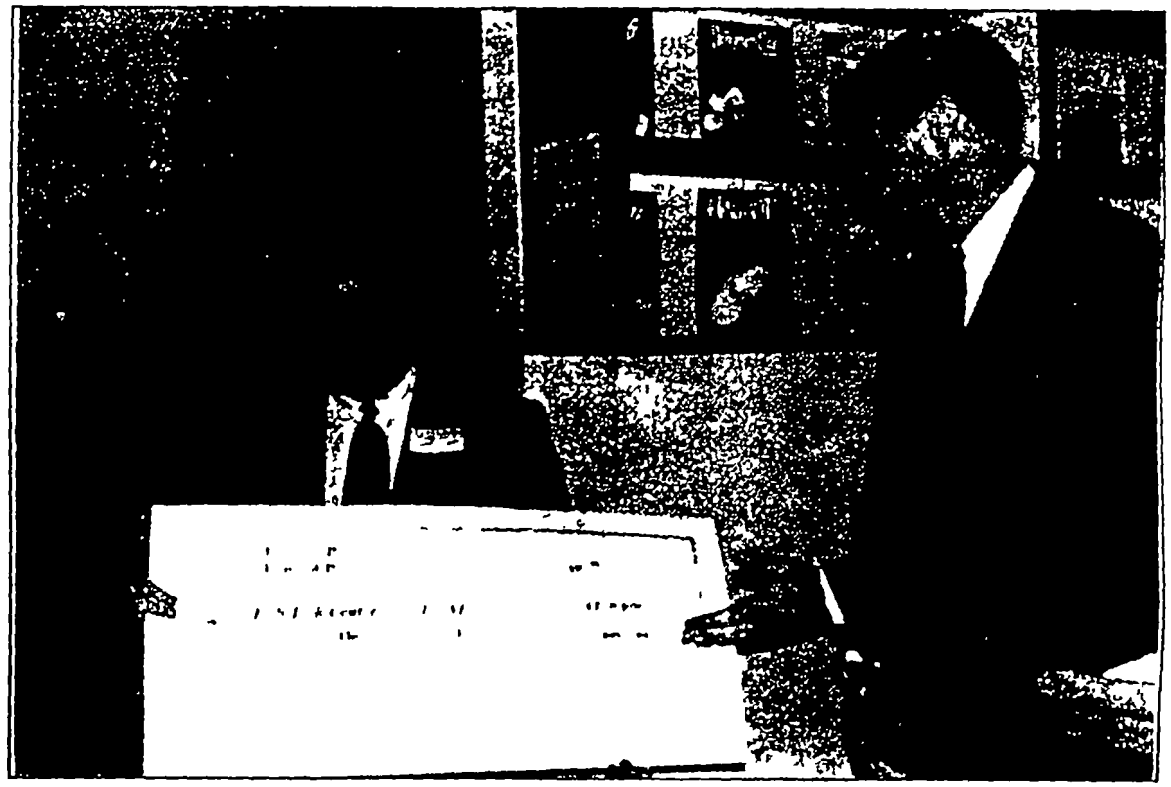
The Fish Tech Center and the UAF Marine Advisory Program already have plans for the remaining $100 000 donated to fund education and training courses

We will create courses in seafood harvesting and processing for K 12 teachers in Alaska to use in develop curriculum for 4th 7th and 10th graders said Dr Scott Smiley director of the UAF Fishery Industrial Technology Center (Fish Tech Center) Personnel said the cost of this project will be $20 000

For another $30 000 the Fish Tech Center and the Marine Advisory Program will develop video training programs for short courses in seafood safety processing hygiene marketing and quality issues for seafood processing personnel

Finally, Fish Tech and the Marine Advisory Program plan to spend $50 000 to develop a curriculum and team of professionals to help train mid level seafood processing personnel in business and management concepts

Educational programs such as these "will ensure that Alaska's commercial fishing and processing industry remains healthy and continues to provide meaningful career opportunities for future generations of Alaskans Galloway said



Sue Jeffrey photo

University of Alaska Regent Dan Ogg, left, Dr Scott Smiley, director of the UA Fairbanks Fishery Industrial Technology Center, and Gov Tony Knowles applaud a $120,000 donation the university received Thursday from Premier Pacific Seafoods, a company which operates a floating processor and eight trawlers in the Bering Sea pollock fishery

His company, a diversified fisheries marketing and management company, manages the S S Ocean Phoenix an at-sea processor and its fleet of eight catcher boats primarily in the Bering Sea pollock fishery

The Ocean Phoenix is the only fisherman owned pollock processor operating in the Bering Sea The fishermen also operate the fleet of family-owned trawlers which deliver pollock to the mothership

Galloway s company is also a member of the North Pacific Seafood Coalition a group of onshore processors motherships and independent catcher boats working to increase the inshore pollock allocation, which the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will take up in April

Local scientists share in federal grants

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Funding for marine research was given a Congressional boost this month with the re authorization of the nation s Sea Grant programs through the year 2003

Funding was increased by $8 million nationwide, with $64 8 mil lion to be divided between Sea Grant programs in 29 states through a competitive review process

The Alaska Sea Grant College Program is based at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences

This year, programs in Alaska have a $1 3 million budget used to study commercial sport and subsistence fisheries, basic and applied marine sciences, and fisheries research, which includes projects designed to improve seafood quality

Projects under way include an economic assessment of the Kenai Peninsula sport halibut fishery, studies on the health of Steller sea lions and harbor seals, and a study of the reproductive biology of gold en king crabs, under way at the Institute of Marine Sciences here

The study of the golden king crabs is one-year-old and will be funded for a total of three years The $70 000-a-year project, run by Judy McDonald has some specific goals and has already yielded previously unknown information

' We're just getting a handle on how long females carry eggs Nobody knew that before Females carry their eggs about 11 months she said

McDonald said she wants to find out at what size males and females become sexually mature how many females a male can service what size a male must be to breed and how much time elapses between molts

Roger Kane/LOG photo

Judy McDonald, a labratory technician at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Seward Marine Center, lifts the belly plate of a golden king crab to reveal a clutch of roughly 20,000 eggs

An average clutch size is about 20 000 eggs McDonald said she s also studying how long it takes for an egg to hatch

We re in communication with crab people all over the world and we share information What we re trying to do with each person working on little pieces of the puz zle is get a good picture of what s happening she said

As the information comes together it will be of use to other researchers commercial and sport fishermen and other industry groups McDonald said

She said it s important for commercial managers to understand the dynamics of clutch sizes to accurately estimate recruitment, what size crabs are best left in the water and when males become functionally mature

What s widely known is that golden king crabs live in very deep water deeper than blue red, tanner or opilio crabs They live on rocky inclines and are usually not harmed when they are brought to the surface unless they are physically injured or exposed for too long to freezing air temperatures

They are frostbitten easily and will usually die from such exposure but not until months later, McDonald said

They don t know about frostbite in their world so they have no mechanism to deal with it she said

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA and Kodiak's Fish Tech Center received a $120,000 grant from the Ocean Phoenix partnership, a Bering Sea pollock fishing cooperative According to company president Dave Galloway, the money is earmarked for research and education $20,000 will go to marine mammal studies, and the remaining funds will be used as seed money for a curriculum for kindergarten through 12th grade instructors to learn more about the fishing industry and its importance to the state Funds also will be used to develop videos that teach about food quality, and some money will develop a program for a group of three professors to teach midlevel managers of fish companies about business, marketing and distribution

JOURNAL OF ALASKA BUSINESS & COMMERCE
APRIL 6, 1998

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Dave Gibbons has been appointed forest supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, which flanks Anchorage and stretches along the Southcentral coast Gibbons has been acting supervisor for the country s second largest national forest

Sea Grant wins funding boost, to run through 2003

By Carrie Sloan Lehman
Journal Reporter

The Alaska Sea Grant College Program in Fairbanks got a financial boost when Congress voted unanimously to re-authorize the nation's Sea Grant programs through 2003 The Sea Grant Re authorization Act will provide $64 8 million in 1999, an increase of nearly $8 million from 1998 The funding will be divided among the 29 Sea Grant programs across the nation

Alaska's Sea Grant Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, will receive $1 3 million in 1998 and an additional $1 3 million in 1999 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration The money funds economic studies of commercial, sport and subsistence fisheries, applied and basic marine and fisheries research, and projects aimed at improving seafood quality

"The bottom line is that Congress thinks Sea Grant should have more money next year than this year," said Lee Stevens, a Sea Grant spokesman in Washington, D C "There was unanimous support for Sea Grant and agreement that Sea Grant uses the taxpayers dollars for worthwhile purposes"

The state's research focuses on two major goals, said Alaska Sea Grant Director Ron Dearborn understanding the natural and human-caused changes in the North Pacific Ocean, and maximizing the value of the state's seafood production

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration also awarded an $800,000 grant to UAF to continue an undersea research program

Sen Ted Stevens, R Alaska, co-sponsored the bill, and Rep Don Young, R Alaska, sponsored the bill in the House

Sound currents show oil could reach Flats

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Oceanographers with the Prince William Sound Science Center have discovered that currents in the Sound flow more toward the Copper River Flats than was previously thought

"We sort of knew that the flow at Hinchinbrook Entrance could be inward or outward," said oceanographer Shari Vaughan "But I think most people assumed the flow at Montague Strait was outward, and to have three drifter tracks, showing the opposite — it surprised me '

Five drifting buoys were deployed over several months in 1996 and 1997 The buoys showed that there are two counterclockwise gyres in the Sound, one in the Central Sound north of Hinchinbrook Entrance, the other between Perry and Naked Islands, over the deepest part of the Sound They showed that currents also flow into the Sound at Montague Strait, and out through Hinchinbrook Entrance

One buoy deployed in May of 1997 left the Sound through Hinchinbrook Entrance and headed east to approximately within 10 miles of Kayak Island then headed back past the Sound went up Montague Strait again, back out Hinchinbrook Entrance traveling west, and ended up in Shelikof Straits

The buoy path shows that summer currents at 30 to 50 feet along the shelf of the Gulf of Alaska may flow either westward or east, toward the fishing grounds of the Copper River Delta

The buoy path shows that summer currents at 30 to 50 feet along the shelf of the Gulf of Alaska may flow either westward, or east, toward the fishing grounds of the Copper River Delta.

Previous studies used fixed current meters moored in Montague Strait and Hinchinbrook Entrance and past results indicated that although the currents could move in the opposite direction, the basic path of the currents into the Sound was northward, through Hinchinbrook Entrance, counterclockwise across the sound, and southward through Montague Strait

Drifting buoys record their path by sending global positioning system coordinates to a satellite that transmits the data back to the Science Center To eliminate the influence of wind a large canvas bag called a drogue is attached to each buoy It acts as a drag, and records the measurements 30 to 50 feet below the surface

Jody Seitz is a radio producer and writer who lives in Cordova

THE PENINSULA CLARION MARCH 29, 1998

Decline of harbor seals remains mystery to scientists

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill

Harbor seal numbers in the Gulf of Alaska began dropping about 20 years ago In Prince William Sound, biologists noticed their numbers declining about 1985 While the negative population trends continue in the sound, their populations are thriving in southeast Alaska and the population is showing signs of stabilizing in Kodiak

About two years ago, Alaska biologists Mike Castellini and Brian Fadely met another seal researcher who had found some interesting patterns in the blood of harbor seals from the North Atlantic Dr Paul Thompson, of Scotland, found that the blood chemistry of seals changed with their diet In particular, the size of red blood cells increased when they shifted from eating high fat content fish such as herring, to pollock and cod

Thompson wanted to know if biologists found the same thing in harbor seals here The collaborative effort has helped eliminate some reasons for population declines, and has helped scientists focus more closely on the exact nature of the problem

Fadely, now with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau, says at first he didn't find anything exceptional On the whole, the harbor seal blood looked healthy 'Any veterinarian looking at the blood of these seals would say they are healthy,' said Fadely

And he found no serious differences in the health and condition in seals from Southeast Alaska from those in Prince William Sound

What he found were trends that are considered "subclinical " They do not represent a lack of health, but are changes in the blood chemistry that occur according to where seals live, the time of year and between years

"We see this change throughout several years, which is consistent with what the fisheries biologists are saying about the relative abundance of pollock and herring in that area

To better understand what they are seeing in the wild studies of captive animals are needed Fadely said

'That way we will know what the animals are being fed, he said We can take continuous measurements of its health and fatty acids accumulations based on diet, learn how stable isotopes change based on diet, what diets are best for the animals and how well they assimilate them "

The puzzle still exists If the animals are in good condition and their blood looks healthy then what is wrong? According to Fadely, it could be a number of things

'It might be our sampling that we re missing the animals that are compromised, or we have it in our data and haven't seen it yet," he said Or another possibility is that it isn't health-related at all '

Scientists hope to get a better understanding of how diet affects the seals especially pups and juveniles, in studies at the Alaska SeaLife Center beginning this year

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

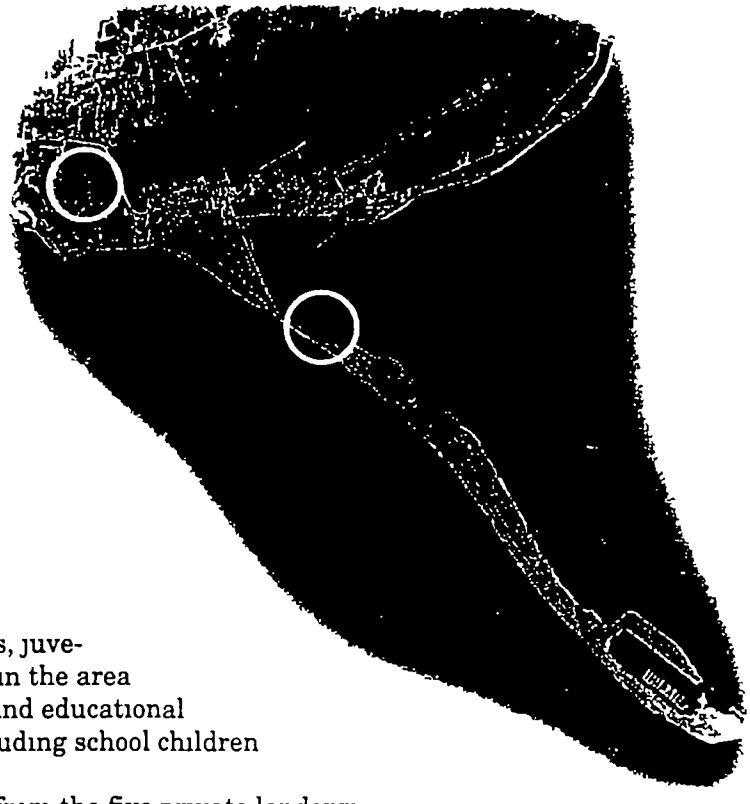
LANDMARKS

Newsletter of Kachemak Heritage Land Trust Spring 1998

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust preserves for public benefit, land with significant natural, recreational, or cultural values by working with willing landowners

Cooperative Effort Saves Open Space on Homer Spit

The clock was ticking as purchase options were about to expire, when, on January 22, Governor Tony Knowles used an executive privilege to approve permanent protection for 68 acres of intertidal land on both sides of the Homer Spit near Green Timbers and 38 acres along Beluga Slough across from McDonald's Restaurant (See circles on map) Two years ago, Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, the Trust for Public Land (a national land conservation organization with a northwest regional office in Seattle), and the City of Homer joined forces to prepare an acquisition proposal for the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council



Because of the importance of these parcels and the imminent threat of development made obvious by nearby permitted activities already taking place, it was imperative to act quickly to ensure their permanent protection Tens of thousands of shorebirds are attracted each spring to these intertidal flats to feed on invertebrates When such crucial habitat is lost, these travelers do not easily find alternate routes Harbor seals, juvenile salmon, and a variety of waterfowl species also feed in the area These same tidelands provide high-quality recreational and educational opportunities for thousands of visitors and residents including school children and scientists

The Trust for Public Land secured purchase options from the five private landowners and KHLT rallied bird-watchers and many others to express their support for this small parcel program acquisition A hearty thank you to each of you who wrote letters—according to EVOS Executive Director Molly McCammon, this project had more public support than any proposal to date!

The project moved smoothly through the acquisition process until it met an unexpected snag in the State Legislature EVOS purchases must receive a legislative blessing even though no state money is being spent We feared the project would be lost when we were told it could not be reviewed until late March, long after the purchase options expired To our relief, at this critical point Governor Knowles interceded with his approval

The City of Homer will own and manage these properties under a protective conservation easement held by the U S Department of Justice Coupled with adjacent land the City has dedicated to its newly designated conservation zone, a neighboring property under conservation easement with KHLT, and the State's Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area designation, this acquisition will preserve forever resources on which both wildlife and people depend Simultaneously, the U S Fish and Wildlife Service has acquired key Beluga Slough properties intended for protection and minimal-impact use as a visitor center and a network of pedestrian trails Each of these projects will enhance the value of the others toward creating an attractive environment for recreation and wildlife conservation We appreciate this opportunity to work with the Trust for Public Land and the City of Homer on a project so very important to Homer's economy and to its quality of life

Dear Friends,

Logging is going on all around us due to the wide spread spruce bark beetle infestation In fact, the beetle is rapidly changing the face of the Homer area and will soon seriously impact our neighbors to the north

As many of you know, KHLT holds a conservation easement preserving traditional agricultural activity and natural habitat on Yule Kilcher's 660 acre-homestead east of Homer The easement allows commercial logging on a sustainable yield basis and cutting trees for disease and insect control However, this easement was written before any of us understood the potential impact of the beetle infestation

The realization that it was necessary to log most of their timbered land all at one time because of the beetle infestation was hard for the Kilchers to accept, and we applaud their conservation ethic throughout this process Their harvest plan requires the loggers to avoid thickets of young spruce and to leave wide corridors along the several creeks undisturbed. After the logging is completed next fall, the Kilchers will decide what land to put under agricultural use and where to concentrate reforestation

Although we have spent extra time in meetings and monitoring the logging progress, we feel very good about how well this conservation easement is working The beetle learning curve has been steep for us all, and we appreciate Kilchers' cooperation in trying to do what is best for the land

We also appreciate YOU as members! Your continuing support as we grow and change to meet the Kenai Peninsula's needs is very important Even as we build our stewardship and operating accounts and bank toward long term sustainability, we need your support to continue to be proactive in our efforts We could not be successful without you!

Barbara Seaman

Barbara Seaman
Executive Director

Trustee Council Invites Comments on Restoration Reserve

The Restoration Reserve is the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council's savings account, a fund expected to be worth about $140 million by October, 2002, after the last settlement payment by Exxon The reserve was set aside to fund long-term restoration activities Exactly how the fund will be used has yet to be determined

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust strongly supports use of some of the Restoration Reserve funds for continued large and small parcel habitat acquisition, protection, and restoration There cannot be a better way to protect and assure the existence of viable habitat than to preserve it as such forever To better achieve this end, we believe that purchase of conservation easements should become a high priority Instead of outright purchase of sensitive lands, a fund within the Restoration Reserve could purchase enough of the development rights to important parcels of land to preserve significant conservation values, while keeping them in private hands (and on the tax rolls) Stewarding these conservation easements would ensure long-term monitoring and data collection as well, and far less money will be spent for far more protection

The Trustee Council is currently seeking public input for possible uses of the fund Twenty-five public meetings will be held throughout the spill region prior to a formal decision in the fall of 1998 KHLT encourages your participation in this process

To submit your ideas and comments to the Council, please consider the following questions

- Should a permanent endowment be set up with annual dividends used to finance restoration projects? Or should the fund be budgeted for expenditure over a 10-20 year period?
- Should funds be used to protect habitat? Should they be used for research and/or community restoration projects? What other options should be considered?
- How should the fund be governed? Should a new trustee structure be developed? Should the 17 member Public Advisory Group continue to exist?

Comments about the reserve are due by April 30th, and can be sent to the Restoration Office at 645 G Street #401, Anchorage, AK 99501, or e-mailed to kerih@oilspill state ak us

KHLT Jigsaw Puzzles for Sale

- Small 48-piece and more challenging 150 piece puzzles make great gifts any time of year
- Scenes of KHLT protected properties and other special spots on the Kenai Peninsula
- $9 and $14
- Available at all three KHLT offices

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
"COMFISH" SUPPLEMENT
MARCH 24, 1998

Council seeks restoration input

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council seeks public input on the future of restoration activities in the spill region and possible uses for its $140 million savings account

A public meeting will be held at the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly Chambers, Saturday, Mar 28 at 7 p m for this purpose

Four years ago, after an extensive public process, the Council adopted its Restoration Plan combining habitat protection, research and monitoring, and general restoration projects But it also created a savings account — the restoration reserve — to fund long-term restoration activities

The Restoration Reserve gives the Council the option of combining some sort of restoration program after the final payment from the Exxon Valdez civil settlement is received from Exxon in the year 2001 The reserve is expected to be valued at approximately $140 million by 2002

The Trustee Council seeks ideas from the public on how this reserve account should be used Several key questions should be considered

Should a permanent endowment be set up with annual revenue used to finance restoration projects? Or should the fund be budgeted for expenditure over a shorter time frame (e g 10 or 20 year periods)?

Should the funds be used to protect more habitat? Should it be used for research and monitoring? Should it be used for community-based restoration projects? What other ideas should be considered?

How should the fund be governed? Should a new trustee structure be developed?

To help answer these questions the Trustee Council's staff is holding public meetings in communities throughout the spill region as well as Anchorage Fairbanks and Juneau

Further information can be obtained by calling the Restoration Office at 907-278-8012 or toll free from Alaska 1-800-478-7745

Any oily clothes in your closet?

By Tony Bickert
Valdez Vanguard

The Valdez Museum wants your oily clothes, but only if they're stained by the 11 million gallons of North Slope crude that spilled from the tanker Exxon Valdez in 1989

Museum director Joe Leahy, who has begun to prepare a special exhibit for the 10th anniversary of the spill next year — the ninth is March 24 — is searching for oily clothes, rocks, spill response equipment and clean-up tools

He also wants to hear stories from folks who in 1989 witnessed this quiet company town of 3,686 boom to an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 within the following few months

"We're interested in people's impressions and evidence on how the community was affected

See Spill, Page 15

Spill ...

From Page 1

and changed by this ' Leahy said

From the national media blitz to Exxon s high-paying rock and otter scrubbing jobs, Valdez became a standing-room-only town and remained so through most of 1989

"There are legends that hang out from that kind of thing, ' Leahy said ' For instance, during April and May of 1989, it's said there were more aircraft going in and out of here than went through (Chicago's) O'Hare in a comparable period of time Those are the kinds of things we re going to try and track down to see if there are any truth to the legends "

Leahy said he s also interested in obtaining artifacts related to habitat and species restoration, "to represent how the community and industry have worked to improve the safety of oil shipment in Prince William Sound "

He said those who would like to donate or lend contributions to the exhibit should call the museum at 835-2764

New Easement Protects Important Moose Corridors

On December 9, Ed Bailey permanently protected the natural habitat and moose travel corridors on his 32 acre homesite atop the Homer Bluff off Skyline Drive KHLT is pleased to hold this conservation easement because the property is located in one of our high prior ity protection areas as identified in our long term protection strategy Several wildlife corridors on the sharply defined ridges between the bluff and the benchlands below provide essential routes between summer and winter habitats The seven acres along the bluff consist of mixed spruce and cottonwood stands as well as willow and alder thickets A well-worn lateral trail runs along the bluff's edge and is used year-round by mammals in this transition zone In addition, the property is in close proximity to the Anchor River/Fritz Creek Critical Habitat Area and one corner abuts 80 acres of Kenai Peninsula Borough land desig- nated for habitat and watershed protection

Ed's conservation easement prohibits subdivision and limits development to one two-acre pre-existing homesite for single- family residential or nonprofit use Further disturbance of the natural vegeta tion outside the homesite is generally prohibited except for a limited network of pedestrian trails

Executive Director Barbara Seaman, President Betsy Webb, and Nina Faust watch Ed Bailey sign his easement as Secretary Toby Tyler stands ready with his official seal

Like most conservation easements protecting natu ral habitat, this property is not open to public access, which raises an often-asked question, "What is the public benefit if the public can't use it?" Our community benefits because limiting development on this property significantly enhances the viability of many wildlife species we are fond of living among, especially our increasingly displaced moose population Setting aside high-value natural habitat helps maintain the aesthetic qualities that make this such an attractive place to live and visit, and this contributes directly to a healthy economy

Ed and his partner Nina Faust came to Homer in 1981, he as a biologist, to open the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge and she, as a teacher, to begin the Quest program at the high school Both retired from their professional responsibilities in the mid-90s to devote more time to the environmental causes close to their hearts They volunteer for at least one major conservation project each year enjoying visits to exciting destinations such as Haleakala Crater National Park on Maui where they helped re-establish the Nene (Hawai ian goose) and to Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge where they worked in the California Condor Recovery Program Other working vacations sent them to the remote islands on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula and to Channel Island National Park in California

Ed and Nina participate in the local Natural Re- sources Conservation Service Wildlife Habitat Improve- ment Program, through which they are developing wildlife ponds on their property and replanting depleted fields with grasses to improve natural habitat Nina pre- pared the Baseline Documentation for their conservation easement describing the natural values and condition of their property at the time of the donation They are now concentrating on expanding the protected natural habitat in their neighborhood by acquiring adjacent parcels with the intent of including them under easement with KHLT Asked how he developed such a strong conservation ethic, Ed responded " As a refugee from southern California I have witnessed the metasta sizing subdivisions and shopping malls and don't want to see it replicated here I want to set aside important wildlife corridors to allow free movement of moose between summer and winter ranges and avoid fragmen tation of habitat occurring in most other locations "

KHLT was delighted when Ed and Nina responded to our introductory materials promoting our Homer bench protection program and we look forward to work- ing with them to provide an expanded sanctuary along this important wilderness corridor

A Surprise Donation from Dr. and Mrs. Henry T. Tyler

In 1991 a forward-thinking group of Homer residents established a community foundation, based on successful models in other cities, to serve the greater Homer area The Homer Foundation attracts gifts and bequests from many donors to create a permanent endowment dedicated to improving the quality of life for Homer area citizens Six local nonprofit organizations including KHLT have endowments set up with the Foundation We have always dreamed that some day our initial small investment would yield a substantial return to help meet our operating and stewardship responsibilities

Last fall, when the Foundation investment report arrived, we were surprised to find that our balance had increased by some 400% due to a posthumous donation from Dr and Mrs Henry T Tyler It took no great search to learn that this was arranged by our long-time member and Board of Directors Secretary Richard (Toby) Tyler

"When my stepmother died last year, I was amazed to find that my folks had left me their insurance policies Of the options offered, I decided to cash them out, have the income tax deducted in advance, and then spend or donate the remainder Since my folks had been well aware of the organizations which I have long supported, I felt that perhaps this is what they would have wanted," Toby announced "I have had some difficulty figuring out why my father, who died ten years ago, did not do a better job of arranging for the distribution of his holdings beforehand Gifts of large sums of money may be given away every year, and being gifts, can be taken as an income tax deduction by the giver while, being a gift, they are tax-free for the recipient," he added "On the other hand, it has been great fun being allowed to play the philanthropist with someone else's money!"

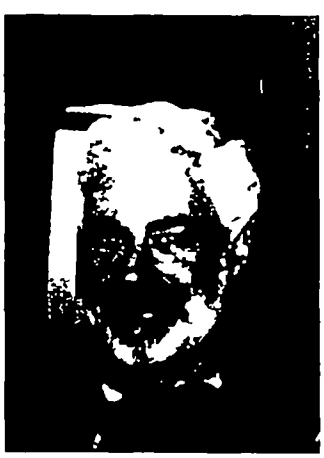
Dr and Mrs Henry Tyler

Thank you, Toby, for deciding to "play the philanthropist" to the benefit of KHLT! You have set a wonderful example for others who may wish to contribute to greater Homer organizations by designating a donation through the Homer Foundation

New Board Member Introduced at Annual Meeting

We were delighted to see an overflow crowd at the annual meeting in November Although we would like to believe the excellent attendance was due to an upsurge of interest in KHLT business, we have no doubt that the draw was primarily Joel Gay's excellent slide show Skiing the Harding Ice Field Thank you, Joel, for a fascinating program

As usual, part of the evening's business was the election of board members Incumbents Marian Beck, Michelle Brown, and Toby Tyler were re-elected Board member of the year, Toby Tyler, and volunteer-of the year, Vickie Rich ,were recognized by the member ship



John Mouw

We are happy to introduce our new board member John Mouw who is filling the remainder of Fred Harnisch's term

Attracted by what he calls "the wonderful spirit of Homer," John and his wife, Rika, moved from Vail, Colorado, in May of last year Before coming to Homer John worked as a hotel manager and in the field of real estate John has been active in the Center for Coastal Studies and has done water quality monitoring for the Cook Inlet Keeper Program He is also a member of The Nature Conservancy Asked what made him volunteer for the Land Trust, John replied, "I want to contribute to the community, rather than just occupy space "

Check out our website at
http //www xyz net/~khltkbr

We are not fully linked yet but California computer guru Stan Purington is guiding us into the modern age as fast as we Luddites can compile the information he needs

Creative Ways to Donate to KHLT

You can leave a lasting legacy of conserved land on the Kenai Peninsula and make a significant difference in the long-term financial health of KHLT by including us in your estate and financial planning People of all levels of wealth can help us Many gifts to KHLT provide substantial tax or other financial benefits to donors The following forms of donation are just some of the ways to creatively give to KHLT

Gifts of Cash are the simplest way to donate to KHLT Friends or loved ones might greatly appreciate a donation to recognize an anniversary, birthday, or retirement We will publish the names of the donors and those memorialized in our semi-annual newsletter Such a gift can help leave a legacy for someone special in your life to help us save irreplaceable lands on the Peninsula

Gifts of Appreciated Securities may help to reduce or avoid capital gains taxes

Gifts of Land with or without significant natural values may also give you an income tax deduction Trade lands are donated to KHLT to be sold in order to generate money to promote our conservation program

Gift of a Conservation Easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and KHLT that permanently limits uses of the land to protect its conservation values The land stays in private ownership and use, and KHLT ensures that the conservation restrictions are honored over time A gift of a conservation easement may offer the landowner income tax, estate tax, and/or property tax relief

Life Tenancy Gifts occur when the donor gives land to KHLT while retaining the right to use the property for life Such a gift may create a tax deduction

Charitable Gift Annuity transfers an asset to KHLT KHLT then agrees to make regular, fixed payments to the donor for life

Gifts by Bequest involve gifts to KHLT through a provision in your will This allows you to make a future gift to support KHLT

Charitable Remainder Trusts can help you have life income, provide a charitable tax deduction and may help you avoid capital gains and estate taxes Your financial advisor can help you establish a CRT

These are just a few suggestions about ways for you to help KHLT while potentially providing you with some favorable tax consequences If you would like more information about how to include KHLT in your financial planning, please call us at (907) 235 5263 or write us at Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, P O Box 2400, Homer, AK 99603 We will be happy to discuss confidentially ways you may give to KHLT

Please note that KHLT does not give tax or legal advice We suggest that you work with a qualified financial planner or tax attorney to maximize your financial benefits

Seward Slide Shows Swell Coffers

Seward residents enjoyed the expertise and adventurous spirit of three Alaskans in January and February As a benefit for the local office of Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, long-distance bicyclist Frank Lahr described his round the world trip He endured and enjoyed intense heat, welcoming strangers, AK47s and surprisingly few flat tires Carl Tobin, Alaska Pacific University professor and wetland crazy, took us with him on a mountain bike trip across the Alaska Range Showing remarkable endurance, determination, and mental stamina, he and two others biked, hiked, slogged, and bushwhacked over 700 miles on a diet of Malt-O-Meal, liquid butter, and energy bars Lastly, local wildlife biologist and author Dave Smith gave a fascinating and entertaining debunking of many myths surrounding brown bears

Thanks to all who helped in this success, especially to KHLT members Jim and Sue Pfeiffenberger who wrestled with all the details and ensured a flawless slide show series

Congratulations to Wayne Biessel, Caroline Wilder, and Roger Herrnstein for winning three great raffle prizes last December Special thanks to Homer Saw & Cycle for providing the ski package, winter jacket, and backpack to encourage brisk ticket sales All proceeds directly benefit KHLT's land conservation program

Assistant Director Marie McCarty shows off our new Kachemak Bay Region outreach display generously funded by the Homer Foundation

FINANCIAL PROFILE

	December 31, 1996	December 31,1997
REVENUE		
Donations, memberships, and grants	$61,033	$86,232
Special Events (net)	3,706	6,866
Investment Income	2,686	6,306
Other Revenue	-0-	6,154
TOTAL REVENUE	$67,425	$105,558
EXPENSES		
Land Protection Program	$7,454	$14,101
Stewardship/Property Management	5,749	9,732
Outreach/Public Education/Conferences	3,959	20,654
Management & General	10,212	8,087
Fundraising	5,883	7,795
TOTAL EXPENSES	$33,257	$60,369
ASSETS and FUND BALANCES		
Members	412	385
Conservation easements to date	6	7
Acres under easement	872	905
Conservation land acquisitions to date	4	6
Acres owned for conservation	217	395
Acres owned for trade	25	25
Value of property acquisitions	$277,973	$439,773
Equipment	$14,447	$14,447
Stewardship & Bondurant Funds designated funds to monitor and defend KHLT conservation easements and conservation properties	$15,488	$35,490
Homer Foundation Endowment endowment fund to generate income to monitor KHLT conservation easements	$5,766	$5,766
Klingel Fund designated revolving fund to purchase or lease land, conservation easements, or trail easements	$21,933	$29,810
General Reserves designated fund intended to become an endowment to help pay KHLT operating expenses	$14,635	$24,299
Designated Operating Funds to pay for specific program expenses	$19,719	$16,821
General Fund unrestricted funds to pay program and general operating expenses	$22,983	$34,081
TOTAL ASSETS	$392,944	$600,487
Liabilities	$116	$673
NET ASSETS	$392,828	$599,814

Building our Peninsula-wide Land Trust

Thanks to generous funding received last July from the U S Environmental Protection Agency, administered through The Nature Conservancy of Alaska (TNC), KHLT is spreading its wings across the Kenai Peninsula The Kenai River Region (KRR) office in the Soldotna Blazy Mall is in full operation in space we share with the Kenai Watershed Forum and the Kenai River Project of TNC who are also working on Kenai River watershed protection programs

We intend to provide our services across our expanded service area at a level supportable by the local communities Our goal is to attract a broad, peninsula-wide membership base Since she began work in July, Kenai River Regional Director Pam Houston concentrated her efforts on outreach and membership development She introduced KHLT to civic organizations, government agencies, and neighborhood associations, letting them know what we do and, just as importantly, what we do not do! We emphasize our mission to work with willing landowners to protect significant natural habitat and explain that we do not impose our program on anyone Several new protection projects are now under discussion as a result of our outreach efforts

We are sorry to announce that we are losing Pam Houston after such a short, although very productive term We wish her our best at graduate school where she has just recently been accepted She is a quick study and we are delighted that she will continue to volunteer for KHLT as time permits

Acting Resurrection Bay Region Director and board member Mark Luttrell leads our eastern peninsula program from his donated office space in the Resurrect Art Coffee House in Seward KHLT will soon implement an upper-peninsula proactive protection strategy based on a resource-specific mapping project similar to our successful lower-peninsula project of a few years ago Mark and new Kenai River Region staff will research and identify priority areas based on an analysis of natural resources, property sizes, and imminent threat We will consult other organizations and government agencies to make the best use of existing resources to create this series of maps We will then send information outlining KHLT's conservation options to landowners in priority areas and work with those who respond favor ably to increase the amount of protected habitat penin sula-wide

We are pleased with what we have accomplished so far to expand our presence beyond our original bound aries, and are excited about becoming a sustainable force for land conservation across the entire Kenai Peninsula

Four Alaskan Land Trusts Meet

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust was pleased to take the lead in organizing the first statewide meeting of Alaskan land trusts Thirty representatives from KHLT, Great Land Trust (Anchorage), Interior Land Trust (Fairbanks), and Southeast Alaska Land Trust (Juneau) participated in this two-day session in Anchorage Marc Smiley, a well-known facilitator from Oregon, applied his background in land and resource conservation and organizational development to pull this new group together to efficiently share information and experiences pertinent to Alaska

Our first day meeting topics included conversation about the nature, message, and value of a coalition of Alaskan land trusts and how we might better promote the benefits of our work statewide We learned more about the new Taxpayer Relief Act and about the Land Trust Alliance's services from LTA Northwest Assistant Director Liz Bell We discussed common statewide issues such as the rapidly spreading spruce bark beetle infestation and wetland mitigation The importance of developing clear organizational policies and procedures that relate directly to the LTA Standards and Practices was made clear

Day two was dedicated to conservation easements Together we worked through an "easement from hell" to find hidden pitfalls and potential problems Topics covered within this activity included initial landowner contact, actual easement drafting, the importance of good stewardship and accurate baseline documentation, careful monitoring, and the enforcement of conservation easement restrictions

The four Alaskan land trusts will plan another meeting for next year It is critical for us to work together to ensure a high quality of professionalism in our work across this vast state We are proud to have taken the first steps toward building a coalition permanently preserving significant land in Alaska

KHLT is grateful to the Land Trust Alliance Northwest, the Wilburforce Foundation, the Alaska Conservation Foundation and The Nature Conservancy of Alaska for financial assistance to make this important meeting possible

Marc Smiley leads the discussion on statewide land trust issues

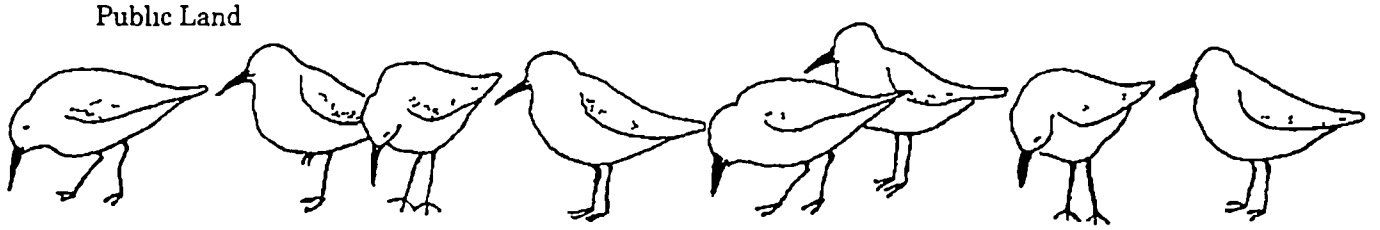
Spit Shorebird Habitat Dedication and Festivities

Saturday, May 9

4 p m Shorebird Habitat Dedication at Mariner Park on the Homer Spit
Homer Mayor Jack Cushing and representatives from the Trust for Public Land, KHLT, and the Homer Chamber of Commerce's Shorebird Festival committee will join in a ceremony to celebrate the preservation of important habitat on the Homer Spit and along Beluga Slough

7 p m - 9 p m Shorebird Festival Keynote Cocktail Party at Land's End Resort
A casual evening of celebration and education featuring keynote speaker Peter Harrison, M B E , screenwriter, artist and author of over a dozen books $5 admission supports the Shorebird Festival Committee

9 30 p m till ? Kick up your heels with Homer's own "Too Fat to Fly"
The fun continues at Land's End! Enjoy local color and local brew at a party hosted by the Trust for Public Land



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HOMER, AK 99603

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R W Tyler, Secretary
Marian Beck
Daisy Lee Bitter
Michelle Brown
Mark Luttrell
John Mouw
Angie Newby
Toby Wheeler

Mark your calendars for Arbor Day, Saturday, April 25
KHLT will be selling a variety of nursery stock trees and plants
Locations to be announced

Alutiiq Pride

Alutiiq Pride News

March 1998

Restoration Workshop Held in Anchorage

The *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council held their annual Restoration Workshop at the Captain Cook Hotel on January 29-30, 1998

The workshop is an opportunity for scientific researchers to present their projects and the progress made in their area of specialty This years theme centered around long-term monitoring and research The keynote address was given by Dr Donald Boesch, President and Professor, University of Maryland Center for Environmental and Estuarine Studies He spoke of the importance of long-term monitoring and research, especially in the damage ecosystem the Exxon Valdez oil spill effected The long-term monitoring and research would allow the researchers the opportunity to better understand how an ecosystem can rebound and what factors are needed to make the transition more expedient

A few of the other projects that presented during the workshop included Ginny Fay and Chris Broderson, Chenega Bay Beach Cleanup, Effects of oiled incubation substrate on pink salmon straying Alex Wertheimer, Juvenile pacific herring growth and habitat, Dr Kevin Stokesbury, Harbor Seal condition and health status, Dr Mike Castellini Community-based Harbor Seal management and biosampling, Monica Riedel, and many other very interesting and exciting projects

The ten Community Facilitators were invited to this very important workshop On January 28, they held a science workshop of their own with five of the presenting researchers The science that is taking place throughout the spill-affected area is exciting and this workshop goes along way to allow those who live within the region to keep updated on progress

Eyak Youth/Elders Conference Tentatively Set for August 18-19, 1998

The Eyak Youth and Elders Conference on Subsistence has been moved to mid-August No exact dates have been set yet, but will be soon

The *Exxon Valdez* Trustee Council approved the funding for this conference at the December 18, 1997 meeting Funding will provide transportation for one elder and two youth from every community within the spill area, which includes all communities on Kodiak Island, all Chigniks, Ivanoff Bay, and Perryville on the Alaska Peninsula, and every community in Prince William Sound and lower Cook Inlet Contact Altana Olsen at 424-7738 for more information

Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission Update

On January 29, 1998 the Executive Director of ANHSC, Monica Riedel, gave a presentation on the harbor seal biosampling project at the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council Restoration Workshop She gave a brief history of the organization, showed how important seals are as a subsistence resource, and explained the link of the project to the

restoration process and how the Native community is directly participating in the research and restoration of the seals Vicki Vanek, DVM, reported on the number of samples being collected and what villages

are participating She also pointed out the collaboration with the scientists that are both receiving the samples and who are also engaged in EVOS related projects

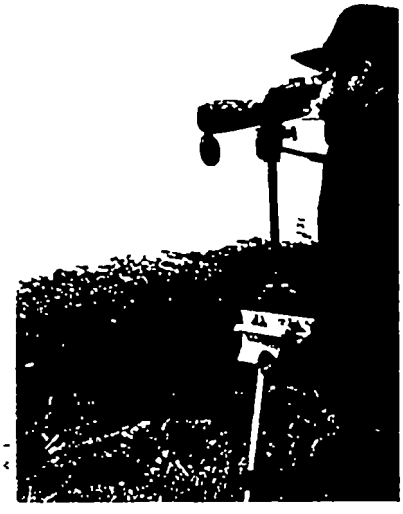
In other news, ANHSC has recen held a meeting with the National Marine Fisheries Service to discu elements of a comanagement agreement for harbor seals The meeting was very positive and a drafting committee was formed t continue a cooperative working relationship

Finally, Kodiak is the designated s for the annual Marine Mammal Workshop and ANHSC meeting, which will take place March 26-2 1998 For more information, plea call Monica Riedel at 424-5882

On the Land

Alaska Update

The residents of Homer Alaska along with visitors to the popular Homer Spit and Beluga Slough and birdwatchers across the country have reason to celebrate these days. The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council recently authorized nearly $1 million from their Small Parcel Habitat Protection Program to protect five of nine parcels secured by TPL for conservation. These properties are adjacent to land previously protected by the city of Homer, the state of Alaska and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and were identified for protection as critical intertidal habitat for shorebirds, mollusks and other creatures dependent on the ocean's resources.



The public support for this project has been overwhelming, says Molly McCammon, the trustee council's executive director. The outpouring of letters and phone calls from Homer and around the country has been nonstop. "Homer Mayor Jack Cushing says that this purchase will help protect highly visible land that is important for protecting habitat and Homer's economic diversity.

In addition to serving as critical habitat for migrating shorebirds, Homer Spit and Beluga Slough are important community resources for clam digging, birdwatching and environmental education.

Even amid all the excitement, there is work yet to do. Four critical properties remain threatened by impending development. Chris Rogers, TPL's project manager for Alaska, notes, "TPL will continue working in partnership with the city and Kachemak Heritage Land Trust to secure protection for the remaining parcels, located at one of the most heavily visited areas of the spit near the public fishing hole."

Project Manager Chris Rogers, TPL National Advisory Council member Ellen London and TPL board member Martha Wyckoff Byrne [illegible] visitors how they can help [illegible] the Homer Spit.

The Trust for Public Land

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New attraction brings visitors close to marine life

Wildlife has always attracted visitors to Seward Tens of thousands come from around the world every year to see fjords and glaciers eagles and puffins whales and sea lions

In the summer of 1998 visitors will have an exciting new way to learn about marine wildlife at close range — the Alaska SeaLife Center Its mission research rehabilitation and public education

The roughly $50 million facility is partly funded with a settlement that Exxon paid to the state and federal governments for the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in nearby Prince William Sound

As a result a lot of the research and rehabilitation work on fish marine mammals and seabirds will be aimed at restoring species harmed in the oil spill

Scientists will study declines in marine mammal and bird populations genetic damage to herring and pink salmon and how to treat sick and injured wildlife

Besides the usual laboratories the center will have outdoor rocky habitats for marine mammals and a covered and netted area for seabirds

Visitors to the Alaska SeaLife Center will be immersed in the wildlife and natural habitats of the Northern Gulf of Alaska coastal region The hope is that research will help the environment and public education will lead to support for environmental stewardship

Photo Courtesy National Park Service

These Steller sea lions are in the wild, but you can see the same species close up in a naturalistic habitat at the Alaska SeaLife Center

The visitor's experience will begin outside with a bayside park landscaped with native flora

Inside visitors can explore artificially made rocky habitats that imitate coastal places where sea lions seals sea otters and seabirds live and breed

Cliffs and boulders were created from steel rebar chicken wire and pneumatically applied super strong concrete After it hardened a four inch layer of shot crete was applied to the structural concrete surface and expertly carved to look like the real thing

Barnacles mussels and other shellfish apparently clinging to the boulders also are man made Lead artist for the project Pancho Vining said silicon molds were made from the real critters Then casts were made with a cement mixture and mortared to the rock work to create the tidal zone

To make the simulated granite look as realistic as possible it was painted Julia Goldman one of the painters said it was sort of a water color technique with a lot of thin layers of paint applied to give it a speckled look

Real plants were added, such as Pacific water parsley wild celery dwarf fireweed Sitka spruce and beach rye

You ll be able to watch through underwater windows

Continued on Page 14

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Continued from Page 13

seabirds diving into a pool for food You ll be able to walk outside among the habitats and get close to the wildlife

The animals will be at the SeaLife Center for research and rehabilitation not merely display Part of the visitor experience will be to watch researchers and learn about what they re doing

The habitats contain a storyline for people to discover as well Visitors can enter simulated caves that were carved by the tides with built up sand and even animal tracks So that perhaps a small child will find river otter tracks leading out of the beach said John Fulford general manager of Jolly Miller Construction the company that built the habitats

Inside the center the main gallery will have tanks some as large as 3 600 gallons featuring the habitats of pelagic fish like herring lingcod and flounder jellyfish a kelp forest with rockfish crabs and bottom animals and octopus and wolf eels

There will be a series of small tanks showing aspects of the intertidal zone such as barnacles and mussels anemone algae and sea stars You can touch small animals in a discovery zone or watch a working fish genetics lab from an overlook

The exhibits aren t intended to stand alone as displays They require interactions with researchers and staff That s where the SeaLife Center s discovery staff come in

We re trying to integrate the senses and a sense of play into the learning experience, said discovery program designer Vicki Seigel

Their goal is to have some kind of program every half hour at various locations for 10 20 minutes going into a little more depth about the exhibitry said Jim Pfeiffenberger program coordinator

We ll have hands on science too said Leslie Peart discovery education director 'We re operating on the philosophy you ll bring your own special talents to the study of science

Visitors could see updates on the center's research through videos of the scientists and perhaps get real time information from oceanographic research conducted by the University of Alaska Fairbanks Peart said

Outside again visitors can watch salmon return to the center in a special fish pass Scientists will release young salmon into Resurrection Bay and study the returning adults

The fish pass consists of an enclosed concrete tube extending 45 feet into the bay from a concrete tank that would act like a canal lock raising the water level and thus the fish to an upper pass attached to the water side of the SeaLife Center and leading to its outdoor pools The fish lock has an acrylic window for public viewing

For the people of Seward the Alaska SeaLife Center is a dream they made come true Local citizens formed the Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science For years they ve worked to advance their vision of a research and visitor center

They garnered $37 5 million from the oil spill settlement another $12 5 million from the state oil spill settlement borrowed $17 5 million and now they re raising another $12 million privately Forty seven businesses and individuals from Seward have donated a combined $1 million Seward volunteers have donated thousands of hours of labor

Not only are we an innovative and proud community but we continue to amaze even ourselves said Willard Dunham member of the SeaLife Center s board at a celebration in 1995 of Seward s donations

The SeaLife Center is at the foot of Fourth Avenue downtown on the waterfront It s scheduled to open May 1 The hours will be 9 a m 9 30 p m daily through mid September and 10 a m 5 p m Wednesday through Sunday in the winter Admission is $12 50 for adul $10 for youth 4 to 16 and free for kids under 4 There are student and group rates Family and individual memberships are available

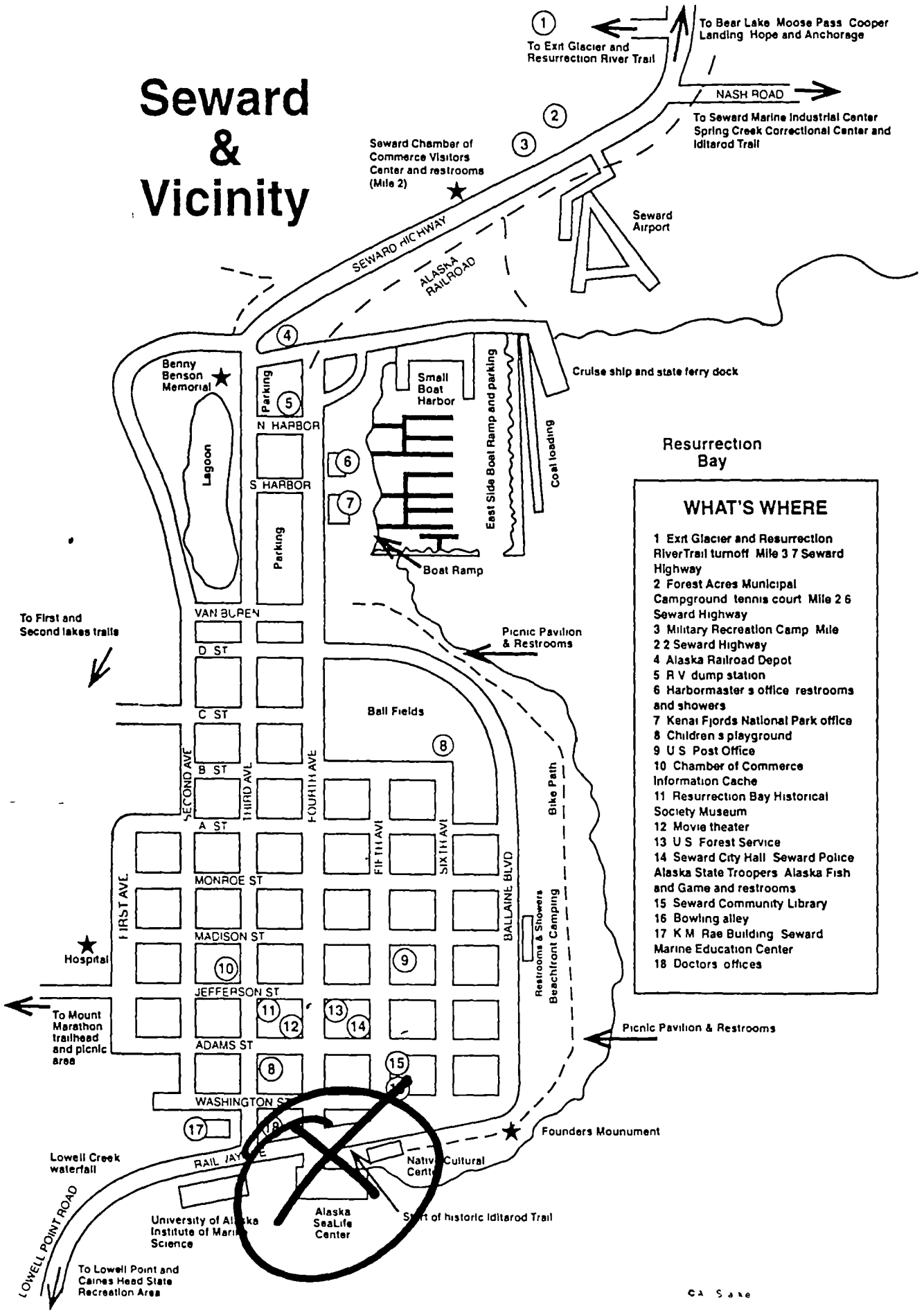
The SeaLife Center is available for conferences educational workshops and social and special events The center is wheelchair accessible

If you want to learn more about the Alaska SeaLife Center or contribute to it please call 1 800 224 2525 or (907) 224 3080 or write the center at PO Box 1329 Seward AK 99664

Shellfish hatchery tours

A new shellfish hatchery operated by Qutekcak Native Tribe of Seward opened this year It plans to offer tours through the SeaLife Center

The hatchery located about 100 yards west of the SeaLife Center on the waterfront will raise oysters clams scallops and other shellfish


Seward & Vicinity
To Exit Glacier and Resurrection River Trail
To Bear Lake Moose Pass Cooper Landing Hope and Anchorage
NASH ROAD
To Seward Marine Industrial Center Spring Creek Correctional Center and Iditarod Trail
Seward Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center and restrooms (Mile 2)
Seward Airport
SEWARD HIGHWAY
ALASKA RAILROAD
Benny Benson Memorial
Lagoon
Parking
N HARBOR
S HARBOR
Small Boat Harbor
East Side Boat Ramp and parking
Coal loading
Cruise ship and state ferry dock
Boat Ramp
Resurrection Bay
To First and Second lakes trails
VAN BUREN
D ST
C ST
B ST
A ST
SECOND AVE
THIRD AVE
FOURTH AVE
FIFTH AVE
SIXTH AVE
FIRST AVE
MONROE ST
MADISON ST
JEFFERSON ST
ADAMS ST
WASHINGTON ST
Ball Fields
Picnic Pavilion & Restrooms
Bike Path
BALLAINE BLVD
Restrooms & Showers
Beachfront Camping
Hospital
To Mount Marathon trailhead and picnic area
Picnic Pavilion & Restrooms
Founders Mounument
Lowell Creek waterfall
RAILROAD
Native Cultural Center
University of Alaska Institute of Marine Science
Alaska SeaLife Center
Start of historic Iditarod Trail
LOWELL POINT ROAD
To Lowell Point and Caines Head State Recreation Area
WHAT'S WHERE
1 Exit Glacier and Resurrection RiverTrail turnoff Mile 3 7 Seward Highway
2 Forest Acres Municipal Campground tennis court Mile 2 6 Seward Highway
3 Military Recreation Camp Mile 2 2 Seward Highway
4 Alaska Railroad Depot
5 R V dump station
6 Harbormaster s office restrooms and showers
7 Kenai Fjords National Park office
8 Children s playground
9 U S Post Office
10 Chamber of Commerce Information Cache
11 Resurrection Bay Historical Society Museum
12 Movie theater
13 U S Forest Service
14 Seward City Hall Seward Police Alaska State Troopers Alaska Fish and Game and restrooms
15 Seward Community Library
16 Bowling alley
17 K M Rae Building Seward Marine Education Center
18 Doctors offices

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Located at Mile 0 of the Seward Highway
www.alaskasealife.org

Bird-watchers don't have to look far to find specimens

By William Shuster

Many tourists arrive each summer to see the wildlife of Alaska While the majority of people take one of the tour boats to the Kenai Fjords to view the seabird rookeries, there are other opportunities to observe birds right around Seward

One of the favorite birding areas is the lowland at the end of the airport This spot has brackish ponds and marsh grass adjacent to the head of the bay

In the spring this is a major stopping spot for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl Rarities such as the Eurasian wigeon, brant, black-headed gull and rufous-necked stint have been seen here

In the summer, nesting birds include gadwall mallard northern pintail, common snipe spotted sandpiper, least sandpiper, arctic tern, mew gull, alder flycatcher orange-crowned warbler, yellow warbler, Townsend's warbler •Wilson s warbler Lincoln s sparrow and savannah sparrow

In addition, there are at least six bald eagle nests visible in and around Seward This nesting density is the highest level ever reported Watch for these birds among the cottonwoods growing on the east side of the airport

Bald eagles are seen everywhere but especially around the small boat harbor A sharp eye can spot some of their nests in the spruce trees above town Also present in town are large numbers of ravens While these birds are quite shy in the Lower 48 they are very tame in the towns of Alaska Compare their size and massive beaks in contrast with the much smaller crows These crows are actually from a different species than the common crow found in the Lower 48 These crows are northwestern crows a bird found only along the coastline

Photo by William Shuster

Varied thrushes, such as this one having a bad-hair day, can be seen in the forests around Seward

Within the small boat harbor mew gulls glaucous winged gulls black legged kittiwakes and arctic terns can be seen feeding on herring and other small fish While all the gulls are year round residents the terns are migratory The arctic terns arrive in Seward in the last week of April from their wintering grounds near Antarctica Watch how they will almost disappear underwater when they dive on small fish the see swimming along

One of the most colorful bird in the Seward area is the harlequin duck The males are slat gray on the head breast and back with white streaks somewha resembling a clown s makeup For a close view of the birds, dri ve the Lowell Point Road and watch them dive for mussels close to the shoreline

Another occasional near shoreline species along Lowell Point Road is the marbled murrelet This small bird swims underwater with its wings as it chases small fish Notice how this bird will be sitting on the water when it leaps forward with a splash and dives The marbled murrelet is very rare along the Pacific Coast in the Lower 48 but it is quite common around Seward These birds feed in the ocean but fly at night into the forests to nest on the moss covered branches of large spruce and hemlock trees

While you are driving along Lowell Point Road watch for rufous hummingbirds z pping around the houses at the end of the road as they compete for the sugar water at hummingbird feeders This is probably the best place to spot our only hummingbird

Exit Glacier Road is an excellent spot to look for birds that frequent cottonwoods Stop along

Continued on Page 31

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The course starts in the woods before it climbs to a scenic ridge

Lost Lake run athletes mix it up with dogs, Olympians

The Lost Lake Breath of Life Run — a nearly 16 mile footrace on a backcountry trail — has become a popular race with serious runners fun runners and even Olympic skiers

The sixth annual footrace in 1997 from Primrose Campground to Bear Creek Fire Hall attracted a record 470 runners to raise funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

The race has a reputation as well-organized and fun Walkers and even dog walkers are welcome And after the race runners don t just suck on orange slices There s beer and a barbecue as well

Marsha — she s got something figured out here said two time winner Adam Verrier an Olympic cross country skier referring to organizer Marsha Vincent

The course along the U S Forest Service s Primrose and Lost Lake trails leads runners up spruce forests to the ridge then past the lake then along meadows full of wildflowers with views of Resurrection Bay in the distance and finally down through the woods to the fire hall

Anchorage resident Kirk Fisher won the men s race last year in 1 hour 40 minutes and 56 seconds in his first effort I heard it was a beautiful trail It s for a good cause That means something to me he said

> **'I heard it was a beautiful trail It's for a good cause That means something to me'**
>
> — 1997 men's race winner Kirk Fisher

Kristi Waythomas also of Anchorage finished first among women for the second year in a row Her time of 1 58 17 was off her own record by about a minute

She fell a few times and feared that Olympic cross country skier Nina Kemppel would overtake her I thought Nina might catch me up because I was throwing up at the top Waythomas said

Some runners have an extra advantage four feet Meg Kurtagh of Anchorage ran with her golden retriever yellow Lab mix Emma

It was Meg s fifth year and Emma s first She was so excited at the start she was jumping up and down She s a skijorer so she thought she was going to pull all the time

This year s race is scheduled for Aug 23 For more information call organizer Marsha Vincent at (907) 224 3537

Continued from Page 30

the road and watch for yellow Wilson s and orange crowned warblers hermit and Swainson s thrushes and alder flycatchers At night saw whet owls can be heard calling their whistled note all through the night

The bridges at Box Canyon and Resurrection River will typically have American dippers nesting underneath These birds are often seen feeding in the fast water near these bridges

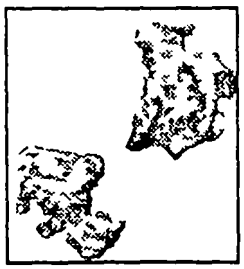
Near the end of Exit Glacier Road just before you cross the Resurrection River you will see the Resurrection River trailhead This Chugach National Forest trail provides easy access through the tall stands of Sitka spruce and western hemlock

Birds often seen along this trail include the varied and hermit thrush ruby crowned and golden crowned kinglet northern three toed woodpecker Townsend s warbler chestnut-backed chickadee and brown creeper Also present though in lower numbers are the more rare spruce grouse black backed woodpecker and the boreal owl These birds are often seen in the morning along the trail when they come to pick up gravel

Located at mile 13 2 of the Seward Highway you ll find the Grayling Lake trailhead The National Forest trail is three miles long and is an easy walk to find many of the birds mentioned for the Resurrection River trailhead Also common in the summer are the olive-sided flycatcher western wood pewee and gray jay White-winged crossbill and pine grosbeak are sometimes very common (though in some years they are not present because of their vagabond habits) At Grayling Lake there are often nesting pairs of common loons and Barrow's goldeneyes

Birding is inexpensive All you need is a pair of binoculars a field guide, and the curiosity to stop and take the time to observe the birds Besides the tour boats there are sometimes bird walks hosted by the Chugach National Forest or the Kenai Fjords National Park Stop by either office to see what walks might be planned A birds of Seward checklist is available at both offices If you are interested in learning what unusual birds might be present in Seward be sure to call the Seward Rare Bird alert phone at (907) 224-BEAK (224 2325)

William Shuster is a wildlife biologist for the U S Forest Service in Seward



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ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS APRIL 3, 1998

Trustees approve $70 million for Afognak Island land

By ROSANNE PAGANO
The Associated Press

Alaska's oil spill trustees on Thursday approved spending $70 million to acquire nearly 42,000 acres covered by old growth spruce on Afognak Island, by far the council's most expensive purchase

The pending agreement, which took four years to negotiate, goes next for approval to landowner Afognak Joint Venture, a Kodiak-based Native partnership, which said it could act as soon as April 16

Trustees are charged with spending the state's $900 million settlement from the Exxon Valdez oil spill The panel said Afognak tracts offer prime habitat for a range of wildlife hurt by the tanker wreck and include some of the continent's best nesting sites for the elusive marbled murrelet seabird

Of nearly a dozen tracts already acquired, trustees said the parcel on north Afognak Island ranked highest in restoration value based on the amount of wildlife it shelters

Brown bear, deer, elk, salmon, murrelets and pigeon guillemots all rely on the Afognak lands The purchase includes land bordering Shuyak Strait and Perenosa Bay, as well as tracts surrounding popular Pauls Lake and Laura Lake

"This (purchase) had the most species that depend on old growth and were injured by the spill," said Deborah Williams, the Interior Department representative on the trustees council

Before the Afognak offer, the trustees' most expensive purchase was on Kodiak Island's south tip in 1994 for $46 million

Members unanimously approved the Afognak acquisition after hearing public comment that included praise from environmentalists in Juneau and Homer

The deal drew criticism earlier this week from U S Sen Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, who complained that trustees are locking up too much Alaska land

"The trustees already have purchased 424,000 acres (and) seem intent on buying up 750,000 acres before they are done," he said Murkowski says settlement money should be used instead for research, fishery enhancement and community projects

If approved, the deal would add tracts to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and Afognak State Park while permitting the joint venture to log roughly 2,200 acres Two major partners are the Afognak Native corporation and Koniag Native regional corporation

Howard Valley, chairman of the joint venture board, said Thursday that landowners had long been prepared to accept $70 million but engaged in "frank and at times difficult" negotiations over which tracts to sell

The pending sale takes in about one fourth of the joint venture's holdings, Valley said "The goal was to get the right selections of lands for the right price," he said

Williams said negotiations were unique because it was the first time the trustees had dealt with logging landholders

'Others had contracted for timber harvest but (Afognak) is doing the harvesting," Williams said "They could say, 'We know our profits, we know our losses and risks'

"They were more equipped to challenge our appraisals

Molly McCammon, the trustees' executive director, said agreement on the trees' value was a key issue

Old-growth spruce are logged by Afognak Joint Venture for export to Japan and Korea, where the trees are prized for their lack of blemishes

"We liked to joke that these were gold-plated, diamond-studded trees," McCammon said "This purchase takes a big chunk out of the bank account

Greg Petrich, a wildlife conservation director with the Alaska Rainforest Campaign said Thursday that environmentalists preferred no logging, but were satisfied that wildlife would remain protected in the agreement

STATE NEWS

$70 million land deal eyed

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council is on the verge of what could be its most expensive land purchase, a deal for up to 40,000 acres on Afognak Island's northern end that could cost as much as $70 million The council apparently reached a conceptual agreement Friday with the land owner, the Alaska Public Radio Network reported Monday Council executive director Molly McCammon said the spill council may meet Thursday to take action on the deal "We've always been looking at acreage on northern Afognak Island, somewhere between 38,000 and 40,000 acres, basically as much as we could buy with the $70 million that the trustee council has earmarked for this acquisition," McCammon said The land owner, Afognak Joint Ventures, and the trustee council must give final approval to the purchase agreement McCammon said the Afognak land would greatly enhance restoration in that part of the spill area

Daily News wire report

PENINSULA CLARION
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1998 Soldotna/Kenai, Alaska

Oil spill trustees plan financial legacy

By SHANA LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is collecting a nice nest egg and wants regional residents to help it decide what to do with the money Tuesday, on the ninth anniversary of the infamous tanker wreck in Prince William Sound, council employees held a hearing in Soldotna to solicit local opinions

The council, set up by state law to administer the $900 million civil settlement Exxon is paying, is salting away $12 million per year into its Restoration Reserve The reserve is a savings account designed to provide funding after the original EVOS restoration projects wind down in 2002

The council estimates the reserve will contain $140 million at that point and will generate 4 percent annual growth — that's $5 6 million — after inflation They hope the funds will provide a lasting legacy to the affected region

Now the council needs to decide how to handle the long-term account

Should it spend all the savings for specific projects and close out the restoration mission? Should it set up a permanent foundation to fund long-term science and habitat protection? Should the entire trustee council and restoration process be restructured for the new century?

Sandra Schubert, projects coordinator for the council, told the 15 people at the Soldotna meeting that the council needs to plan for 2002 now, because some options under consideration may require legislation or court orders because of the legal complexities of the oil spill

The council asked for "scoping comments" in its August 1997 newsletter Now, the council is holding public meetings in 25 communities and soliciting written comments The comment deadline is April 30 The input will be incorporated in a Restoration Reserve Plan due out in the fall

Four components are being evaluated

- How should the money be spent? Possibilities include research and monitoring, habitat protection by buying land, community projects and expanded education and outreach activities
- How should funding and policy decisions be made? The management could keep the present trustee

See EVOS, back page

...EVOS

Continued from page A 1

council made up of six administrators from the state departments of Law, Environmental Conservation, Fish and Game, the federal U S Forest Service, Department of Interior and the National Marine Fisheries Service Or it could set up a new governance structure or board of directors

■ How should public input be collected? Currently a 17-member Public Advisory Group meets quarterly and advises the trustees Some have suggested the PAG should represent more stakeholders, others suggest it is too expensive and should be abolished

■ How long should the EVOS restoration process continue? Options under consideration include spending the reserve funds in 10 years, 20 years or converting them into a permanent endowment, analogous to the Alaska Permanent Fund

Questions at the Tuesday meeting focused on land purchases along the Kenai River corridor Schubert and Science Coordinator Stan Senner explained that the trustees do not acquire land for themselves but provide funds for other groups or agencies to purchase parcels from willing sellers and manage them One proposal for the reserve would delegate future land transactions to private nonprofit entities such as The Nature Conservancy

To date the EVOS funds have protected about 56,000 acres on the Kenai Peninsula The largest parcels are in Kachemak Bay State Park Kenai Fjords National Park and the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge on the southern peninsula But the trustees also have purchased 11 properties on the Kenai River It also helped buy land near Anchor Point Nanilchik and Kasilof and funded research on local red salmon runs

The Soldotna audience expressed general approval for the restoration work and the reserve plan Several spoke of their support for more habitat purchases scientific studies and public education

The Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council director and science coordinator attended to advocate for science funding Director Bryan MacLean read a CIRCAC statement endorsing a permanent reserve to fund long-term data collection on the region s ecosystem CIRCAC has a mandate to monitor the Cook Inlet environment but finds it nearly impossible to do without stable, long-range funding such as the reserve could provide

James Fisher of Soldotna recommended that funds remain available, if needed to subsidize research at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward Built with $26 2 million in assistance from the trustee council the facility opens in May with plans to generate tourism revenues to underwrite research and education projects

Ed Berg an ecologist with the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge urged trustee financing for a proposed facility in Peterson Bay south of Homer The building, a partnership between the Seldovia Native Association and the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies would combine research with a ecotourism lodge

Future public meetings about the EVOS Restoration Reserve Plan on the Kenai Peninsula are scheduled for April 8 in Homer and April 9 in Seldovia There also will be one in Anchorage April 9 and in Whittier April 10

Copies of a special edition Restoration Update newsletter detailing the restoration reserve proposals and how to submit comments are available free from the trustee council office Comments or requests for information can be mailed to Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Restoration Office 645 G Street Suite 401 Anchorage AK 99501-3451 or phoned to 800-478-7745 or 907 278-8012 or faxed to 907-276-7178 or e-mailed to kerih@oil spill state ak us

■ **LAND DEAL** Oil spill council closes in on 40 000 acre purchase / B 3

METRO

TUESDAY March 31 1998 ☆ ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Seals, Stellers arrive

1st occupants land at Seward center

By MAUREEN CLARK
The Associated Press

Like a weary traveler who has spent hours in the air Sydney the seal grunted and stretched in her cage Monday afternoon settling in for the last leg of the journey to her new home at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward

Sydney was one of two harbor seals and three Steller sea lions aboard an Alaska Air National Guard C 130 transport plane that carried the animals from Vancouver British Columbia to Seward During a stopover in Anchorage the animals lolled in their cages showing only mild interest in the customs inspectors and TV news crews that greeted their arrival

The five marine mammals were joining 22 sea birds as the first permanent residents of the SeaLife Center which will open its doors to visitors May 1

They are extremely well trained and used to us humans said Dr Michael Castellini research director at the center Biologists hope the sea lions and harbor seals will help them learn more about declines in both species

The 4 year old Steller sea lions — Kiska Woody and Sugarloaf — came from the Vancouver Aquarium where they were outgrowing their holding tanks They are named for islands along the Alaska coast that have sea lion breeding rookeries

We probably have the best habitat in the world for these animals Everything s been designed to accommodate full sized adult Steller sea lions said Kim Sundberg executive director of the SeaLife Center

Woody the male tips the scales at 550 pounds and could grow to about 1 000

Please see Page B 2 SEWARD

FRAN DURNER Anchorage Daily News

Sydney a harbor seal landed Monday in Anchorage on the way to Seward and its new home at the Alaska SeaLife Center The seal received care from veterinarian Dr Pam Tuomi and Victor Aderholt the Seward center s director of animal husbandry The seal was aboard a C 130 and was on the last leg of a trip from Vancouver Aquarium in Vancouver British Columbia

SEWARD: Sea life begins arriving

Continued from Page B 1

pounds in the next five years Sundberg said Females Kiska and Sugarloaf weigh 350 pounds and could grow to 500 pounds The sea lions will be the largest animals at the center

Harbor seals Sydney and Pender were orphaned pups rescued off the coast of British Columbia The 18 month old seals have been living at the University of British Columbia Six more harbor seals are scheduled to arrive at the center over the next month

Steller sea lions in Western Alaska were put on the list of endangered species last year There were as many as 140,000 in 1960, but that count fell to about 18,000 by last year

Harbor seals in Alaska also have seen steep declines since the early 1980s, Sundberg said

The SeaLife Center will give scientists the opportunity to do controlled studies over a long period of time in an effort to pinpoint the causes of those declines

"We're trying to find the smoking gun Why aren't these sea lions surviving in the North Pacific?" Sundberg said One theory is that it's a food-related problem

"We're going to feed them different diets and measure their blood and blubber content and overall fitness," he said

In addition to helping researchers, the seals and sea lions are expected to be a major attraction at the SeaLife Center, which is expected to draw about 200,000 visitors in its first year, officials said

The sea mammals will live in outdoor tanks designed to resemble rocky, coastal areas The habitat areas will have large glass windows so visitors can watch the animals

The arrival of the animals in Seward on Monday marked a milestone in the eight year development of the $55 million center

"It's one of a series of big deals," Mayor Bob Satin said "It reaffirms that we're a can-do city It's a dream come true for us"

Opinion

Require parking

Progress and growth are inevitable for Seward We can only try to ease the problems that come with it — before they happen

The ordinance that requires one off-street parking place per room was instituted to alleviate future parking problems If the conditional use permit for the new hotel is granted allowing it to use on street parking and parking in the Alaska SeaLife Center lot as part of its required spaces, this ordinance might as well be thrown out

There already exists a parking problem in the downtown area (not to mention all of Seward) When the SeaLife Center was proposed, careful consideration was given to the amount of parking it would need to avoid overly stressing the situation Upon completion, it has fewer spaces than originally planned for To top that off, the city "axed ' parking on Railway

It is a noble gesture that the new hotel will be targeting mass transit guests, but I hardly think that it will turn away people arriving by automobile As a motel owner, I know that over 95 percent of my guests travel independently I also know that they do not leave their cars parked only between the hours of 10 30 p m and 8 a m

As a resident of the downtown area, I am concerned about the overflow of vehicles from the SeaLife Center when its parking lot is full with cars from the guests of the hotel We are going to have to endure visitors parking in our yards and blocking our driveways Businesses that do provide private parking lots for their customers are going to find them clogged with non-customers vehicles It is going to be a mini-Fourth of July — every day of the summer

I do not think it is fair to other businesses who have been denied the privilege of counting on-street parking as their required parking in the past Nor is it fair to those in the future who will be denied No doubt the Kings owners of the new Harborview Inn would have liked to have counted on-street parking as they were carefully planning how much building and how many parking places their properties could allow

Some ordinances will be able to be revised and some CUPs will be able to be issued to allow for progress and growth But is it smart to do either when we know that it is going to be detrimental to the overall plan? Is it wise to do something that is going to further complicate and compound an already existing problem?

Kelly Lo
Taroka Inn
Seward

Letters

THE SEWARD PHOENIX LOG MARCH 26, 1998

Oil spill exhibit set for Marine Science Education Center

The Pratt Museum's award-winning traveling exhibition, 'Darkened Waters Profile of an Oil Spill," opens in Seward on March 28, at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Seward Marine Science Education Center, adjacent to the new Alaska SeaLife Center

Residents are invited to visit the exhibition at no charge on March 28-29 from 3 30-9 30 p m and on March 30, from noon-4 p m In addition to the Darkened Waters exhibit, the Seward Downtown Business Association will show historic films of Seward in the center's auditorium

During April, the exhibition will be available for visits by school groups Arrangements should be made with the Seward Marine Science Education Center at 224-5261 Darkened Waters will open to the general public on May 2 Admission costs $3 for adults, $1 for children and $9 for a family The exhibition will close Sept 13

The opening of the exhibit will launch a series of programs, forums and exhibitions commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1999

Since 1991 the exhibition has visited 15 sites throughout the United States, including the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History in Washington, D C , and the Burke Museum of Natural History in Seattle, Wash To date, it has been viewed by more than one million people Darkened Waters occupies 1,500 square feet of floor space and features 99 photographs, numerous graphics, objects from the spill, and various interactive components

The exhibition examines the chronology of the grounding of the Exxon Valdez, initial responses, efforts to clean up, and environmental impacts of America's worst oil spill Darkened Waters also explores the impact of the spill on people's lives Finally it focuses on the continuing problem of oil spills and oil transportation worldwide by posing the question to viewers Can people make a difference?

To remain relevant, the exhibit is periodically updated During the spring and early summer of 1998, the issues raised by Darkened Waters will be revisited and new information will be added on the state of restoration and recovery, the status of spill area communities and changes in spill prevention and response capabilities New interactive computers are planned to allow visitors to view CD-ROM programs on sea otter research and spill area restoration

Updates will incorporate information from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, Chugachmiut, Prince William Sound Science Center, spill area communities, Regional Citizens' Advisory Councils, environmental groups, the oil industry and other sources with useful experience or expertise

Among Darkened Waters' many underwriters are the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, the Alaska Conservation Foundation, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council and the National Science Foundation

For more information, call Melanie Nakken, coordinator at the Marine Education Center, 224-5261

City offered 90 acres on Homer Spit

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

Herndon & Thompson Inc has offered the city about 90 acres of land on the Homer Spit that includes the barge basin the company built in 1995

A Herndon official said the company wants around $6 million for the property and city officials are taking a serious look at the proposal

It s all pretty preliminary right now,' City Manager Patti Whalin said this week We're looking at the revenues the land brings in now and what our costs would be, that s where we re at right now

The construction company s project coordinator, John Calhoun, said Herndon wants out of the land management business and is making moves to get into road paving in a big way

"It s going to take a tremendous amount of energy and time to get off the ground and get up and running ' Calhoun said of the paving operation 'The other thing is there are a lot of things that can be done out here to make this a viable operation It's a break even deal now, but it could be extremely profitable "

Calhoun said the barge basin would be an ideal place for a boat haul out facility perhaps one large enough to handle vessels too big for Northern Enterprises Boat Yard on Kachemak Drive That hoist has lifted boats up to 70 tons and 64 feet long according to a company spokeswoman

Whalin said the city would have to develop and lease the property to make it worth the expense of purchase She said the city could not afford to buy the 90 acres and turn it into bird habitat On the other hand marine businesses could be lured to the barge basin by a haul out

Having a boat haul out facility would mean a lot of marine businesses would have a lot of work she said That would be a good thing for Homer A lot of people have said it's needed

Logging won't go on forever Whalin said Marine related industries are what we re looking at around that harbor But it s an expensive piece of property The only way to afford it is if it keeps on working '

A lot of questions remain to be answered before any decision can be made ranging from the cost of infrastructure development to practical things like annual dredging of the barge basin s entrance channel Whalin said yesterday she and other city officials were to meet with Herndon officials to get some answers

She Port Director Denny Erlandson Finance Director Vil Koeberlein and city commissioners will then have to hash out the prospects and make a recommendation for action to the city council, she said

Any land deal would probably mean a sizeable down payment followed by payments over time That, she said, would have to be paid out of revenues generated by the property Expenses would not be taken from other Spit-generated revenues, she said

' It will have to support its own debt service she said

City acquisition of the Herndon land is likely to generate a lot of public reaction

Land's End Resort owner Jon Faulkner said he has expressed "casual interest" in acquiring the land if the city declines

"Personally, I think private enterprise can operate a boat haul-out facility better than the city and make the city more money My personal concern is do we want more industry creeping up the Spit? '

Faulkner said the land ought to be developed as a planned unit development where land uses transition from recreational to commercial as one moves farther out the Spit Land nearest the Spit bird habitat north of Herndon s land should be the least developed he said

He said he would rather see marine industrial uses confined to the 30-acre land fill which was built for that purpose rather than one more thing stretching out the industrial uses of the Spit "

On the other hand if the city does acquire the land Faulkner said, it will be compelled to develop it If it does anything else than make it pay for itself the city will have an angry taxpaying public to deal with he said

If he were to acquire the land and basin Faulkner said he would consider a small recreational boat harbor and tourist-related commercial development

While timber storage has been good for Herndon it won't last forever, Calhoun said and that s something the city needs to consider There are only a few industries that could replace it — commercial fishing freight services and tourism

"The other is marine industrial," Calhoun said "It coordinates well with tourism and commercial fishing and if we had a haul out here, we would get every boat from Central Alaska west There'd be boats from Dutch, Kodiak, Cold Bay and all over coming here for repair and work The city doesn't have space in the harbor for a haul-out This property is ideal for that "

Kenny Moore, owner of Northern Enterprises Boat Yard, said he wouldn t mind seeing more industry in Homer, even if that meant a larger haul-out on the Spit That wouldn't compete directly with his operation he said

He did say there would be problems with a boat haul-out on the Spit For one thing, there is more wind than at Northern Enterprises, he said Also, Nikiski now has a boat haul-out He wondered if there are enough boats to make a new haul-out pay

Cook Inlet Keeper director Bob Shavelson said the city should consider the proposal carefully

"It is unfortunate the development of those lands by Herndon moved ahead without any serious long-term vision for the Spit. The city needs to make sure it is used in the best economic and ecological interests of the city of Homer That long-term vision is something that needs to be considered during the upcoming comprehensive plan review "

Officials with the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust which helped engineer the recent purchase of bird habitat on the Homer Spit just north of the Herndon land, declined comment

Area update

CORDOVA TIMES
MARCH 26, 1998

Cathy Sherman at (907) 424-6665

Harbor collecting oily bilge water

The harbor may be a bit cleaner this summer, as the Cordova Harbor Department is now equipped to collect and dispose of oily bilge water from harbor vessels EVOS funding has given the Harbor the ability to pump up to 15 gallons per minute

Once the oily bilge water has been pumped from the boat, a trailer will transfer the waste to the EVOS station where the oil will be allowed to settle before pumping off the excess water Vessel owners should contact the Harbormaster's office to make arrangements

ALASKA JOURNAL OF
BUSINESS & COMMERCE
MARCH 30, 1998

The **Alaska SeaLife Center** is inviting artists and photographers to submit proposals for solo or group exhibitions for the grand opening season, May 1 through Oct 31 in Seward Alaska marine mammals, sea birds and coastal scenery are the topics of emphasis For more information, contact Maureen at (907) 276-8095

CORDOVA TIMES MARCH 26, 1998

Letters to the editor

Community center plans move ahead

Thank you for your commitment of time, energy, creativity and concern in your participation in the Cordova Community workshop The needs and values you have identified will serve as the foundation for the report to the community and the Cordova City Council as the plan moves through public review, refinement, packaging for funding opportunities and implementation This plan is the continuing work with the contract with RISE Alaska, jointly funded by the City of Cordova and The Prince William Sound Science Center to define a mutually supportive program to create the future

The next presentation will evaluate the technical issues of balancing space requirements and economics to make a plan to meet these needs Your continued participation is important As discussed in the workshop, this can take many forms

On March 31, from 7-9 p m in the Masonic Hall, the project team and the community will meet to discuss the next steps on the path to implementation Please plan to come and invite friends who will be needed to bring these plans into reality

On April 1, at the Cordova City Council meeting, the project team will present the implementation proposal Your input and support at this meeting is a critical element of project success

After the Council meeting, the draft Implementation Plan for the Cordova Center Program will be amended with the input from the community, the City and the Science Center This document is a tool to solicit funding and to map what is ahead Each of you will receive a copy by mail

Meanwhile, there are many ongoing efforts within Cordova which will contribute to the success of this venture These include the Historical Society's effort at the museum, the Port and Commerce Development Advisory Board, Tourism subcommittee, the Cordova Chamber of Commerce and the new Visitor Center facility, the OSRI and Prince William Sound Science Center programs and many others

Again, many thanks for your participation It's our hope that there will be strong community support of the Implementation Plan for the Cordova Center Program Please know how much we value your contribution to this planning process and to the continuation of high quality civic discourse in Cordova

Sarah Barton
Rise Alaska

Concrete plan for bridge wanted

Planning commission OKs recommendations for Funny River project

By DAVE O LUCAS
Peninsula Clarion

The Kenai Peninsula Borough will recommend halting a Coastal Management Program permit review for the proposed Funny River Bridge project until design plans are more concrete

That decision was included in planning department comments about the bridge project and its final environmental impact statement The staff comments were approved unanimously by the Borough Planning Commission Monday night and will be forwarded to state and federal highway officials

"We don't want to proceed with the permitting of the project until DOT (state Department of Transportation) is ready to move forward," Borough Planning Director Lisa Parker told the planning commission

"Postponing the Coastal Management Program permit review would allow the borough time to evaluate the issues and concerns raised by the public and resources agencies during the final environmental impact statement public comment period," said Parker, reading from a prepared staff report

The final environmental impact statement for the project was put out for public comment in January The deadline for public comment on it and the Army Corps of Engineers permitting process was March 3 Coastal Management Program comments were due Monday

Jim Bryson of the Federal Highway Administration in Juneau said March 4 that the agency had received approximately 100 comments and at least one petition signed by numerous Funny River residents during the public comment period The petition was in support of the Scout Loop Road location for a bridge, said Bryson, but he declined to comment on the bulk of the comments until they have been reviewed further

"We haven't fully evaluated all the comments as yet," he said "We need to address any substantive comments and determine if any new issues not already addressed in the environmental impact statement are out there "

Bryson added that he anticipated sitting down with the agencies that have concerns and trying to work them out before the FHA issues a final decision That process could take another month to complete and will involve DOT project managers It should

See BRIDGE, back page

...Bridge

Continued from page A-1

address all the questions about the project

"I don't anticipate that there are any new issues out there that haven't been addressed in the comments," said Bryson

In addition to recommending postponement of the Coastal Management Plan permit review until the design for the bridge and a possible public boat launch facility are finalized, the planning department comments also support improvements to Funny River Road regardless of the bridge and recommend a clear span design for the bridge

The comments note that the borough is on record as supporting a bridge in the area to meet community transportation needs, but also point out that protecting the river is a priority, listing chapter and verse of the applicable borough codes and environmental regulations

"Protection of the Kenai River and its resources are paramount in the borough's analysis of a feasible and prudent alternative to meet the public need for this bridge crossing," reads the recommendation, in part "The Kenai Peninsula Borough recommends that any Kenai River crossing incorporate a clear span bridge design to comply with the KPB Habitat Protection (KPB 21 18), Floodplain Management (KPB 21 06), KPB Coastal Management Program Enforceable Policy 3 2 and the Kenai River Special Management Area Plan "

Several past and present residents of the Funny River community, as well as an attorney speaking "on behalf of a nonprofit group of landowners near the proposed bridge' called Friends and Neighbors of the Kenai River spoke in opposition to the bridge while commission members were considering the Planning Depart-ment's recommendations

The Friends and Neighbors group's concerns include the age of some of the information in the environmental impact statement, which was first drafted in 1991, the impact the bridge and boat landing might have on brown bear and coho salmon habitat, the cost of using the Scout Lake Loop "preferred alternative" as a site and wetlands mitigation, according to attorney Wayne Dawson of Anchorage

"There needs to be a comprehensive land use plan in place before this is even considered," he said

The borough also has concerns about the age of some of the information in the FEIS, said Parker However, that specific point was not outlined in the comments to DOT and the Federal Highway Administration

Concerns about adequate land use planning for Funny River were included in the public comments on the FEIS, noted the planning department report The Environmental Protection Agency said it finds the FEIS "deficient," in that the borough's habitat protection ordinance "only addresses the first 50 feet of the Kenai River main stem riparian habitat, it does not protect other critical habitats and resources associated with the contiguous wetlands and tributaries," said the report

The state departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Game and the U S Fish and Wildlife Service also registered concerns about the adequacy of the 50-foot buffer established by the borough

Other points raised by residents included problems with overcrowding, trespassing, litter and bonfires during the summer months The bridge would just make those problems worse, they said

"We see the problems they have on the lower river and we don't want to see them come to the upper river, too," said Ron Maddox

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
"COMFISH" SUPPLEMENT
MARCH 24, 1998

Sea Grant funding solid through 2003

■ *Salmon quality part of Fish Tech project*

By NEAL MUIRHEAD
Special to the Mirror

Scientists at the Fishery Industrial Technology Center in Kodiak next year hope to examine how salmon quality degrades as the fish approach their spawning areas

They expect the research to help fishery managers improve the quality of the harvested salmon

"Requirements that fishermen only harvest salmon near spawning grounds can deny them the chance to catch high-quality fish,' said Ron Dearborn, Sea-Grant Alaska director

The project is one of several proposed by the Alaska Sea Grant Program for $1 2 million in funding for next year, according to Dearborn With matching dollars from the uni versity that s a significant amount of money slated for coastal and marine projects around the state

Dearborn said Sea Grant is committed to two major program goals understanding the natural and human-caused changes in Alaska's marine environments, and maximizing the value of seafood production based on Alaska's marine resources

"Wise decisions about these resources require substantial understanding and public involvement in the issues,' said Dearborn, and he emphasized that providing effective public information was a primary focus of Alaska Sea Grant

Congress has unanimously approved renewed funding for the Sea Grant program through 2003 The Sea Grant Reauthorization Act, which cleared the Senate Feb 12 authorized additional funding of nearly $8 million for next year for which Sea Grant units nationwide will compete

Sea Grant is a national university-based program that funds research and education dealing with the wise use and development of marine resources

Rep Don Young who chairs the House Resources Committee was a key sponsor of the bill to reauthorize funding for the Sea Grant Program Sens Frank Murkowski and Ted Stevens were co-sponsors of the legislation

THE HOMER NEWS MARCH 26, 1998

Pratt grants aimed at Bay

The Pratt Museum received a $10,000 boost for its public outreach programs when the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation doled out six watershed grants to Kenai Peninsula agencies recently

Awarded under the umbrella of the museum's Kachemak Bay Discovery Project, the grant will help fund several new programs and a portion of the Kachemak Bay Conference on April 25

"It is an opportunity for all user groups of all kinds to talk about their needs, their visions and hopes for the future of Kachemak Bay' said Mike O Meara the museum s special projects coordinator

Conference organizers also want to hear what seventh- and eighth graders have to say about the Bay through essays on the topic "If The Kachemak Bay Went Away" Entries must be submitted by April 15 with no more than 350 words in the form of a story, poem or song to Kachemak Bay Essay, PO Box 627 Homer Call conference coordinator Pam Chavious at 235 4196 for more information

The conference is co sponsored by the Pratt Museum the Marine Advisory Program and Cook Inlet Keeper

Part of the museum s grant is earmarked for collaborative programs such as Sea Week for museum staff to attend water quality-related programs to modify the museum's web site and to fund a Discovery Project newsletter which will encompass up to date information on local watershed research

The Kachemak Bay Discovery Project is a multi-faceted undertaking which involves redesigning the museum s marine room, developing a science curriculum and laboratories and placing remote controlled video cameras on Gull Island among other things

The DEC awarded 19 separate watershed grants this year for a total of $671,000 On the Peninsula the other grants will be used for water monitoring of Kachemak Bay and the Kenai River, erosion control along the banks of the Russian and Kenai rivers and for a water monitoring program of Resurrection Bay

Stan Stephens of Valdez has been elected president of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council Executive committee members also elected **Bill Lindow** vice president, **Bill Walker** treasurer, **Marilynn Heddell**, secretary, **Wayne Coleman** and **Blake Johnson**, at large representatives

ALASKA JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & COMMERCE
MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1998

THE CORDOVA TIMES MARCH 26, 1998

RCAC elects Stan Stephens president

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council elected Stan Stephens as its president at a March 13 meeting in Anchorage Stephens, 63, is president and operator of Valdez-based Stan Stephens Cruises He has been involved with the council since 1990 and is the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association s representative to the group He served as RCAC president once before from 1993-1995

"There's probably no individual who better exemplifies the core values of the council than Stan," said executive director John Devens I look forward to working with him to make oil transportation safer and to promote worldwide the cause of involving citizens in decisions that affect their social and natural environments"

Cordova resident Bill Lindow, representing Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation, was elected vice president, Bill Walker, representing Valdez ,was elected treasurer, Marilynn Heddell, representing Whittier, was elected secretary, and Wayne Coleman, representing the Kodiak Island Borough, and Blake Johnson representing Kenai Peninsula Borough, were elected at-large board members

Some Cordovans were also reseated after their two-year terms expired Margy Johnson, representing the City of Cordova, Michelle Hahn-O'Leary, representing CDFU and Kelly Weaverling, representing the Oil Spill Regional Environmental Coalition will continue to serve on the council

The next RCAC meeting will be May 14-15 in Valdez

Rep. Austerman:

A report on the Deferred Maintenance Task Force findings & proposals

Part of the infrastructure required to support the fishing industry in Kodiak, is the harbors The State of Alaska owns the docks in St Paul's Harbor, St Herman's Harbor and the transient float Although the state is responsible for maintaining those facilities they haven't appropriated any funds for this purpose in over a decade Meanwhile the city has been paying for temporary repairs to figuratively keep the harbor afloat

Members of the Alaska Legislature s Deferred Maintenance Task Force (DMTF) were in town this past September to review first hand problems associated with the lack of maintenance on all state assets Members of the DMTF were impressed that Kodiak has been spending millions of dollars of their own money for ongoing maintenance of the dock facilities The clincher for the deal was when the city promised to take responsibility for the harbors once they were fixed

Kodiak fared really well in the DMTF s overall recommendations The harbors are fully funded for $7 775 000 under their proposal This was due in part, to the fact that the City of Kodiak made a great presentation to the task force The harbormaster s office gave the task force a briefing followed by a walking and boat tour of the affected facilities Additionally the harbor facilities in Port Lions will receive a little over $4 million under pending legislation

If you haven t been down to the docks lately this is what you will find Dozens of pilings support timbers and bull rails are rotten Electric utilities are in desperate need of replacement Wiring and distribution boxes are beyond repair The water system is contaminated and the water is not drinkable Hundreds of flotation billets are saturated and no longer properly support the docks

The visitation culminated with a public hearing They heard from the general public and government officials in Kodiak as well as folks from Larsen Bay Ouzinkie Old Harbor and Chiniak The message was loud and clear Fix our roads and fix our harbors

A report of the DMTF findings and recommendations including a plan for funding has been submitted to the legislature for its consideration As a result of this plan five bills each have been introduced on both sides of the legislature If you would like to see a copy of these proposals, the Kodiak Legislative Offices (LIO) located in the Kodiak Plaza Building (across from Subway) have these available The exact bill numbers are

House Bills 312 through 316 and Senate Bills 324 through 328

In essence $1 5 billion from the Constitutional Budget Reserve (CBR) fund would be set aside and only the interest from this $1 5 billion would be used to pay for Revenue Bonds that would be used -to capitalize the 'Build Alaska Fund This fund would provide an effective means of financing deferred maintenance projects around the state These projects would include the marine highway system schools, roads harbors airports and state owned buildings All of the various projects would be incorporated into a six year capital improvement plan (CIP) separate from the state s regular CIP

More information about any of these pieces of legislation can be obtained by calling the LIO at 486-8116 or my office in Juneau at 1 800-865-2487

THE CORDOVA TIMES MARCH 26, 1998

Clam beds may hold answer to slow otter recovery in Bay of Isles

Coastal currents

By Jody Seitz

KNIGHT ISLAND — Eight years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill many people are still dogging it out, trying to find out what's recovered, what hasn't, and why One of those people is Glen Van Blaricom, of the University of Washington

Sea otters have been slow to recover in Bay of Isles, which was heavily oiled in 1989 Van Blaricom is one of several scientists who think that one reason might be their food supply

'For any one of several possible reasons, we think the food supply in the heavily oiled areas isn't as good as it used to be for sea otters," he said "We're trying to see what the patterns are, and if that's true, get some idea as to why it might be less adequate here '

The job is anything but glamorous Van Blaricom uses a dredge to winnow away the mud from clams in a randomly-chosen plot about 25 feet under the surface and 18 inches square "It's basically a lot of time laying on the bottom sucking mud out of a hole " he said

But that's where the sea otters dig for their favorite food butter clams, littlenecks, cockles, and bent-nosed clams They also eat crabs, mussels, and other invertebrates but in Prince William Sound their diet is mostly clams, according to Van Blaricom

"We think that their diet in the sound is half- to three-quarters clams, and primarily those which come from the subtidal environment and are dug out from the mud or the sand,' he said

Clams produce billions of larvae each year, but it takes just the right combination of currents, plankton and mud for the larvae to settle to the bottom and develop into clams Ten years may pass before they grow large enough to appeal to sea otters.

To find out how the clams are progressing, researchers record the sizes, ages and number of clams they dig up in the Knight Island bays and compare them to places that were not oiled, at Montague Island

If it turns out that the clams grow and reproduce at the same rate in both areas, but oiled areas have fewer clams, it's possible the spill affected them However, he cautioned, there could be natural causes as well, such as different growing conditions, or predators

Sea stars, for example, eat clams But when researchers investigated, they found that the stars ate fewer clams than they first thought "We found that the rates of predation by sea stars were equal in both areas, and that they weren't really eating as many clams as we thought they were They're mainly eating other things, Van Blaricom said

As of last July Van Blaricom and his field crew had sampled 70-80 sites around the Sound dredging four to five plots at each site

His preliminary impression was that there did appear to be fewer clams in the oiled sites However, he still needs to compare reproduction in the oiled and non-oiled areas before any conclusions can be drawn, he said

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

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Harbor seal numbers in the Gulf of Alaska began dropping about 20 years ago In Prince William Sound, biologists noticed their numbers declining about 1985 While the negative population trends continue in the sound, their populations are thriving in southeast Alaska and the population is showing signs of stabilizing in Kodiak

About two years ago, Alaskan biologists Mike Castellini and Brian Fadely met another seal researcher who had found some interesting patterns in the blood of harbor seals from the North Atlantic Dr Paul Thompson, of Scotland, found that the blood chemistry of seals changed with their diet In particular, the size of red blood cells increased when they shifted from eating high fat content fish such as herring, to pollock and cod

Thompson wanted to know if biologists found the same thing in harbor seals here The collaborative effort has helped eliminate some reasons for population declines, and has helped scientists focus more closely on the exact nature of the problem

Fadely, now with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau, says at first he didn't find anything exceptional On the whole, the harbor seal blood looked healthy 'Any veterinarian looking at the blood of these seals would say they are healthy," said Fadely

And he found no serious differences in the health and condition in seals from southeast Alaska from those in Prince William Sound

Then he analyzed the blood data of harbor seals from the Montague Strait area, and the central area of Prince William Sound

What he found were trends that are considered subclinical" They do not represent a lack of health, but are changes in the blood chemistry that occur according to where the seals live, the time of year and between years

'We see this change throughout several years which is consistent with what the fisheries biologists are saying about the relative abundance of pollock and herring in that area

To better understand what they are seeing in the wild studies of captive animals are needed Fadely said That way we will know what the animals are being fed he said We can take continuous measurements of its health and fatty acids accumulations based on diet learn how stable isotopes change based on diet what diets are best for the animals and how well they assimilate them

The puzzle still exists If the animals are in good condition and their blood looks healthy then what is wrong? According to Fadely it could be a number of things

It might be our sampling that we're missing the animals that are compromised or we have it in our data and haven't seen it yet he said or another possibility is that it isn't health related at all

Scientists hope to get a better understanding of how diet affects the seals especially pups and juveniles in studies at the Alaska SeaLife Center beginning this year

THE PENINSULA CLARION THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 1998

Assembly votes to keep public access to beach

Decision upheld despite complaints from nearby Seward property owners

By DAVE O LUCAS
Peninsula Clarion

The Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly voted 5-2 Tuesday night to uphold a borough planning commission decision not to vacate a right of way that has provided public access to the Resurrection Bay beach near Lowell Point in Seward for many years

The owner of the property adjacent to the right of way, David Fischer of Anchorage, requested the borough vacate the easement based on problems created by people using it as an informal parking lot and camping area Noise, vehicle congestion, vandalism to property owned by Fischer and other residents of the Martin subdivision and trespassing were all cited as reasons for vacating the popular beach access point

The planning commission denied the petition to vacate on an 8-1 vote, after first approving findings of the borough planning department staff Staff recommendations noted Borough Coastal Management Program policies prohibit vacating public access to coastal waters unless equal or better access is provided

Fischer disagreed, arguing that state Division of Parks property adjacent to the area — recently purchased with money from the Exxon Valdez oil spill mitigation fund — provides alternative access to the beach So does the boat launch known as Miller's Landing located at the north end of the subdivision

The assembly heard those arguments reiterated and examined the information gathered by the planning department before making its decision Assembly member Patrick O'Brien requested that he be removed from the appeals hearing as he is a property owner in the affected subdivision, but that he be allowed to speak on the issue as a private citizen Assembly President Jack Brown granted O'Brien's request but noted he believed O'Brien could participate without a conflict of interest if he so desired A discussion followed on whether O'Brien's request would create a precedent whereby other members of the assembly could be expected to do the same thing in similar situations in the future That would have to be decided on a case-by-case basis, ruled Borough Attorney Collette Thompson

Fischer argued that the Division of Parks' property provides plenty of beach access for kayakers and pedestrians, and that the right of way access was not appropriate for vehicles attempting to launch larger boats Fischer said the Division of Parks has plans to develop a parking lot and other facilities on its property sometime in the future, specifically with a staging area for kayakers in mind

Division of Parks Director Jim Stratton sent a letter to the planning department in December stating the agency had "no objection" to the proposed vacation "The vacation of the right of way will have no effect on the Division of Parks' efforts to provide outdoor recreation opportunities at this site "

What Stratton's letter did not talk about was any specific plans or time line for developing beach access at the site for kayakers, pedestrians or otherwise So far, the only action taken by the state on the property has been to erect a rock wall that would effectively bar motorized vehicles from getting to the beach that way

O'Brien spoke in favor of allowing the vacation, noting that he, too, had been in touch with parks officials and had been given some assurances that public access to the beach could not be taken away

With people parking and camping in the right of way, "partying all night," Fischer and other residents are negatively affected by the public use of the right of way, said O'Brien "He (Fischer) does not enjoy quiet use of his property, that's for sure "

O'Brien noted he didn't think the planning commission had all the "proper" information in front of them when they made their decision and reiterated his belief that the public would always have access to the beach across state parks land

"Adjacent state land does not provide the same degree of access," said Parker

Assembly member Tim Navarre said he was under the impression that some EVOS land had been set aside for preservation

Borough Mayor Mike Navarre said he supports the planning department's findings, agreeing there is no guarantee at the present time that the state parks land will provide the same type access as currently available Until the Division of Parks commits to a specific plan for its property, he'd rather ensure the public maintains its level of access to the beach, said Navarre

"It boils down to a question of private convenience vs public access," said Mike Navarre "The fact is state parks and state lands have all kinds of restrictions on them "

The mayor noted many areas of state-owned property along the Kenai River have restrictions to access on them

Tim Navarre asked if it would be appropriate for the borough to consider limiting access through the right of way to pedestrian traffic only, which might help alleviate some of the problem Assembly member Dale Bagley objected to that line of discussion being allowed in the appeals hearing, saying it wasn't pertinent to the question at hand

Nonetheless, the borough does have some options for managing the flow of people using the right of way that could be exercised in the future, such as erecting barriers or signs to prevent parking or overnight camping in the right of way

Assembly member Ron Drathman said he opposed the appeal

"The evidence is overwhelming that everybody in Seward uses this right of way all summer," he said

Assembly member Drew Scalzi said that while he sympathized with Fischer, he couldn't support his appeal either The borough's duty is to provide public access, he noted, and vacating the right of way might lessen the pressure on the state to create a viable alternative in the park Scalzi also noted that the borough would likely be confronting this problem more often in the future, as demand for public access to popular recreation sites continues to grow It's something the assembly needs to be prepared to deal with he said

Assembly member Debra Horne disagreed, saying she thought the state land did provide adequate public access as required by the Coastal Management Plan

"The evidence shows this vacation is reasonable and will not impact public access," said Horne

In the end, the group voted 5-2 to uphold the planning commission's decision, with Horne and Brown voting in favor, O'Brien sitting out and Grace Merkes absent

Brown said afterward he was unhappy with the way some of the procedures in the hearing had been carried out Drathman, a canny parliamentarian and always willing to needle Brown on procedural matters, pointed out the president could blame himself since he was in charge of the proceedings

Brown said later he was mainly concerned that the proceedings be conducted as closely to the letter as possible, to ensure fairness for the person appealing

"Taking on 'the government' can be really intimidating for normal people," said Brown "I don't want anybody in that position to feel like they aren't getting a fair shot "

In other business, the assembly voted against passage of an ordinance that would have granted a sales tax exemption for Rolfers (a type of massage therapy) similar to the break provided for other health care providers

The ordinance, sponsored by Merkes, failed on a 7-1 vote An amendment that would have extended the tax exemption to cover all "therapeutic massage and body workers" certified by their national board failed to get an introduction

"Certification by the state of Alaska is what I feel is lacking to support this," said Scalzi noting he recognized the value of massage therapy as an alternative treatment

"If the state decides to support this as a medical procedure then I could support this We need to be consistent in how we approve tax exemptions "

The group also approved the introduction of four new borough ordinances which will receive public hearing at the April 21 meeting and approved three lay down' resolutions pertaining to bills pending before the state Legislature in Juneau

Cooper Landing resident Sherman C "Red Smith gave a presentation on an 'action plan for beetle kill timber utilization " Smith urged assembly members and the audience to take any possible steps to salvage some economic value from the dead and dying spruce trees on the peninsula

Mayor Navarre also addressed the beetle problem, providing the assembly with a quick report on last week's meeting of the federally-funded beetle task force Navarre's comments focused mainly on fire protection, an issue of paramount importance as warm weather approaches

If it turns out that federal grant money secured to fund the task force can't be spent on fire protection measures until after the group makes its report to congress, Navarre said he might ask the assembly to authorize spending some borough funds which could later be reimbursed "I hope that isn't necessary," he added

Navarre also said he doesn t foresee a necessity for hiring a lobbyist on the education issue in Juneau Sen John Torgerson and other members of the local delegation are following the issue closely, and Navarre will try to spend some time in Juneau himself "as things start happening," he said

"I don't feel comfortable expending the funds at this time "

Firm Lays Out Visitor Center, Boardwalk Plan

by Pat Lynn
Editor, The Star

DUCK FLATS--An Anchorage consulting firm has laid out a series of ambitious options for improvements along the Valdez Duck Flats including a visitor center a boardwalk paralleling the Richardson highway, a viewing platform overlooking the Duck Flats and an elevated walkway from the Duck Flats to the Small Boat Harbor

The consulting firm characterizes the Duck Flats as "a rare habitat" with its value further emphasized by its location adjacent to Valdez

The city of Valdez and other governmental agencies face a wide range of options from doing nothing to embarking on a series of very expensive projects to connect people to the Duck Flats as a natural asset

Among the options

1 The building of a Scenic Turnout & Viewing area just north of Crooked Creek on southside of the Richardson Highway at a cost of $250,000

2 Constructing an elevated boardwalk alongside the entire southside of the Duck Flats from Crooked Creek toward Loop Road, a distance of 1,850 feet, at a cost of $1 4 million

3 Extending an elevated boardwalk from Crooked Creek to the Small Boat Harbor where it would link up with the new trail system at Dock Point Projected cost $1 9 million

4 The construction of a 3,500 square foot visitor center--at a location not yet identified--to house a visitor center and an oil spill restoration exhibit Projected cost $1 9 million

The consulting firm says the U S Forest Service and the state Department of Natural Resources 'have expressed interest in using the administrative space that would be made available in the new building

Those options and more are contained in a 68-page report issued this week by Dames & Moore, an architecure and engineering firm based in Anchorage

The consulting firm was retained by the Prince, William Sound Economic Development Council last July at a cost of $63,400 to conduct a comprehensive study of the Duck Flats

Calling the Duck Flats "a relatively unique habitat," the consulting firm says its proximity to Valdez and the Richardson Highway "provide an unusual opportunity for public access' for recreation and tourism

The consultant's report also emphasizes that any and all options require the recognition that the habitat be left undisturbed as a sanctuary for wildlife

Boardwalks, for example, should be elevated on steel pilings which would rise above the flora and the high tidal zone, all shrubbery disturbed during any improvements should be replanted, all viewing areas/boardwalks should contain advisory information that the environment is delicate and should remain undisturbed

The Duck Flats, say the consultants, play an important part in providing habitat to wildlife--marine waterfowl in particular--that are recovering from the affects of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill

The final draft of the Dames & Moore report is available at the office of the Economic Development Council located upstairs in the KCHU public radio building on Pioneer

Consultants from Dames & Moore will be at the Valdez Post Office on the morning of March 24 and the afternoon of March 25 to solicit public comment on their report

A public meeting on the report is set for the city council chambers on March 24 from 7 until 9 p m

The Dames & Moore report may provide ammunition to the city of Valdez and various other agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Valdez Visitor & Convention Bureau, the Small Business Group and others which may seek funds from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to underwrite the suggested projects

The trustee council is charged with spending $900 million in settlement costs with Exxon with the money earmarked for the preservation, enhancement and recovery of lands and wildlife damaged by the 1989 spill

To date, none of the money has been allocated to any Valdez projects

Various government and non-government agencies and business people in Valdez complain that each summer the town is inundated with visitors seeking information on the infamous spill but there nothing local to offer

Snowden wants a SeaLife dock, too

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

Hotel owner Brad Snowden wants to build a floating dock at the Alaska SeaLife Center and serve it with his own tour boats by summer 1999

If the deal goes through, it would be the second such dock downtown Kenai Fjords Tours recently completed agreements with the city to lease tidelands and with the SeaLife Center to sublease uplands for a two-berth dock that is planned for this May

"We plan to do exactly what Kenai Fjords Tours Inc is doing," Snowden said In fact, he's calling his company Kenai Fjords National Park Tours "The difference is with two docks you now have competition "

The city agreement with Kenai Fjords Tours requires the company to make a "reasonable effort" to accommodate other qualified dock users on a scheduled basis and at fees capped by the city

But Snowden said the agreement gives one company power over when other companies could use it He sees a second dock as necessary for competition, or one company could "dominate our town to a too-large degree "

Snowden said he wants to protect against what he called "cross lateralization," in which a company owns every entity where a tourist spends money, from transportation, lodging and tours to restaurants and bars

"If it was only one company, all that Seward would get is the crumbs We would have one company gobbling up the pie," Snowden said

So far Snowden's idea is just a proposal to the city He doesn't yet own any boats or have financing, he said He's looking for partners

The City Council is scheduled Monday to consider whether to direct the administration to negotiate a tidelands lease and operating agreement on the same terms as that of Kenai Fjords Tours' agreement

When the city considered the Kenai Fjords Tours deal earlier this year, without requesting other proposals, administrators said there was room for other docks in front of the metal breakwater next to the SeaLife Center

But there s no point leasing the tidelands if you can't use the uplands Snowden also needs a sublease from the SeaLife Center

The SeaLife Center has asked Snowden to answer several questions said SeaLife Center administrator Darryl Schaefermeyer at a March 9 council work session

The SeaLife Center wants to know how Snowden would use the property what his business relationship with the center would be, what his financial backing is, what his schedule would be for completing and operating the dock, what its likelihood for success is and how would he mitigate impacts on the center

"We obviously know Kenai Fjords Tours' ability to run a business," Schaefermeyer said But Snowden isn't in the tour boat business And they don't yet know how one dock will work out, he said

Snowden said the questions are legitimate, but he d have to secure the property before he could get financing and partners

Snowden said his deal would be an advantage to the SeaLife Center As co-owner of Best Western Hotel Seward he's connected to Best Western s worldwide marketing "If anything should excite them this surely should," he said

Snowden said he also plans to expand the hotel southward, although he doesn't yet know how many rooms he would add When Seward grows location will be critical he said I am making sure we are in place, ready to expand and react to demand "

The city didn't refer the Kenai Fjords Tours proposal to the city Planning and Zoning Commission "There were no real zoning issues in the submerged land so it made sense to keep the process at the council level," Acting City Manager Rick Gifford said in a memo

A council work session added more opportunity for public comments than the usual lease procedure and effectively replaced the planning commission step, he said

The council is following the same procedure with Snowden, who has asked for equal treatment

Although there may be no zoning issues, there could be planning concerns for some council members

Councilman Pat Callahan, at the March 9 work session on Snowden's proposal, wondered where it would all end He didn t want to see 10 docks there If the city accepts one dock, does it have grounds to turn down other docks, he asked

Roving reporter visits Seward

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

A reporter who travels the West for his one-man newspaper visited Seward last week and was impressed by the pigeons

OK, he also toured the Alaska SeaLife Center and marveled at the scenery But Chuck Woodbury especially liked seeing the humble pigeon in exotic Alaska

"Virtually everything I see, I write about," said Woodbury who publishes Out West a quarterly newspaper about his travels "It's silly little stuff like that But to my readers, they travel along with me Whatever I find interesting, they enjoy"

A former publisher, Woodbury began his newspaper 10 years ago as a hobby Thanks to some national media publicity — including ABC News, National Public Radio, USA Today and People Magazine — it took off, with subscriptions rising to about 10,000 before falling off to the current 7,000

Woodbury lives in Edmonds, Wash , with his wife, whom he met on the road, and young daughter He travels about three months of the year for several weeks at a time This was his first trip to Alaska, and he intended to spend most of it on the Peninsula

Woodbury said he writes in the first person, as if he's writing to a friend, about "anything that I find interesting, and I tend to be attracted to the offbeat."

Like David Wimp of Cheyenne, Wyo , a retired Army cook who decided to count to a million on a calculator one digit at a time He's been doing it for more than 10 years now and has amassed 30 miles of paper tape to show for it

Or Dishwasher Pete, whose goal is to wash dishes in every state in the union and who puts out his own magazine called, yes, Dishwasher

Pete writes about his fellow dishwashers and includes features on sneaking food and their favorite pans to wash When the David Letterman show invited Pete, who is a shy man, he sent a ringer, Woodbury said

The newspaper's readers feel like they know him, Woodbury said, and they send him plenty of chatty letters in return He said he could fill his newspaper with letters alone

A former bartender who called himself Mike the Bike wrote recently about a close encounter with folksy radio personality and author Garrison Keillor

Keillor apparently didn't like Mike's self-styled "highly renowned Bloody Mary," didn't finish it, and didn't leave a tip "A few days later he almost hit me on my bike I'm sure he has his good side but I've not been a fan since," Mike said sadly

The magazine costs $12 95 a year from Out West, 9792 Edmonds Way Suite 265 Edmonds, WA 98020

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG MARCH 19, 1998

SeaLife Center looking to purchase fish

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

The Alaska SeaLife Center expects to buy about 100,000 pounds of fish in its first year to feed the mammals, birds and other marine life that will be the subjects of research and exhibition

The three sea lions scheduled to live at the center eat a combined 100-150 pounds of fish a day said SeaLife Center Executive Director Kim Sundberg

Gale Vick, a consultant to the SeaLife Center, said they want to buy locally as much as possible but they have to consider price The budget is about $100 000

They're looking for the best deal, including price, processing storage and transportation, Vick said Processing would likely be flash-freezing in blocks

So far, most of their purchases have been cheaper in Seward than from elsewhere, Vick said The downside is that not all of the species they want are available locally

In some cases that's because fishermen can't legally target a species The SeaLife Center might ask the state Board of Fisheries for permission to have experimental fisheries for some species, Sundberg said

In other cases the fish don't live around here

The SeaLife Center is looking for herring salmon black cod, pacific cod, pollock, rockfish, Dungeness crab, shrimp, razor clams, hardshell clams, mussels and sea urchins They'll also use eulachon and capelin, sand lance, two species of krill (which fish eat), and squid

Prices would have to take into account processing, packaging, tendering, and fish taxes processors told SeaLife Center staff at a recent meeting

The volumes are very small by industry standards and even for individual fishermen, industry members said The SeaLife Center expects to buy just 15,000 pounds of salmon a year for example and 3,700 pounds of Pacific cod The SeaLife Center is compiling a list of possible suppliers

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
MARCH 19, 1998
(BOTH ARTICLES)

Kids' thoughts are with porpoise

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

Seward Elementary students' thoughts about the oceans will hang over the heads of visitors to the Alaska SeaLife Center Literally

Local sculptor Jim Ramsdell's realistic wood carvings of a pod of Dall porpoises chasing a meal of herring and squid will hang from the ceiling over the escalator and lobby Inside the hollow body of the mother porpoise will be drawings and notes from local students

Their thoughts varied from Danny Groh's sketch of his dad s fishing boat to those of a girl named Mandy, who said, I d like the ocean not to be salt water"

A kid named Nick said "I wish for the ocean to be nice and clean And I wish for all the jellyfish and fishes to be clean too"

The project is "just to give the kids a connection with the spirit of the Dall's porpoise, ' Ramsdell said

He's been working on the basswood sculpture, which includes six porpoises and their prey, since mid-January All the porpoises are hollow, not only to make them lighter but to relieve the wood's stress on the glue that holds the pieces together

Last week Ramsdell showed students the crude, early stage of the mother porpoise s form, and they put their contributions in the belly

The sculptures start as life-size drawings

Ramsdell glues three long pieces of wood together, then roughly cuts out the animal's form with a chain saw and hollows out the interior Two smaller pieces of wood fill are glued to the sides of the body

Ramsdell uses an electric grinder with a carbide burr to modulate the form, eventually working down to a Dremel rotary tool with dental hand pieces A friend, Sarah Bontempi, sands it The fins, separately carved, are attached, and the sculpture is primed with gesso and painted with acrylics

Borough preserves right of way to beach

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

The Borough Assembly has rejected an Anchorage man's effort to eliminate a popular right of way at Lowell Point beach

David Fischer owns a house next to the 200-by-40-foot right of way that leads from the road to the beach It's sometimes used by people launching boats from trailers or kayaks by hand or walkers on the beach and Caines Head trail

The problem is people also trespass on Fischer's land, vandalize his property, put bullet holes in his house, and party loudly all night, he told the borough Planning Commission Feb 23, when he asked it to vacate the right of way

Fischer argued that the beachfront property west of his, which was recently sold by Jim McCracken to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council and turned over to the state Parks Division, provides access to the beach for pedestrians and kayakers People launching motorized boats can use Miller's Landing Fischer said

'It boils down to a question of private convenience and public access'
— Mike Navarre, borough mayor

The state Parks Division didn't oppose the vacation Parks Director Jim Stratton said it wouldn't affect their efforts to provide recreation opportunities at the site The state is planning to put in parking, toilets and paths on its parcel

But other nearby property owners said the current right of way is the best access, and that using state land would disturb the flora and fauna They said Fischer could fence his land, as other residents do, to reduce trespassing and vandalism

The planning commission turned Fischer down, and the Borough Assembly rejected his appeal Tuesday in a 5-2 vote, with one member absent and Seward-area Assemblyman Pat O'Brien abstaining because he owns land next to Fischer's

It's the borough's policy not to vacate public access to coastal waters unless equal or better access is provided That was the point of contention

The majority of Assembly members said the state hasn't guaranteed free access to the beach and it wouldn't necessarily match the current type of access Nor did they accept Miller's Landing, which sometimes charges launch fees, as an equal substitute

O Brien speaking as a citizen, told the Assembly that the right of way isn't a viable vehicular access now — vehicles get stuck in the sand It's rarely used for that, he said State parks land 20 feet away was just as good for other types of access, he argued

O Brien sympathized with Fischer's frustrations "He does not enjoy quiet enjoyment of his property, that's for sure," O'Brien said

"It boils down to a question of private convenience and public access," said borough Mayor Mike Navarre When the state Parks Division provides the same type of access, it would be appropriate to vacate the current access, he said

City, merchants differ on parking

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

The city doesn't have the money to enforce a two-hour parking limit downtown It doesn't have the money for a minimum of 57 signs needed to inform drivers of such a parking limit And debatable as it is, a two-hour limit may not even be necessary — all according to Tylan Schrock, assistant to the city manager

Schrock told the Downtown Business Association March 13 that the city would be hard pressed to come up with the estimated $16,177 it would cost to establish and maintain a parking limit

Schrock said it would cost the city $7,756 per season including salaries, uniforms and supplies for parking enforcement officers

Signage is costly as one sign for every third or fourth parking space would be needed, and would cost $3,521

Public Works Superintendent Floyd Amsworth reported to Schrock that labor would add another $4,900 to the project

The bottom line as Schrock stated in a letter to the DBA, is that a parking limit would have to be approved by the City Council and that the city administration will not recommend any solution that is not cost-neutral to the city'

If implemented as the DBA outlined in an April 3 1997 letter to the city, the two-hour limit would apply on Fourth Avenue between Railway Avenue and Jefferson Street, from 9 a m - 5 p m , June 1-Sept 1, seven days a week

Schrock said the time limit would be extended to 6 p m on weekdays and Saturdays and wouldn't begin until noon on Sundays, so as not to interfere with church services

He also suggested that parking on Washington and Adams streets between Third and Fifth avenues would also have to be restricted, because "the immediate result of implementing the time limit (on Fourth Avenue) would be to clog these two streets immediately"

But Schrock said he's reluctant to back the limit before exploring alternatives

One solution, he told the group, may be to establish parking lots specifically for downtown residents, business employees and owners Moving them into lots would open up parking on the streets

The city also could enter into a contract with someone to manage downtown parking, similar to the contract the city has with Randy McFarland in the harbor district

"But that too will come with a cost," Schrock said

McFarland said he's ' still recovering from the arrow wounds from last year," when he took charge of implementing two-hour limits in the harbor

But he is willing to consider entering into a parking management contract for the downtown area He s been watching traffic, talking to people and has some suggestions

He recommends turning Railway Avenue into a one-way street downtown and eliminating any bus stops on Washington Street, which would reduce congestion there

He said, "The DBA certainly has the vision to see the problem " but doesn't know if the will of downtown residents and merchants is strong enough to effect change

"It's a divided neighborhood with people coming from three or four different directions," he said

Sue Cummings, owner of the Yukon Bar, said she doesn't want to see parking regulated downtown

"You don't need regulations for common sense It s stupid Just stupid We don't need that People don't want to come here to see what they left at home " she said

'I want to be able to park right in front if I can" and if not, she said she parks where she can find space and walks to work

But just down the street, Dennis Treadwell, co-owner of Starbird Studio said parking needs to be regulated

While he said he would not presume to speak for the rest of the DBA, as a member he doesn't see a problem with downtown merchants helping pay for parking enforcement, but he thinks the city should "belly up" as well

Dave Crane, owner of the Alaska Shop and a DBA member, is a vocal proponent of the two-hour parking limit and is frustrated that the city isn't willing to commit the money and the manpower to change the downtown parking structure before the onslaught of summer tourists

Crane asked Schrock at the March 13 meeting why the city will enforce a parking prohibition on Railway Avenue for the benefit of the Alaska SeaLife Center but won't help downtown merchants with their perceived parking problem

"It kind of upsets me that the city hasn't come up with anything to help out he said

But Schrock took offense to Crane s comment and said he was there to represent the city and to help out He said he's just not convinced that there is a problem

' Convince me that this is going to be a problem," he told the group

Crane said parking already is a problem and that the city needs to assume some responsibility for it and help solve it

He said the city code allowing for zero setback on lot lines in the Central Business District is partially to blame for the lack of parking

'You don't need regulations for common sense. It's stupid. Just stupid. We don't need that. People don't want to come here to see what they left at home.'

— Sue Cummings, owner, Yukon Bar

spaces business owners can provide on their lots And he said because the city doesn't require business owners to provide employee parking, it is responsible for where they do park And if they park in spaces in front of shops, the city should do something to handle the overflow

Crane proposes that the city split the costs with downtown merchants and be more reasonable in its cost estimation

He said unless workers putting the signs up are working overtime, it shouldn't cost the city any extra money because city employees are salaried He also criticized the signage requirement

"Fifty-seven signs seems a little ridiculous to me," he said

But Police Chief Tom Walker explained that the city must comply with federal standards He also said the number of signs required will prevent people from appealing to the court for dismissal of parking tickets because they didn't see a sign

Schrock also fielded questions from various DBA members who asked how much money the city could take in as revenue from parking violators

"I'm not excited about counting on parking tickets for revenue," he said

Schrock said it would be better in the long run to watch how things go this summer before taking action If there is a problem, he said the city will be walking point, as always He only wants the merchants to be a little more cooperative

"Let's face it The city will be the bad guy We'll set it up, we'll enforce it and we'll take the heat for it," Schrock said

Seward shines in bright Peninsula economic picture

By Nancy Pounds
Journal Reporter

Seward continued to be a bright spot for the Kenai Peninsula Borough economy last year as several sectors reported increases for 1997

The economy in the borough showed slight growth from the previous year, according to a report released last month by the Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development District Inc

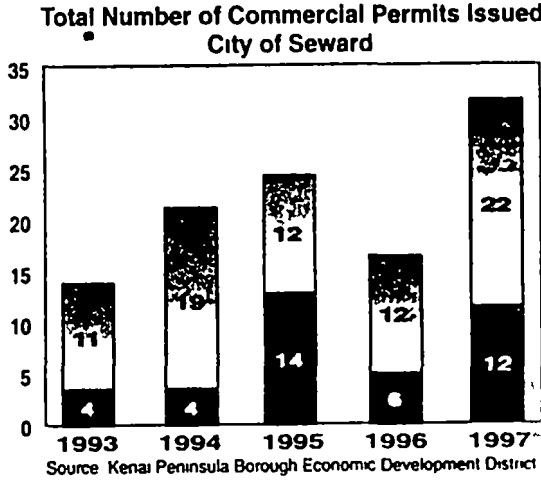
"Overall, for the borough, we're definitely growing, but growing at a fairly slow rate," said Becky Hultberg, project manager with the Economic Development District

Seward recorded a mini-economic boom last year, the report shows The total number of commercial and residential building permits rose in 1997, and the city issued the highest number of residential construction permits in the past five years Commercial construction permits also climbed, totaling 34 permits in 1997 compared with 18 the previous year Value for commercial permits issued for Seward also was up $2 million in 1997, reaching $8 million

"We definitely think tourism and the SeaLife Center are going to have a big impact on Seward,' Hultberg said

Tourism continues to be a strong segment of Seward's economy with just more than 100 cruise ships docking each summer, she said

In Homer, residential building permits for the year logged strong results, probably thanks to a burst in building second or retirement homes, she said



Also commercial permit values for Homer construction rose due to work on several warehouses and a National Bank of Alaska branch

For the central Peninsula area, residential and commercial building activity proved on par with 1996 results, she said However, permits are only issued for the city limits, and a significant amount of building did take place in the Kenai and Soldotna area, she added

Available employment figures for the Kenai Peninsula rose by 0 9 percent for the first half of 1997 compared to the same period in 1996 The mining and manufacturing sectors showed strong growth for the first half of 1997, the borough Economic Development District's report says Increases in fish processing led to a boost in area manufacturing whil additional jobs in the oil an gas industry contributed t growth in the mining secto Manufacturing employmen grew thanks to fish processin plants operating nine month out of the year instead of th usual four to five months Hult berg said

The oil and gas industr added 74 jobs for the Peninsul last year, borough statistic show The region s oil and g industry looks to be on th rebound after several ye rs decline, and renewed explo ration and production in Coo Inlet by Phillips Petroleum Forcenergy Inc and Anadark Petroleum Corp , Hultber said "There's more optimis for the Cook Inlet oil and g industry than in the last 10 t 15 years " she said

STREET TALK

ENVIRONMENT

• **The Nature Conservancy** has awarded the **Alaska Heritage Program** of the **University of Alaska Anchorage** a $24,000 grant to develop and maintain a biological conservation database and related information The grant, to be distributed through the **University of Alaska Foundation**, has been designated for the program's operations

STATE NEWS

Chugach forest supervisor named

JUNEAU — The country's second-largest national forest has a new supervisor Dave Gibbons was named forest supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, which flanks Anchorage and stretches along the Southcentral coast as far east as Cape Suckling Gibbons was acting supervisor before being appointed to the permanent post Friday He has worked for the Forest Service for 23 years, including 19 years in Petersburg and Juneau Gibbons helped develop the first land management plan for the Tongass National Forest He has been involved the past nine years in assessment and restoration work after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Forest Service said Gibbons replaces Larry Hudson, who retired last fall

Peninsula Clarion 3/19/98

Oil spill exhibition to open in Seward

The Pratt Museum's award-winning traveling exhibition, "Darkened Waters Profile of an Oil Spill," opens in Seward March 28 at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Seward Marine Science Education Center, adjacent to the new Alaska SeaLife Center

The exhibition examines the chronology of the grounding of the Exxon Valdez, initial responses, efforts to clean up and environmental impacts of America's worst oil spill 'Darkened Waters" also explores the impact of the spill on people's lives Finally, "Darkened Waters" focuses on the continuing problem of oil spills and oil transportation worldwide by posing the question to viewers "Can people make a difference?"

A special reception is planned for local residents March 30 Residents also may attend the exhibition at no charge March 28, 29 and 30 The center will be open from 3 30 to 9 30 p m on these dates In addition to the 'Darkened Waters" exhibit, the Seward Downtown Business Association will show historic films of Seward in the center's auditorium

During the month of April the exhibition will be available for visits by school groups Arrangements should be made directly with the Seward Marine Science Education Center by calling 907-224-5261

'Darkened Waters' will open to the general public May 2 with an admission charge of $3 for adults $1 for children and families for $9 The exhibition will close Sept 13

A Call to Action

THE ANCHORAGE PRESS
MARCH 5 - 11, 1998

Chugach roadless areas at risk

by Matthew Zencey

Alaskans like to brag about how big and spectacular everything in the state is so let's take a minute and steer our chauvinism toward the chunk of Southeast Alaska known as the Tongass National Forest

For starters the Tongass is huge It covers more than 80 percent of Southeast Alaska The Tongass is the nation s largest national forest the king Matanuska cabbage of the entire system You could chop the Tongass in half and it would still be bigger than the next largest national forest (which just so happens to be the other one located in Alaska, the Chugach, here on the Southcentral coast) Together the Tongass and Chugach encompass most of a vanishing national treasure — the country's last virgin temperate coastal rainforest

It is a place where vast tracts of soaring spruce, hemlock and cedar cling to the lowland and coastal edges of sheer mountains capped in glaciers and year-round snow Underneath the canopy of the old growth forest Sitka black tailed deer roam freely, alert for their nemesis the Alexander Archipelago wolf Brown bears cluster alongside streams choked with spawning salmon, gorging themselves during the passing season of plenty High above the forest floor, the mysterious goshawk zooms in and out among the giant trees, looking to dine on unsuspecting birds

Anyone who s flown over the Pacific Northwest on a clear day knows that the forces of progress have already blitzed most of the coastal rainforest that covered the region since George Washington was a pup Because Alaska is so remote, we've got a lot more of our ancient trees left standing In fact to entice businesses to chop down Alaska s treasures, the U.S government had to spends hundreds of millions of dollars subsidizing the construction of logging roads and paying for a huge management bureaucracy whose costs are not covered by selling these valuable ancient trees

The most outrageous of those subsidies has disappeared As of last spring both huge pulp mills that had gobbled up cut-rate Tongass timber for 40 years were closed for good and their sweetheart contracts were terminated But some powerful Alaskans — and their friends in the Forest Service — still dream of resurrecting a smokestack timber industry The agency s new plan for the Tongass would double what the timber industry now cuts In the next two years, the agency will crank out enough timber to supply existing industry for eight years That huge pipeline of wood just might entice an aspiring timber baron to put in a huge mill of some kind

More than half of this new barrage of Tongass clearcutting would hit wild areas not yet invaded by logging roads and monster trucks and clearcuts In bureaucratic jargon they're officially known as "roadless areas " Nationwide, the Forest Service has decided to take a second look at what it's doing to these last wild and undisturbed areas under its charge It has proposed an 18-month moratorium on punching new roads into these "roadless" areas

As you can see from the agency's ambitious cutting plans in the Tongass, such a moratorium would protect huge areas of the nation's largest national forest But the road building moratorium does not apply to the Tongass How can this be? How could the agency omit the Tongass — the Amazon of North America, the country's last great stronghold of centuries' old trees, the place where your tax dollars are subsidizing the wholesale ruination of vast tracts of our very own rainforest? As David Letterman would say "Two words Ted Stevens " The big environmental cheeses inside the Clinton Administration got a case of weak knees and decided they didn't want to pick a fight with the powerful senator

The good news is that the Chugach, the northern heart of the Alaska rainforest, is covered by the moratorium on new roads Compared to what's at stake in the Tongass though, delaying new roads on the Chugach is an afterthought There's hardly any commercial logging on federal lands inside the Chugach (Native lands inside the Chugach are a different story Many of them have been heavily logged, which is why the government has spent a lot of Exxon Valdez oil spill money buying Native timber lands and timber rights)

But even this modest protective measure on the Chugach has raised the blood pressure of Mr Timber himself, Sen Frank Murkowski He has been throwing tantrums that might spook the Forest Service into dropping the Chugach moratorium altogether So what's a friend of the trees to do?

Don t just toss this paper in the recycling bin Mark your calendar for Wednesday March 11, and come give the Forest Service a piece of your mind The agency is having an "open house" to take public comment on its road building moratorium at the Spenard Recreation Center, at 2020 W 48th Ave , from 2 p m to 7 p m Look for the Alaska Rainforest Campaign information room just past the big room where the Forest Service has set up shop Munch a few snacks and get more details for putting into your comments for the official record

See you there

Matthew Zencey is campaign manager for the Alaska Rainforest Campaign, a coalition of national and Alaska-based conservation groups

PENINSULA CLARION 3/19/98

Gubernatorial candidates set to debate fish issues

Gov Tony Knowles John Lindauer, Wayne Anthony Ross and Sen Robin Taylor are all coming to Kodiak to talk fish

A gubernatorial candidates debate set for March 26 from 7 to 9 p m will be the first time this election year that the major contenders for Alaska governor will confront each other An interesting (some would say intimidating) twist is that the debate will be limited to fisheries issues The two-hour event, sponsored by the United Fishermen of Alaska and the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce, will be broadcast live statewide via the Alaska Public Radio Network

Student leaders from all regions of the state will be included in the event, as the 300-member Alaska Association of Student Government is holding its annual meeting in Kodiak at the same time

The gubernatorial candidates debate kicks off ComFish Alaska, the state's oldest and largest fishing industry trade show, and the only show held in a major Alaska port Now in its 18th year, ComFish Alaska is scheduled for March 27-29 at the U S Coast Guard base The hundreds of vendors can plan on a packed house — recent closures for cod and snow crab means more fishers than ever will be in town

Other events highlighting ComFish Alaska this year include a legislative forum hosted by Sen Jerry Mackie and Rep Alan Austerman, a meeting by the Exxon Valdez Trustees Council and a followup to the recent Salmon Forum II

■■■■■

LAINE WELCH

Fish Factor

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 3/18/98

EVOS hearings

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has informed me of the following meeting schedule to take public testimony throughout the spill region, to discuss possible uses for the Restoration Reserves

Kodiak - March 28, 7 p m , in the borough assembly chambers Ouzinkie - March 30, 1 p m , Port Lions - March 31, 1 p m , Larsen Bay - March 31, 7 p m , these three preceding sites have yet to determine a meeting place Old Harbor April 1, 2 p m , in the city offices The communities of Karluk and Akhiok have tentative dates of between March 29-April 2, with a meeting place to still be determined The deadline for written comments is April 30, 1998, addressed to EVOS, 645 G St , Suite 401, Anchorage, AK 99501-3451

Are wild pinks in Prince William Sound one stock or many?

Editor s note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound spilling nearly 11 millions 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

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

When Jim Seeb moved to Alaska in 1990 after years of working in the Columbia River Basin he learned right away there were two schools of thought on wild pink salmon in Prince William Sound One said that because pink salmon stray more than any other species of salmon, they were basically all the same The other said of course each stream was home to a separate genetically distinct spawning stock

The Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp is the largest hatchery system in North America and releases 450 million pink salmon fry each year into the sound Maintaining whatever genetic diversity exists is a big concern

Seeb saw the Columbia River salmon decline Perhaps more than most, he sees the need for genetic di-versity

This is how he tells the story In the Columbia River there were many separate reproductively isolated stocks of coho salmon And through the process of natural selection these stocks had adapted to their local conditions With so many stocks, many subtle differences in life history evolved When the fish emerged from the Columbia River, some would turn left and some would turn right and some would go straight

When the dams came along we biologists weren't smart enough to recognize all of these subtle differences of these stocks from a number of different hatcheries, ' Seeb said

We stocked a lot of fish and ultimately all of the brood stocks in the Columbia system became the same, ' Seeb said ' What happened was that the stock differences eroded and the optimal use of the environment degraded and the native stocks inhabiting that region gradually went extinct "

The 1993 run failure of pink salmon in the Sound followed several years of poor or erratic returns The same year a collection of scientists planned a study, "The Sound Ecosystem Assessment," to understand the environmental factors governing pink salmon production in the sound

In order to address the injuries from the spill guide hatchery production and protect the wild stocks, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council funded the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to study the genetic makeup of wild pink salmon in Prince William Sound in 1994

They found that some stocks are very closely related to each other However there are regional differences, and surprisingly, greater genetic differences between pink salmon spawning in different parts of the same stream than salmon spawning in separate but adjacent streams

We found that upstream and intertidal spawning aggregations within the same stream were often very much different from each other and more different from each other, than say, intertidal spawning aggregates from stream to stream said Seeb

'The best way that we can preserve stock diversity and preserve the local adaptors and make sure that we have a good wild stock base is to not muck around with the wild stocks," said Seeb

In most cases, according to Seeb, the only safe way to increase wild salmon stocks is to open or create new habitat

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

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Trustees consider future restoration of oil spill area

In 1991, the state and federal governments settled their claims against Exxon resulting in the largest ever civil settlement in the United States over damages from an oil spill The historic $900 million civil settlement is being paid out over a 10-year period with the last payment due in September 2001 However, that won't necessarily mean the end of restoration

Following an extensive public outreach effort, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council adopted a long-term restoration plan in 1994 which focused on research and monitoring, habitat protection, and general restoration projects The Council also established a savings account or reserve to keep the option of continuing restoration well into the next century With $12 million being set aside each year, by 2002 the Restoration Reserve is expected to be worth about $140 million

The reason for the reserve fund, according to Trustee Council Executive Director Molly McCammon, is that the future consequences of the oil spill are still unknown, even nine years after it happened "A lot of the species injured by the spill have long lives salmon, harbor seals sea otters, herring and many seabirds We don't know in some cases the long term prognosis," McCammon said

"We don't know exactly what all the injury is and what the possibilities for recovery are "

The question is, what sort of restoration activities should be continued, over how long, and how should it be administered? To help answer these questions, the Trustee Council is holding public meetings in 22-spill area communities as well as in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau This will give everyone in the spill region a chance tell them how they've been doing and what should be done in the future

In Kodiak, the Restoration Reserve meeting will be held Saturday, March 28 at 7 p m in the Borough Assembly Chambers

The court settlement requires the money to be used to restore, rehabilitate or enhance injured species, but the Trustees want to know more than just how it should be used or where it should be spent, according to McCammon

"They're also looking at how long a restoration program should last. Should all the funds be spent over a 10- or 20-year period or should some kind of permanent endowment be set up similar to the Permanent Fund," she said

"They're also looking at governance issues Should the Trustee Council stay in existence and continue to oversee restoration as is currently required under the court settlement or should the fund be given to some other entity to govern how it is used?

Under the current process, the Trustee Council solicits a lot of public input to make its funding decisions There are public meetings, a 17-member public advisory group, and facilitators in 10 spill area communities That process is expensive Should it change in some way?

For more information or to express your opinion about this important issue, contact the Trustee Council office in Anchorage toll free at 800-478-7745

You can also write to the EVOS Trustee Council at 645 G Street Anchorage Alaska 99501 or send e-mail to kerrh@oilspill state ak us Deadline for written comments is April 30, 1998

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.

Alutiiq Museum Bulletin
Volume 3 No 3&4 March 199

Oil Spill Artifacts Home

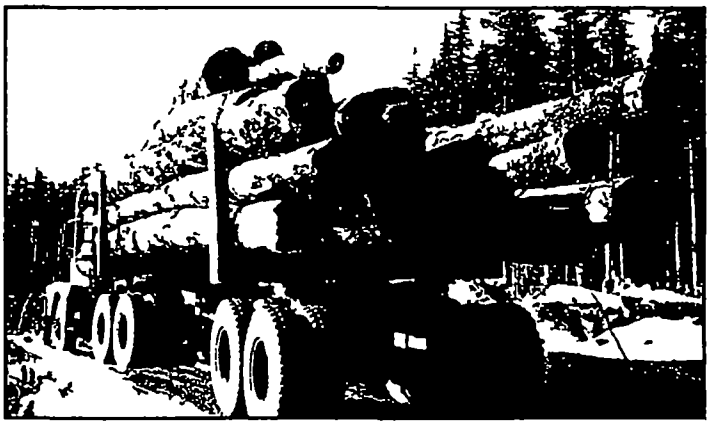
With help from the EVOS Trustee Council and the University of Alaska Museum, artifacts collected from Kodiak sites following the oil spill were recently moved to the Alutiiq Museum The collection contains mostly stone objects from the prehistoric period Recovered in 1989 and 1990, they were already under the professional care of the University of Alaska Museum when the Trustee Council appropriated funds for the Alutiiq Museum

Last December, we began working with Veronica Christman, a Resource Manager for the EVOS Trustee Council, to initiate the return "The situation was complicated," explained Alutiiq Museum curator Amy Steffian "Although the collection is small, the artifacts it holds are from many different sites, owned by many different organizations This meant that a number of land managing agencies would have to approve a permanent transfer" UAF archaeologist and Museum Curator Craig Gerlach suggested a plan University of Alaska Museum would loan the collection to the Alutiiq Museum and then work with the Trustee Council to have the Alutiiq Museum named the permanent repository With a generous grant of $1,000 from the Trustee Council, U of A Museum is packed the artifacts, which arrived in Kodiak at the end of February "We are grateful for the excellent care the University of Alaska museum gave these objects while they were far from home" remarked Alutiiq Museum board president Nancy Anderson, "and we are pleased that the responsibilities of guardianship can now be transferred to the Alutiiq people"

The artifacts will be stored in the Alutiiq Museum's collections room, where they will be available for study and may be incorporated into gallery exhibits Steffian hopes to use some of the objects in a display chronicling the Alutiiq heritage movement "The return of these objects is a great example of the emerging importance of Native repositories to the preservation of Alaska's past" ■

Land Office Timber Sale Puts Revenue on Stream

A significant income stream will benefit Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries over the next five years because of a major timber sale recently completed by the Trust Land Office (TLO) The sale, located on 3,000 acres of Trust land at West Icy Cape 60 miles west of



Yakutat, will generate $2 million of income annually through 2002

The area has a long history of timber harvest activity and presented a unique opportunity for The Trust to begin its long-term forest management program The sale helped facilitate a significant conservation transaction in Prince William Sound by enabling the timber buyer to leave a portion of the ecologically important timber there standing

The sale will generate $2 million annually through 2002.

The Trust Land Office is ensuring the present and future productivity of the resources at West Icy Cape by employing a private sale administrator to oversee the transaction A Memorandum of Understanding with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game also provides for cooperative fish and wildlife habitat protection efforts between the TLO and the department

This timber sale is part of the TLO's efforts to responsibly ensure maximum revenue from Trust lands over the long term The income derived will benefit The Trust beneficiaries now and in the future

Trust Land Management Guiding Principles

- Maximize long term revenue from Trust Land
- Be loyal and accountable to the Trust and its beneficiaries
- Protect and enhance the value of Trust Land
- Manage Trust Land prudently & efficiently
- Encourage a diversity of revenue producing uses of Trust Land
- Meet challenges with enthusiasm, flexibility and teamwork.
- Emphasize innovative win/win solutions
- Success through partnership
- Be a good neighbor

The Trust Land Office

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The Trust Land Office Mission

The Trust Land Office manages Mental Health Trust land to generate income which is used by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to improve the lives and circumstances of The Trust beneficiaries

HEARD ON THE STREET

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
MARCH 12, 1998

Foundation lists grants

The Alaska Science & Technology Foundation announced a list of recent grants approved The state agency provides grants to assist basic and applied research in various fields The grant amounts are $668,654 to the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute to produce seismic maps that will determine if Anchorage buildings are over- or under-designed to withstand a major earthquake, $99,739 for a project to improve sonar technology for counting fish in rivers that will help the Alaska Department of Fish and Game set fishing limits, $91,704 to Jollett Biotek for testing a kit for more reliable paralytic shellfish poisoning testing that can be used to increase local testing of Alaska beaches, $13,200 to examine the science of water quality standards, $20,000 to McNeil River Enterprises Inc to further develop the first Environmental Protection Agency certified bear repellent pepper spray, $188,750 to Yukon Delta Products for the second phase of a project to help eight Alaska manufacturers market innovative salmon products Outside

THE PENINSULA CLARION
MARCH 17, 1998

River workshop scheduled for Soldotna

The Kenai Peninsula Resource Conservation and Development District, in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy of Alaska and the Kenai River Center, is again sponsoring a River Restoration Workshop

The workshop's intent is to help local contractors and landowners develop plans for restoration, bank protection and grateway projects along the Kenai River Information and guidelines will be provided on elements of a streamback restoration plan, criteria used by the Kenai Peninsula Borough, Alaska State Parks and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for granting a permit, examples of acceptable restoration plans and how to complete the new permit form offered by the Kenai River Center

These topics will be discussed by local representatives of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska State Parks and the Kenai Peninsula Borough There will be time to review and discuss specific restoration plans that the public has developed or is in the process of developing All local contractors and interested landowners should plan on attending this session

The workshop will be from 5 30 to 8 p m Wednesday at the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Facility located at Mile 16 5 on Kalifornsky Beach Road To preregister or for more information, call the Kenai Peninsula Resource Conservation and Development office at 907-283-7493

PWSEDC wraps up Duck Flats plan

THE VALDEZ VANGUARD
MARCH 18, 1998

■ Options open to public comment

By Tony Bickert
Valdez Vanguard

Prince William Sound Economic Development Council s idea to increase educational awareness of and public access to the Valdez Duck Flats is open to public comment this week.

The Council last week completed its final draft of the "Valdez Duck Flats Conceptual Plan" after 10 months of studies, surveys, and draft revisions Earlier drafts had received underwhelming support from state and federal agencies, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council and the public

The development council said the agencies and the Trustees support the current draft, available for public viewing at the PWSEDC office in the KCHU building on Pioneer Drive A public meeting on the proposed project is set for 7-9 p m Tuesday in City Council Chambers PWSEDC contractor Dames & Moore, which created the plan will also accept public comment at the post office on Tuesday from 1-5 p m and on Wednesday from 8-11 a m

The development council wants to make the unique salt-water wetlands more accessible to locals and tourists

"There is potential for improving access to the duck flats in conjunction with interpretive displays to increase appreciation of the functions, values and sensitivities of the duck flats," the draft plan states "Properly done, such improvements would create additional recreation opportunities for Valdez residents and visitors alike "

The duck flats comprise 1,000 acres of low-lying estuary saltmarsh and intertidal habitats, one of the largest of its kind in Prince William Sound The flats support a diverse community of plants, fish, birds and animals PWSEDC's plan targets only the southwest corner of the flats, about 67 acres

Dames & Moore came up with several options, from "do nothing" to creating millions of dollars worth of boardwalks stretching nearly a mile Other options being considered include paving a parking lot and viewing area across the Richardson Highway from the current look out area and the construction of a $2 million Oil Spill Restoration And Visitor Center Building Location has not yet been planned Installation of education placards about salmon, waterfowl and wetlands are also being planned

The development council was granted $50,000 by the Trustees council to conduct the study because some species of fish and birds that were affected by the 1989 spill use the flats However, habitat enhancement was not recommended by Dames & Moore or the Duck Flats Advisory Committee

"This approach is unsettling because it summarily dismisses all options except increased access and interpretive facilities," said Trustees Council Executive Director Molly McCammon in response to an earlier draft

Dennis Gnath habitat biologist at the Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game had similar concerns,

"The title of the document is misleading, ' Gnath said. "Conspicuously missing from the 'plan' are any proposals to restore or protect the Valdez Duck Flats — as the title suggests "

PWSEDC later took out the word "restoration" from the name of the plan and replaced it with "conceptual "

"Those concerns were addressed and this one has the blessing of the state," said PWSEDC business manager Kara Merrell She said the U S Forest Service and the Trustees also reviewed the final draft. She said the agencies eventually agreed that habitat enhancement could end up "doing more harm than good "

"But that doesn't mean that any decisions are being made yet That's what the public comment period is for," she added

McCammon, the Forest Service and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources also noted that the citizen survey conducted in June did not indicate that the vast majority of the people of Valdez want increased access

"If one reviews the public comment received, public support is clearly not overwhelming," said Carol Fries of the DNR Commissioners Office

According to the June survey, completed by 155 residents (2,400 surveys were distributed), 42 percent of the respondents did not support increased access Ten percent had no comment.

"Forty-eight percent in favor is certainly not a clear consensus," Fries said

About 70 percent said they would like to see more educational signs

What should be done with the Duck Flats?

The following are comments from the recent PWSEDC citizen survey

• Build the pipeline to the Container Terminal and get the tankers (trucks) off the highway

• More access equals more revenue

'There is abundant wildlife there now always has been I ve been here 50 years Wildlife is best managed by wildlife

• 'The Duck Flats area is a unique ecosystem and only passive activities should be allowed '

• 'The area that needs to be saved right now is the cove across the road from the small boat harbor

• Preserve this natural habitat!"

• Leave the place be — if any part of Valdez should be left as is, this is it '

• 'The RV park facing the Duck Flats is where a naturalist/environmental center should be "

• "Many people are unaware that (except for Copper River Delta outside PWS) extensive tidal flats like the Duck Flats support grass communities for water fowl nesting are rare or non existent elsewhere in PWS Save the Duck Flats! '

• "One way access to start and stop Displays advertising birds and species that habitat in the flats '

• Don t get me wrong I believe in keeping the environment as clean as possible God placed us in a management position over the animals of this earth but you have to realize we are an 'oil port People come to Valdez to see Alyeska and the terminal and of course the scenery, but they realize what we do and how we exist. I think it s important to utilize what we have and have paid for, and making a bigger, more sensitive area that we have to protect, in an area where cars drive and trucks haul ore and fuel all day long is not a smart move "

• "Ideally it should be left as it is, with no further human impact However, the boardwalk and/or viewing area would provide access that people seem to want and it would keep them from tramping through the area and disturbing plant/animal

• ' Allow this area to be multi-use recreational, but restrict use of ATV s and snowmachines Allow access by foot or mountain bike travel "

• ' Parts of the flats should stay as they are but the area by the old pipeyard out to the glacier stream should be open to hunting '

• 'I hope the City of Valdez will concentrate on protecting this habitat for the animals and local population rather than abusing it in the name of accessibility to tourists "

• "Anchorage's Potter s Marsh is a reasonable development example Limited boardwalks around the perimeter allow good observation opportunities without too much interference with the wildlife "

• ' It's a beautiful area. I really enjoy it and look forward to increased access, both through education and physical aids (boardwalks, platforms)

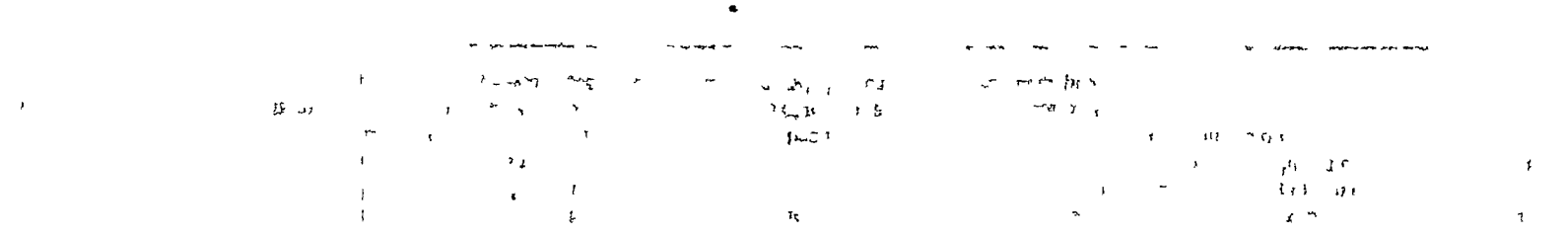
• If it is decided to develop a portion of the Duck Flats please leave a belt of trees or alders to maintain the lush green view as opposed to removal of all vegetation and then filling with gravel From the perspective of those using the parking or other business use a green belt would be appreciated by allowing a more secluded ' Alaskan Experience which is precisely what they came here for

• Is there supposed to be a problem? Or is someone just trying to spend money?

• I stay on the trail system and bike trail where the trails have already been put in and are maintained I see no problem with an area similar to Potter's Marsh near Anchorage

• "Need to expand boat harbor across the street and use a portion of the Duck Flats '

• "Wildlife should be left in peace without further intrusion "



• It is a good area to teach the ecosystem

• Let it stay as is

• I think PWSEDC and EVOS really wasted a lot of cash investing in an area that is just mud in reality and should be an area classified as a tidal flat not a wetland in the traditional sense There are classifications for this area which are misrepresented I, the use of wetlands Wetlands are areas that are basically the same level of wetness on a daily basis This area does not classify as such 2, the use of intertidal zone ' This I feel is a proper use of what the land is An area that changes level of wetness throughout the day Mainly a cycling land in reference to fluid levels 3 explain with honesty the true potential not political wants, desires If you want to spend public money remember you must use the utmost scrutiny and proper judgment — Ph D Marine Biology

• I would like to see a golf course on the land now called the Duck Flats '

• "I would love to see world class access that integrates well with setting

• Leave it alone "

• I think you should consider a public hearing on this matter! This survey has two views two members of this household which have somewhat different views

• All of my concerns concur with fellow water fowlers

• It would be great to see this asset utilized Many people would enjoy the nature of this intertidal zone

• ' Please keep the Duck Flats in its natural state Visitors and locals enjoy the wild fowl that comes and goes with the seasons We should not encroach on their habitat used for centuries "

• 'Clean it up "

• 'Tourists come to Alaska to see nature in its natural form They can see ducks in any major city park Obviously they come here to see it as it should be and really lives Let s not disappoint them and their children '

• Leave the Duck Flats strictly alone Anyone who thinks you can build walkways public toilets hot dog stands and retail outlets in marsh land and still have anything of actual value left is obsessed with a 'make it and get out' mentality "

• ' My family enjoys walking, skating biking the flats We enjoy viewing the birds fish, seals More safe, better access would be great "

• ' I hate to see any special interest group dominate the future of all persons "

• Yes please try to stop anymore of those high density eyesore motor home villages from being constructed on wetlands '

• ' I habitually use the open space west of Old Valdez because of its open space and very few other visitors '

• ' Dismantling the embarrassing presence of the grain terminal could be a fun project for some of us to improve the appearance of the entire bay/waterfront Could be a community directed/volunteer job I d help!"

• "I appreciate this survey and hope to see results and some action taken '

• "The results from this survey may be misleading as the questions are too vague/ambiguous as indicated by notes, especially what do you mean by Duck Flats, including road and bike trail or not? You show both on photo "

• "An opportunity to see Valdez history was lost when the Old Town site was leveled Here is a chance to develop a historic educational site as well as one for environmental education Boardwalks and trails with markers and displays of what Valdez looked like in the post and current environmental ecosystems would be a perfect blend for locals and tourists "

• 'The Duck Flats bordered inside highway should be put under development moratorium We ve already developed nearly all of it Just say no!! Spend EVOS money on something else '

• ' If you do any development please please make it limited like a single line of boardwalk

• Let's remember why tourists come to Alaska I hope you agree the "why is rhetorical If not, the answer is this to get away from development

• People need to realize the Duck Flats are a breeding and nesting ground for many species of wildlife

• Expand harbor/allow dumping of organic landfill on Duck Flats '

• 'Let it be

• "Stay out of there '

• "The flats are okay Let it be

• "I would like to see the small boat harbor expanded

• Pave it over for more parking and picnic spots

• Leave it alone

• Protect it Don t make it a park

• 'There is a need for traffic parking at the duck crossing sign at Zook subdivision Numerous tourists stop to photo the sign crossing the highway at times

• ' Let s let the ducks have some space of their own Valdez is too darn greedy as it is Let s not take the ducks' only home away from them Build a bridge across the Lowe River so that land can be developed and leave the Duck Flats alone Our Duck Flats are one of Valdez very special features Let s not get rid of it

• ' Benches would be nice and a parking area with picnic tables like Dock Point has

• 'Beware of Alaskan politics and money-grubbers '

• Good luck

VOL. 58 NO. 52 MONDAY, MARCH 16, 1998

Leisnoi drops lawsuit over log transfer plan

■ Corporation will reapply

By SUE JEFFREY
Mirror Writer

Leisnoi dropped its case in state superior court against the Kodiak Island Borough and plans to reapply for a permit to build a log transfer facility in Kalsin Bay

The Native corporation filed a lawsuit against the borough last summer claiming the borough had violated the Leisnoi s constitutional rights by denying permission to construct the project at Myrtle Creek

Edgar Paul Boyko Leisnoi s attorney said Leisnoi may still pursue the lawsuit, but for now will drop it to give the borough another chance to grant Leisnoi a conditional use permit

'We came to the conclusion it (the lawsuit) was premature the reason is Leisnoi is going to resubmit the application Boyko this morning

Leisnoi is also appealing the decision to the Alaska Department of Governmental Coordination, but Boyko said he also may drop the appeal with the reapplication in the works

The borough assembly sitting as a Board of Adjustment denied Leisnoi the permit last spring, ruling that the facility s infrastructure and log handling operations would displace traditional commercial, sport and subsistence fisheries, ballast discharge could introduce non-indegenous micro-organisms in the bay threatening the marine environment, and the proposed undisturbed buffer would not adequately protect a nearby creek and preserve the aesthetics of the area

But Boyko says borough officials did not use sound judgment when making their decision

"The decision was based on the number of people in the assembly chambers If we knew that we would have brought in a lot of our people," he said

'Personnel changes," on the borough governing bodies, will better position Leisnoi "if they start looking at it professionally instead of politically," he explained

"They said the log transfer facility is going to affect the fisheries, but they haven t proved how and why "

According to Linda Freed, borough planning department director, Leisnoi can apply for a permit as many times as they want

"Nothing in the rules that say they can't reapply They can even apply with the same plan P&Z will treat it as a brand new application '

Whether Leisnoi plans to resubmit an identical application remains to be seen Ed Ward, Leisnoi CEO and David Nesheim, Leisnoi forester, could not be reached by press time

If Leisnoi fails a second time to obtain a conditional use permit, Boyko plans to resume the lawsuit which claims the borough, by denying Leisnoi the permit for the LTF, is taking property without compensation, which violates the state constitution

Though Federal Judge H Russel Holland dismissed a similar case, Boyko plans to pursue it at the state level, saying, "We're prepared to go back to court."

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Common murres return to Barren Islands in droves

Thousands of murres crowd onto a cluster of rocks in the Gulf of Alaska named the Barren Islands Located at the mouth of Cook Inlet, and across from the southern Kenai Peninsula, the islands collect food as upwelling currents converge around them

Last summer young common murres returned to the Barren Islands in greater numbers than scientists have seen since 1989 It's the strongest sign yet that common murres are recovering from the Exxon Valdez oil spill

The Barren Islands were directly in the path of the spilled oil Of the estimated 250 000 seabirds killed by the oil, 75 percent were common murres

But it's still difficult to compare the population of the Barren Islands before and after the spill, according to David Roseneau, of the Homer-based Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge The only pre-spill data available are two very rough estimates made many years earlier In addition, there is evidence that populations of murres and other seabirds already may have been declining

Since 1989 scientists have been monitoring the bird populations consistently looking for any signs of increase in the population A large number of chicks were hatched on the islands in 1993, but the effect of those chicks on the population would not be seen until they returned as subadults three to four years later

'So we anticipated that because about 10 to 15 percent of three year olds come back and upwards of about 30 percent of four year olds that last summer would be the first year we'd have this four year old cohort from 1993 and then we'd also have some birds from 1994, the three year olds, Roseneau said

Common murre chicks have to jump before they can fly When the parents think they re ready, the males fly to the water and call to the chicks to jump off the ledge and down to the ocean The males lead the chicks to sea The chick learns to fly about 10 to 20 days later While he s at sea with the chicks the male molts Once the chicks jump they remain at sea for the next three to four years

In order to count the birds, scientists establish several sections or plots on all the islands From a boat, two observers count the number of birds in each plot Between the time of peak egg laying and the first sea going of chicks, they count each main monitoring plot between five and seven times every day

By Roseneau's standards, 1997 was a pretty exciting year The young birds came back in droves "All our counts from the various sets were as high or in most cases higher than the previous counts since the spill ' he said

Previously barren ledges filled up "We noticed that in areas that normally didn't support roosting birds, there were large numbers of non-breeding birds roosting and hanging out, said Roseneau 'Those birds mostly consist of three and four year old birds from 1993 and 1994 two years when productivity was quite good

Common murres don t usually breed until about age seven The subadults are just beginning to look around their Barren Island colony for potential mates and nesting sites

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.

Residents, planners plot community center's future

By Elizabeth Saavedra
The Cordova Times

Sarah Barton from RISE Alaska and Lewis Stackpole, an Anchorage architect met with Cordova residents at the Masonic Hall on March 7 to get an idea of what form the community wants a proposed community center to take

'Cordova is pretty amazing in how the citizens have managed to maintain such differences of opinion and haven t sunken into apathy,' said Barton "What we want to do is find out what the community wants as a whole "

"Community involvement is necessary for this project to happen," said Stackpole He compared Cordova to a three-legged stool in which the Science Center the community and the City each make up one of the legs and presented various diagrams to illustrate where the different resources in Cordova can overlap to help support the new center

Many of the more than 30 people present questioned funding availability from EVOS but, as Christopher Beck explained, the trust fund is focused on habitat restoration and scientific research which would not fall under the focus of a civic center

' EVOS would be a partner in the center but certainly not the 'Sugar Daddy'," said Barton "We're getting ahead of ourselves, though We have to decide on what the center will be before we think about funding "

Barton asked the attendees to vote for proposed uses of the center in order to determine the community s desires Possible choices included a museum, library, theater, City meeting space community meeting space, learning facility, community college extension visitor center, Science Center space, exhibit space technology center and a teen center On large posters listing the choices, voters selected up to five preferences

When the votes had been tallied, a new museum exhibit, education and storage center topped the list with 20 votes, while a community meeting space received 15 A library, a conference/retreat center and a teen center each received 13 votes The focus of the workshop then became "How does Cordova make it happen? '

Stackpole prepared for this question with information packets that time-lined three possible scenarios no new construction, creation of a new building and use of existing facilities The assembly then broke up into groups of five or six to discuss pros and cons of each scenario After 20 minutes, the group reassembled and moved on to discuss the impact that cruise ships and tourism would have on the issue

"Our main purpose was to get a clearer picture of what the community really wants and I think we did that ' said Barton "The community is stronger for having this going on It increases the growth of the community s capacity and the civic 'capital' whether Cordova constructs a building or not This funding readiness will be a funding magnet "

Barton will condense the information gathered at the workshop and approach RISE Alaska's technical team before returning to Cordova March 31 to hold a community forum and present her proposal She hopes to have a final proposal for City Council on the first of next month

PENINSULA CLARION FEBRUARY 22, 1998

Around the State

Cordova residents worry trail will become highway

CORDOVA — Some Cordova residents are worried that the proposed Copper River Trail could become a first step toward a highway

Cordova on Prince William Sound has no link to Alaska s road system and is reached only by boat or airplane Past plans to pave a highway have met with resistance from some residents seeking to preserve Cordova s small-town atmosphere

At a meeting last week, state parks director Jim Stratton said the 184-mile trail was not being designed so that it could be converted into blacktop The trail would run along the Copper and Tasnuna rivers

Plans for the $27 million project were referred to a 14-member review board set up by Gov Tony Knowles who has announced hopes for an enhanced Alaska trail system

JUNEAU EMPIRE FEBRUARY 22, 1998

Cordova residents worry they'll get a road

CORDOVA - Some Cordova residents are worried that the proposed Copper River Trail could become a first step toward a highway

Cordova on Prince William Sound has no link to Alaska s road system and is reached only by boat or airplane Past plans to pave a highway have met with resistance from some residents seeking to preserve Cordova s small town atmosphere

At a meeting last week, state parks director Jim Stratton said the 184 mile trail was not being designed so that it could be converted into blacktop The trail would run along the Copper and Tasnuna rivers

More than 50 Cordova residents attended Stratton s meeting including some critics who said private landowners with parcels adjacent to the trail could develop what is now pristine land

But Stratton said trail plans would not advance if landowners did not consent to state recommended standards

PENINSULA CLARION MARCH 1, 1998

Funny River bridge battle begins to boil

Anti-bridge group hires legal help in effort to head off development

By DOUG LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

Several environmental groups said Friday that a proposed bridge on the Kenai River between Sterling and Funny River would threaten brown bears Meanwhile a group of area property owners has hired a lawyer to fight the bridge and resource agencies say they need answers to significant questions before they'll support it

Nearly half the the Kenai R[illegible]ila s brown bears use the a[illegible]elow Skilak Lake just u[illegible]m from Funny River, said Gary Liepitz, a habitat biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Bears congregate there to feed on salmon, and there are significant migration routes along the Kenai and Killey rivers Fish and Game has proposed a critical habitat area near the lake's outlet to protect the bears

Liepitz said the bridge could boost development and recreation, leading to more bear-human conflicts When those happen, he said

'he bears lose Fish and Game wants development managed to preserve bear migration corridors and escape routes he said Environmental groups also fear the bridge will spark development that threatens the bears

'A proposed bridge across the Kenai River near Sterling could be just as damaging to Kenai Peninsula brown bears as timber sales recently canceled by the (U S) Forest Service and the state " the Alaska Center for the Environment National Audubon So[illegible] and its Anchorage chapter th[illegible]ional Wildlife Federation and Sierra Club said in a written statement Friday

Close to 60 area landowners have contributed money to Friends and Neighbors of the Kenai River which formed two weeks ago and hired an attorney to fight the bridge, said the group's president, Jim Fena.

The present route to the community of Funny River follows 15 miles of dirt road from Soldotna

The state has pondered a bridge for years to improve access to schools stores and emergency services The Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly has passed several resolutions supporting the project In a recent survey, the Funny River Advisory Planning Commission found the great majority of those who own land in Funny River live outside the borough Those people favored the bridge to improve access and increase property values, said commission member Mary Byrne Year round Funny River residents were evenly split for and against the bridge

In 1992 the state released a draft environmental impact statement Resource agencies said they d agree to the bridge only after adoption of land-use planning or zoning to help prevent increased development and human use from harming fish and wildlife

Last month Ann Rappoport field supervisor for ecological services with the U S Fish & Wildlife Service said the real issue is development that will come with increased access so the community should plan where development is appropriate

The borough created the Funny River Advisory Planning Commission and passed an ordinance that restricts clearing and construction within 50 feet of the river In December the state released a final environmental impact statement naming a preferred alternative for the bridge project

That would cross at River Mile 34 connecting East Scout Lake Loop to Funny River Road at Rabbit Run Road Work would include a two-lane bridge supported by three piers 7 miles of new road, plus a new boat launch parking boardwalks and outhouse to replace the present informal launch off Alderwood Road The estimated cost is $9 3 million in 1992 dollars

'They accomplished what they did with the ordinance, so we released the document," said Kim Rice, project manager for the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

But Liepitz said resource agencies wanted flood-plain protection The borough negotiated a 50-foot buffer with landowners, he said, but most agencies believe that's inadequate to preserve healthy riparian corridors

Liepitz said due to erosion, a 50-foot buffer today may be gone in a decade He suggested a study to see how well the ordinance is working State DOT hasn't included money for final design and construction of the bridge in its six-year capital projects list, he said, so there s time If the 50-foot buffer isn't effective, he said the borough should expand it.

Liepitz said Fish and Game would prefer a clear-span bridge, rather than one set on piers, to minimize loss of salmon spawning grounds That would add $2 4 million to the cost, the EIS said Fish and Game also fears the new boat ramp will increase riverbank activity and trampling

"There's a lot of information that needs to be brought forward before a decision to design and construct is approved," he said

The Fenas who have property a quarter-mile from the proposed bridge have installed walkways to protect riverbank vegetation from trampling

'We've worked hard to keep the riverbank overgrown with vegetation,' said Nancy Fena, Jim s wife With the increased traffic, that will be destroyed with people walking and with boat wakes

The current there is too swift for a ramp, she said Several years ago, it swept away a boat trailer and car

'We're asking them not to put in the boat launch and if they need a bridge, put it on Anna Lane she said I d prefer no bridge at all "

Rice said the real issue is cumulative effects of development sparked by the bridge, but land-use planning and zoning are functions for the borough, not the state

Borough Planning Director Lisa Parker said the borough, under former Mayor Don Gilman, didn't look kindly on federal agencies' original attempts to mandate zoning as a precondition for the bridge

Three separate reviews of the bridge project are now under way The Federal Highway Administration is reviewing the environmental impact statement. The U S Army Corps of Engineers is reviewing the project for consistency with the Clean Water Act and National Environmental Policy Act. The state is reviewing it for consistency with the state and borough coastal management plans

Jim Bryson realty and environmental officer for the Federal Highway Administration, said neither DOTPF nor FHA has authority to make land-use decisions There may be solutions to the problems critics have raised, he said, but DOTPF and FHA can't implement them

'We can approve the project at this point without having a solution, he said. We can work with the local authority to seek a solution '

The EIS describes a legitimate need and evaluates several alternatives he said and DOTPF believes the bridge at River Mile 34 is the best.

At this point, that s our position as well he said

FHA and the Corps are taking public comments through Tuesday Comments for the state s coastal consistency review were originally due by Feb 17, said Glenda Landua, the borough's coastal district coordinator, but several agencies asked for more information Landua said she ll ask the state to extend the comment deadline long enough to bring the proposal before the borough planning commission That could happen March 23

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PENINSULA CLARION 3/1/98

Money for bridge should be used to divert people away from Kenai

Are we killing the Kenai?

The Department of Transportation wants to build a bridge across the Kenai at the East Scout Lake road location This project has been surfacing every few years but now it seems there is a big push to get it done

Is the damage that this bridge will do to the Kenai River s fragile ecology even a consideration?

Not only the bank and wetlands destruction, but the far reaching impact to the future health of the river needs to be addressed Adding more access to any portion of the Kenai will only hasten its demise

The Kenai River system is already over loaded due to the fact that it is the most easily accessible This project funding should be used to provide access to other recreation areas and lessen the impact on the Kenai

Money seems to be the driving force behind this project. Many stand to gain a financial windfall if this bridge is completed Real estate projects are already under way in anticipation of its approval Local merchants are rubbing their hands in expectation of increased profits

Oliver Wendell Holmes once wrote a stirring poem that saved a part of our history from destruction 'Old Ironsides" so moved Congress that they appropriated funds to restore the naval ship 'Constitution" and it still survives today

I don't claim to be an accomplished poet, but I hope the following words will do as much to help preserve the future of the Kenai River for generations to come.

O Mighty Kenai

Once my waters teemed with fish of every kind, the chinook,
the coho, the rainbow and of course the sockeye too
Wild creatures filled the land,
the moose, the bear, the otter, just to name a few
My banks were lush with greenery,
trees and wetlands did abound
The joy, the peace, the solitude,
could easily be found
The ducks and geese and swans were here
and the eagles soared above
Bountiful and beautiful
something everyone could love

Then the people and their houses came,
the guides the speculators too!
For progress then a bridge was built,
more and more the people came the tide began anew!
The tourists and the fishers came
they scarred the land and left their mark as far as I could see

My banks were trampled and destroyed
was this the final killing blow to my ecology?

But no they want another bridge
from shore to shore once more
They will place their pilings in my stream
where salmon spawn and smolt are reared along my peaceful shore
Can t they see the harm they do?
I can only take so much
Could this be my last hurrah
from man s ungrateful touch?

Won t someone stand in my defense?
Must I die a painful death?
Then I shall be no more!

Quentin Danker
Sterling

PENINSULA CLARION 2/27/98

Better options than putting bridge crossing at Scout Lake-Rabbit Run

Tuesday (March 3) is the last day the public can comment on the Funny River bridge crossing After perusing the four volume document regarding the FEIS/Funny River crossing and finding my name in several places as one who is in favor of the preferred crossing at Scout Lake-Rabbit Run, I find my opinion has changed

One of the early reasons for the bridge was an escape route which is not mentioned much anymore because our new escape route would end up at the busiest crossroad intersection east of the Soldotna Y (Sterling s first traffic light circa 2004?)

To put the burden of more students in the already crowded Sterling Elementary School now would not be in the best interests of the students or the school

The Sterling Fire/EMS far reaching boundaries would not include parts of Funny River

To fill a critical habitat area is a crime yet the preferred crossing disturbs no less than four critical habitat areas

Projective maps show exploding developmental growth on the south banks of the Kenai River from river mile 29 to Naptown rapids

I dislike all of the above scenarios

The EPA is going to delay the project for lack of land use planning in the areas bordering the Funny and Killey rivers And when this hoop is finally jumped through there will be another acronym to place yet another hoop and another carrot It s been going on longer than the 23 years I ve been here There is a better way

The maps clearly show how the pioneers of the area laid out the road infrastructure for the best access to all of Funny River, not just the already overburdened Kenai River The 1990 census data are jumbled for Funny River because the census taker s map shows a bridge crossing upriver from Bing Brown s landing which is the more logical place for the crossing, but was not considered Existing state and borough-maintained roads (none through wetlands) connect Soldotna to within yards of the Killey River east of the section line of Feuding Lane, where the connection with the Sterling Highway should be made Were we to bridge the Kenai River over the two islands on the Feuding Lane section line our precious tourists would be able to view brown bear critical habitat up close as a bonus to our viable escape route Funny River would remain autonomous We then would have to establish our own schools and fire protection For that purpose the borough owns 11 acres on the pioneer road Leanne which is almost dead center of the Funny River s triangular 20 square miles Somebody was thinking ahead

I urge everyone to voice their opinion before the close of public comment on March 3

There will be an informational open house forum at the Funny River community center Saturday afternoon if you need extra information

Thanks for your ear

Paul Eskelin
Funny River resident

Funny River Bridge draws attention

For those of you who read my article last month, you may remember that I discussed my involvement in key issues facing the Legislature this session I mentioned three priority issues education, subsistence and the budget

Another important aspect of my job is investigating and responding to constituent concerns Besides focusing on legislation that affects the entire state, my staff and I continue to pay close attention to issues affecting Kenai Peninsula residents

One issue that seems to be generating a lot of interest in the district is the Funny River Bridge project This issue has been discussed for several years but now seems to be gathering new momentum Efforts to promote the bridge project have encouraged completion of a Final Environmental Impact Study by the Alaska Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration This document describes several details of the proposed project, such as location, design, connecting roadways, as well as details that would impact communities, residences, individuals, habitat and fish and game The FEIS was made available for public review in early January The comment period ended March 3 Comments made by the public were to address technical aspects of the report The Army Corps of Engineers is charged with the task of reviewing the public comments and will receive comments and recommendations from government agencies for the next two months After this process is completed, it may take up to four months to compile a report and make a decision whether to issue a permit to DOT, allowing that agency to proceed with the project So, it could take up to six months for a permit to be issued

REP GARY DAVIS

I have received several letters and phone calls questioning various aspects of this project and the process Citizens have individual reasons why they support or oppose the project Initial concerns include important issues like the distance kids need to travel on school buses, the safety of the highway for these buses, emergency escape routes, access to public services and fire protection

Others are concerned about property tax increases excess traffic, increased fishing pressure, personal property infringements and habitat degradation I believe all of these concerns are real, and I hope that individuals can find a forum to openly voice their concerns and collectively agree on ways to mitigate them

Another issue has been generating some interest is HJR 60, the Community Dividend Fund I sponsored this legislation in an effort to stabilize local taxes Currently, the state appropriates money to municipalities (cities, boroughs and tribal councils) through various programs, either in the form of direct grants or assistance through state agencies Each year these programs cost the state's general fund more than $150 million, and each year we are forced to make reductions in these dollars or eliminate certain programs Our municipalities do not know from year to year what we will provide, therefore, making them unsure about the amount of service they can provide

HJR 60 provides a mechanism to provide some stability to this process It establishes a savings account that will earn interest, which will then be distributed to municipalities to help reduce existing state dollars The fund is established by an initial deposit of $750 million from the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund and is supplemented for 20 years with 2 percent of the permanent fund earnings

The interesting part of this proposal is the confusion citizens are having in understanding just what affect it has on the permanent fund dividend This is not surprising since I have found that the structure of the dividend is complicated and confuses many people This resolution has, what I would call, a minimal impact on the dividend (an average reduction of $10 annually over 20 years) What is becoming an area of concern is how and when should the permanent fund and its earnings be considered available for support of public services? HJR 60 is an impetus to generate public response to this question

The Community Dividend Fund probably does not need the 2 percent section from the permanent fund dividend earnings in order to be workable However, this does add an intriguing aspect to the legislation that generates public interest and debate Remember that this resolution will need to be voted on by all the voters of Alaska I most certainly encourage your comments on this resolution

Rep Gary Davis, R-Soldotna represents District 8 in the Alaska House of Representatives He was first elected to the Legislature in 1992

Dolly Varden numbers dropping

Sport fishers could pose greatest threat to Dollies in Kenai watershed

By The Associated Press

Long derided as a trash fish, Dolly Vardens have survived in Alaska streams despite gold dredges and even a bounty hunt in the 1930s.

But sport fishers now may be their biggest threat.

For the past 10 years, a group of Kenai fly-fishers have complained they've seen fewer Dollies finning up the creeks that feed the Kenai River, and the fish they've caught have been smaller and younger.

Two years ago, anglers convinced the state to issue restrictions to protect spawning Dollies. At the same time, state and federal agencies launched the first serious research into the region's little-known Dolly population.

What they've found, while sketchy, suggests the restrictions may be just in time.

State harvest numbers back up what anglers have been saying. Fewer of them are catching upper Kenai River Dolly Varden.

Numbers of fish caught on two typically productive Dolly streams — Ptarmigan Creek at the upper end of Kenai Lake and Quartz Creek at the lake's lower end — have dropped dramatically.

On Ptarmigan Creek, the catch went from a peak of 8,202 in 1993 to 189 in 1996, which is the most recent state sportfishing data yet available. More striking perhaps is that after an entire season of fishing on Ptarmigan Creek, not a single angler reported keeping a fish. The creek produced 2,508 keepers a decade earlier.

"We're not ready to say the sky is falling yet, but we are concerned," said Dave Athons, state sportfish biologist.

One partial explanation for the sudden decrease could be tied to regulations that began in 1996. The new rules not only limit anglers to two Dollies but also require them to toss back any Dolly longer than 12 inches. The largest Dollies, those above 24 inches, still can be kept as trophies. The limit was devised to protect the species' youngest and most active spawners, much as state moose hunting regulations protect bulls in their prime.

But biologists say other figures suggest something a little more troubling. For instance, about the same number of anglers have fished the Kenai River's main stem between Kenai Lake and Skilak Lake for the last five years, yet they're catching fewer Dollies. Catch rates in the upper river have fallen from 36,451 in 1993, to 21,742 in 1996.

"There is something going on," said Larry Larson, a state fisheries biologist who last summer began studying Dolly Varden behavior patterns. "We can't isolate it yet, but biologically, bells and whistles are going off."

Biologists may not be ready to isolate a cause, but longtime anglers and guides say the upper Kenai Dollies are pinched in a vise consisting of ignorance on the one hand and desire on the other.

Dollies historically were maligned as a trash fish because they feed on salmon eggs. The U.S. government even offered a bounty of a few cents per tail fin in the early 1930s.

That negative image isn't accurate, biologists say, but it has shadowed Dolly Varden into the present day. Until recently, few people thought seriously about studying them. And state fishing regulations offered little in the way of bag limits. Dollies were an afterthought, a simple cousin to the rainbow trout.

Then came the boom in Kenai River sport fishing, and with it more rules and restrictions. Sport fishers frustrated by such handicaps as catch-and-release and baitless hooks for Kenai River salmon were driven farther upstream to find something new to catch.

"And that's what was left, the Dollies," said Ed Atwell, a member of Alaska Flyfishers who has fished Quartz Creek since the early 1970s.

Atwell and other anglers want to see tougher restrictions enacted at the earliest opportunity to protect upper Kenai Dollies while biologists conduct their studies.

They have until April 10 to submit proposals to the state Board of Fisheries, which will consider them next winter before deciding on changes to the 1999 fishing season.

Reports of smaller sizes and fewer fish may be just a normal fluctuation in Dolly numbers, Larson said. But with so many people with years of fishing experience reporting intense fishing pressure in small creeks, the issue begs a hard look, he said.

The problem is, Dollies are a little tough for a researcher to peg down.

Biologists call them "complex," which may be an understatement. The attractive, polka-dotted relative to Eastern brook trout is an unpredictable, athletic creature that might cruise dozens of miles one day, only to turn tail and swim back the next, in a constant quest for food.

Dollies can venture out to salt water, if they feel like it, and back into fresh water. And they often spawn several times before they die, but don't necessarily spawn every year. They reach spawning age at about 4 years and live about a decade.

Fisheries managers don't know how many Dollies exist in the vicinity of Kenai Lake, where the major spawning areas are or even if there are genetically distinct groups that feed and spawn in select areas.

This fall, Larson and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Doug Palmer expect to radio-tag spawning Dollies and track the fish through two more spawning seasons, if batteries imbedded within each fish hold out that long.

They hope to determine where the bulk of the fish are at any given time, and, based on that information, the state later wants to come up with population estimates.

Hotel awaits permit

Proposal lacks on-site parking plan

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

There were only a few empty seats at the March 4 city Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing on a conditional use permit for a three-story 70 room hotel downtown

Fairbanks resident Paul Carter wants to build Hotel Edgewater on the current site of Dreamland Bowl, in the Central Business District

Carter, who did not attend the public hearing because of an injury said in an interview that he's ready to move forward with the project — all he needs is the commission's approval of his conditional use permit

"I don t see the CUP as an obstacle and I don't mind going through it, he said "Everything seems to be moving forward nicely"

But for some citizens at the hearing, the question is parking

The city administration has recommended that the commission require Carter to provide an undetermined amount of off-street parking strictly for hotel use either on site or on a parcel within 600 feet

Carter has submitted plans to use the SeaLife Center s parking lot during off-peak hours and also to use street parking But Planning Assistant Rachel James told the commission that did not guarantee the hotel would always have park ing available for guests' vehicles

Community Development Director Kerry Martin said in a telephone interview that if the commission requires Carter to follow the city code, he would need to enter into a recorded agreement with the SeaLife Center and the city in which the center would provide parking for the life of the hotel

The city s decision to eliminate parking on the north side of Railway and create a bus/private vehicle loading zone on the south side has wiped out spaces that patrons could have used

Carter said he won't need many parking spaces because he intends to target people arriving in Seward on cruise ships buses or trains He said based on his other business Denali River Cabins in Denali National Park, he will get all the customers he needs without targeting independent travelers in automobiles

But Jolene King co-owner of the Harborview Inn, told the commission she thought Carter should be held to the same standards other hotel owners were, and that he should have to provide one off-street parking space per room She also voiced displeasure that the SeaLife Center would be able to lease the parking spaces it was required to provide for its facility

King also disputed Carter s estimate that only 25 percent of his clientele would need parking spaces, because 95 percent of her customers do

Although most travelers to Seward arrive independently, Carter said, In the future, with all the marketing efforts I put forth and with the SeaLife Center, that s going to change And we don't underestimate the (Chugach) Heritage Center It sounds to me like they'll be world class and a big attraction "

Councilman Stu Clark told the commission he too questions the accuracy of the 25 percent estimate He also recommended to the commissioners that they require Carter to provide one off-street parking space per room

SeaLife Center Executive Director Kim Sundberg told the commission that the center would have a paid parking lot and that the rate would be $1 per hour for a maximum charge of $6 per day

He said that during the center's off-peak hours 10 30 p m to 8 a m the lot would be available for the hotel's customers He also said the lot would be used by patrons of the Chugach Heritage Center

Leo Wakefield a real estate agent, reminded the commission that the last developer to propose a hotel on Carter's site was required to provide one off-street parking space for each room and also historic lighting

Last year, the planning commis sion originally required Dan Claugus of Eagle River to provide one space for each room in his proposed 125-room hotel plus spaces for patrons of a proposed 60-seat restaurant But the commission later allowed him to use 50 spaces from the SeaLife Center, 28 from the street and 50 on his site In the end, Claugus didn t buy the land for the hotel

Councilman and motel owner Nathan Orr told the commission that some required off street parking was a good idea Orr also informed the commission that he had a conversation about the project with Commissioner Carol Griswold earlier in the day and may have compromised Griswold

Nearby resident Don Sutherland asked the commission where the hotel s employees would park, and citizen Carol Chaudiere asked

Alaska Pharos Log 3/12/98

Project ...

From Page 4

'A responsible business owner would take responsibility. You can't expect your guests to have to compete for parking '

— Brad Snowden, hotel owner

where guests would park while they were registering for a room Chaudiere said there should be some sort of loading zone in front of the hotel that would be used solely for that purpose, so parking spaces on the street were not used

The administration recommended that Carter be required to have a bus loading zone on the north side of Railway Avenue, approved by Police Chief Tom Walker If it caused traffic problems, it would be moved to Fifth Avenue at the hotel's expense

Councilman and lodging co-owner Jerry King told the commission he didn't think the north side of Railway was a good place for the bus loading zone because the noise might interfere with performances at Chugach Heritage Center

Brad Snowden, co-owner of the Best Western hotel across the street from the proposed hotel, said he's trying to be as fair as he can with his assessment of Carter's parking situation but said, "Business owners need to take responsibility for themselves"

He said, "There's going to be a parking demand created with that new business " As a hotel owner Carter needs to take responsibility for his customers, he said

"A responsible business owner would take responsibility You can t expect your guests to have to compete for parking, ' he said

Snowden has an interesting perspective on the parking issue He has bought five parking lots over the last 14 years and acknowledged that when he bought the corner parking lot on Fourth and Adams, he "probably paid the highest price, per square foot, for any piece of property on the Kenai Peninsula."

He doesn't remember the exact price he paid for the lot, but thinks it was about $70,000

Snowden sympathizes with Carter, but said it's just the cost of doing business

The administration also recommended that Carter be required to provide sidewalks, curbs and gutters, to city standards, along the east side of Fifth Avenue and on the north side of Railway Avenue

A 10-foot building setback would be maintained along the property's north side, because the adjoining property, which is a house, is zoned multi-residential Carter also would have to erect a solid wood fence or provide vegetative screening at least four feet high, but no greater than six feet high, along the north lot line

Action on the hotel's permit was postponed until the April 1 meeting, with the public hearing slated to continue then Martin said the postponement was a result of not having provided proper public notice for the hearing

Prior to granting a conditional use permit, the commission is required to ensure that the proposed use is within zoning regulations

Carter also must show that the value of adjoining property would not be impaired by the hotel, which must also be "in harmony" with the city's comprehensive plan Public services and facilities also must be adequate, and the hotel must not be harmful to public safety, health or welfare

SeaLife center wants entertainers

The Alaska SeaLife Center, in Seward, is looking for entertainers to participate in the grand opening celebration events, April 25 and May 2

Opportunities include, but are not limited to, musicians, singers, dancers, clowns, jugglers and face painters Groups of all ages are encouraged to participate

Those who would like to participate should submit a brief proposal, and if possible, a video tape or audio cassette of their performance to Alaska SeaLife Center Grand Opening Committee, c/o RISE Alaska, 880 H St , Suite 101 Anchorage 99501 Deadline for submission is Sunday

Artist and photographers also are invited to submit proposals for solo or group exhibition of their work for the grand opening season, May 1 through Oct 31 Emphasis should be Alaska s marine mammals, sea birds and coastal scenery

Those interested in displaying their work need to submit 10 slides of their work, labeled with the name, title of the work, medium and dimensions Do not send originals

Also include a resume or brief history of experience, previous exhibits and current address and phone number Proposals can be mailed to the above address

For more information, call Maureen at 276-8095

Peninsula Clarion 3-12-98

Seward Phoenix Log Thursday, March 12, 1998

4 P&Z members say they discussed parking issue before public hearing

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Four of the seven city Planning & Zoning commissioners acknowledged at the March 4 meeting that they each talked privately with someone about a proposed downtown hotel that is currently before the commission for a conditional use permit

The commissioners did not break any city codes or state statutes

But their conversations are examples of "ex parte" contact, which refers to taking information from one side of an issue outside of a public forum

Ex parte contact can include telephone calls, informal meetings, lunches or even casual encounters on street corners

"The essential element of ex parte contact is that someone with a direct interest in a decision before the commission — an applicant, a representative of an applicant or an opponent of the applicant, is attempting to influence or secure a vote outside the public forum before a commissioner has had an opportunity to hear all sides of an issue," according to the Alaska Planning Commission Handbook

The handbook, written by the state Department of Community and Regional Affairs, states that ex parte contact is common and can be beneficial But it warns that "ex parte contact on questions that involve specific parcels of land or the rights of certain individuals" should be avoided

Community Development Director Kerry Martin told the commissioners that the section of the handbook that addresses such contact is not new and asked the commissioners to divulge the information gleaned in the ex parte contacts with the rest of the commission and the public

Commissioner Tom Smith said he had a conversation with Alaska SeaLife Center Executive Director Kim Sundberg about the parking lot that the Institute of Marine Science shares with the center Smith manages the Institute of Marine Science in Seward During the course of that conversation, hotel proposer Paul Carter's parking arrangement with the SeaLife Center came up

"I didn't realize it was a new contractor," Smith said He thought the proposed Hotel Edgewater was being developed by the same man who tried to develop the property last year, Dan Claugus of Eagle River

Commissioner Ron Niebrugge said he had a conversation with Carter and Mark Anderson of First National Bank

Niebrugge acknowledged that the appearance of a zoning commissioner meeting with a developer and a banker may lead some people to believe that backdoor dealing is going on, but he said nothing could be further from the truth

He said Anderson brought Carter to meet him before the conditional use permit application was submitted and before the project had been made public

Niebrugge said it was more of an introductory meeting than anything

"I don t think it's out of bounds to try to talk to the decision-makers to see where the city is going," Carter said

He said it's also "difficult, not being from Seward, to try and become a part of the town"

He said Niebrugge didn't divulge any sensitive information or compromise himself in any way

Commissioner Kelly Martin had ex parte contact with Gene Bradley, whose family owns a video store, the Best Western Hotel Seward and the New Seward Saloon, all of which are near the proposed hotel

Martin said she and Bradley are friends and often talk on the telephone and during the course of a recent phone conversation they discussed the parking situation on Fifth Avenue as it relates to Carter's hotel plan

Martin said Bradley voiced concerns that parking spaces in front of her video store and the New Seward Saloon would be used by Carter's hotel guests

Commissioner Carol Griswold and Nathan Orr, a city councilman, carpenter and motel owner, also said they discussed the project, but neither revealed what they talked about, nor did they return phone calls asking for comment

Kerry Martin advised the commissioners to take advantage of an upcoming training session in Soldotna and referred them to their manuals for clarification of what is expected of them as commissioners

The handbook suggests that if a commissioner is approached by someone wishing to discuss a matter involving specific parcels of land or the rights of individuals, they should invite them to present their testimony before the commission

People not willing to attend commission meetings should be informed that the information they impart will be put on the record, and if they do not want their testimony on the record commissioners should refuse further contact, the handbook said

Written information should be sent to commission staff for review and inclusion in the commission packet

And commissioners should avoid field trips with an applicant or an applicant's representative that are not open to the public or are not recorded in the commission's minutes, the handbook said

City axes some Railway parkir

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Expecting a dramatic increase in the amount of traffic on Railway Avenue this summer city officials have implemented a plan to reduce congestion between Third and Fifth avenues

Parking has been eliminated on the north side of the road and limits use of the south side to buses for loading and unloading passengers at the Alaska SeaLife Center

City engineering manager Dave Calvert kept an eye on Railway s traffic flow all winter and said it didn t take long to realize the road was too narrow to handle bus automobile and pedestrian traffic while still accommodating parking

He said he came up with the idea to prohibit parking and ran it by the chief of police through the city manager s office and up to the community development director, all of whom supported it

But some downtown merchants are upset by the No Parking signs and the loss of spaces along Railway They fear they ll lose business from casual shoppers who have nowhere to park

Tom Buchanan and Dan Coisman owners of B C Sales said they re unhappy about the loss of parking and upset that they were not given any prior notice

Both men said there should have been a public meeting or at least a letter informing them of the changes, prior to the signs being bolted into place

"You have people that work down here and live in apartments and they're taking those people s parking away' Buchanan said

Coisman said he s already heard customer complaints that they can t find parking spots and said "the city's crowding us'

Dave Chamberlain owner of Pete and Mogie s restaurant, is equally displeased with the parking prohibition, as many of his customers park on Railway

He s also upset because he had no idea that a no-parking zone was in the works

It s not right It s not right at all I feel like it's been shoved down all our throats he said

'I can t understand how they can come in and just take parking away from us when we ve already had a problem the last two years,' Chamberlain said

"I understand they re doing it for the SeaLife Center but they have plenty of space for buses on their own property They've eliminated at least five parking spots from us'

While the changes to Railway are new Chamberlain s problem with parking is not

He said parking became a problem when construction began on the SeaLife Center He said construction workers have taken up spaces in front of his restaurant for two years He said he s complained to the city to the police and to people at the SeaLife Center but to no avail

For him, the heart of the problem lies within the city government He said it s exhibited very poor planning skills and has placed the needs of the SeaLife Center ahead of downtown merchants and residents

They created the problem and we ve got to pay for it" he said 'I don t think it s fair for us merchants down here to suffer for their poor judgment."

Chamberlain said the SeaLife Center would have a surplus of parking spaces and room for buses in their lot if they hadn t wasted space with landscaping

But Kim Sundberg executive director of the center, doesn t see it that way

He said the SeaLife Center has made good on all its promises to the city concerning parking and has even managed to squeeze in 161 parking spaces where it had originally planned to have 156

"This is consistent with what we planned all along We have more than complied with the conditional use permit, Sundberg said of the bus only zone on Railway

'The glass is more than half full,' he said and he expects downtown merchants to reap their share of the rewards gleaned from SeaLife Center visitors

As for the no-parking zone on Railway, Sundberg said 'It s really in our best interest to manage this to make the experience of coming to the SeaLife Center as enjoyable as possible Which means creating a safe environment for pedestrians coming to and leaving the facility

Sundberg said approximately 821 cars per day carrying an estimated 100 000 patrons a year will utilize its parking lot, and about 130,000 visitors will arrive in Seward by bus train or cruise ship

SeaLife Center Director of Marketing Donna Harris said to expect about 100 buses a day during the summer s peak She said those buses will be Grayline Princess Tours Trails North and Seward s trolley

There is space for eight buses at a time to load or offload

Police Chief Tom Walker said the decision to prohibit parking seemed like a good idea to him for public safety reasons

"They re expecting many buses coming to offload at the SeaLife Center with a need for several to offload at a time" With the sightseeing traffic coming from Lowell Point and unpredictable kids, possibly running out into the street it s important to make the street as wide as possible he said

Although there have been very few accidents in downtown Seward 'this will effectively create a third lane,' which should enhance visibility and make the street that much safer, Walker said

'With the opening of the SeaLife Center we're trying to do everything we can as best we can I assess what s going to happen around the center this summer, said Tylan Schrock assistant to the city manager He said it s difficult to anticipate everything, but that it s not a good idea to have people walking between cars in traffic to cross a street

Schrock said a stop sign may also go up on Railway at the intersection with Fourth Avenue but that will be determined at a later date

Also being considered for the Central Business District is two-hour parking and paid parking

'The Downtown Business Association is pushing hard for two-hour parking between Adams and Washington (streets) Schrock said

The main concern over the two-hour parking limit is enforcement and enforcement costs money Schrock said 'The city doesn t have it'

He said there would most likely be overflow onto the side streets as well and that also needs to be addressed

The Downtown Busin Association will take up the ma again at its next meeting schedu for 8 a m Friday at the Apollo Restaurant

Fish research foundation seeks funds from borough assembly

B JEFFREY
Mi Writer

Launching the Alaska Oceans Seas and Fisheries Research Foundation with a $50 000 grant tops tomorrow night s borough meeting

The borough assembly will discuss awarding a $50 000 grant to fund start up costs for the research foundation which would obtain and spend monies for ocean and fisheries research in Alaskan waters

Local supporters say the money is a good investment for Kodiak's economy, Alaska's fisheries and the marine ecosystem as a whole

"The foundation strengthens our ability to find funding for research that we as a community believe is critical," says Dr Scott Smiley, director of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Fisheries Industrial Technology Center, or Fish Tech Center

a non-profit corporation sc not constrained by the same accounting limitations and funding mechanisms as the university is and it will enjoy greater flexibility than federal and state agencies do "

The foundation is originating in Kodiak but has a statewide mission to funnel monies to marine research projects across the state and to Alaska's two new research facilities, the Seward Marine Lab and the Kodiak Fisheries Research Center, both opening this year

It enjoys a broad-based support of fishermen, processors, marine research scientists and public officials in Kodiak, including Stosh Anderson Dr Gil Banc Lacey Berns Chris Blackburn Al Burch Kodiak City Mayor Carolyn Floyd Dan James Kodiak City Manager Bill Jones Matt Moir Dan Ogg, Dr Bob Otto Pete Probasco and Smiley

"The nation and the world are focused on the oceans as a means of support with the United Nations declaring 1998 the Year of the Oceans Ogg says We feel the time is right to form a private, non profit tax exempt research foundation for ocean and fisheries research in Alaska's waters "

Assembly members Scott Arndt, Dr Bob Johnson and Wayne Stevens also spoke in favor of the foundation at a recent work session

"For a while the benefits may be intangible, but down the road the community could greatly benefit from this," Arndt said 'It (the $50,000 grant) is a one-time deal It's worth a try "

Johnson agreed, saying, "This is an investment It will be paid back in many ways "

The Kodiak Chamber of Commerce is currently acting as a funding facilitator for two fisheries research programs, the fish meal and decanter surimi projects But the chamber would be glad to leave the job to the foundation, said Stevens, who is also executive director of the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce

"We're filling a void, doing the paperwork to keep the projects going, but we'd just as soon get out of it," he explained this morning

Funding fisheries development programs is nothing new for the borough and the money has been in the budget for several years to fund fisheries development says Borough Mayor Jerome Selby The borough has funded many projects in the past he explained, including king crab studies a fish meal project and the Karluk Lake fertilization program

The reality is, the borough wouldn t have to do this anymore " he said, because this foundation would take over funding fisheries development projects '

According to the foundation's proposed budget, the $50,000 grant would give the research foundation start-up funds to pay for a part-time executive director, accounting and legal fees and general office and travel expenses

Asked if the money would be 'seed money," implying it would be paid back to the borough, Selby said foundation sponsors are reluctant to guarantee the money would be paid back so it would be a grant to the foundation

The borough assembly will hold a public hearing on the resolution at its March 5 meeting before voting to award the $50,000

Also tomorrow night, the assembly will consider paying Alaska State Parks $14,076 a year to look after the recreation facilities at the end of Monashka Bay Road

State park employees would provide up-keep, including cleaning and supplying the outhouses, picking up litter, reporting vandalism and coordinating dumpster pick-up and outhouse pumping services

In a letter to the borough, Claire Holland, Kodiak state parks district ranger, makes it clear that ASP will provide minor repairs such as painting over graffiti and replacing loose or broken boards but not major repairs attributed to vandalism

The recreation area will not be part of the state park system, however

"ASP will not provide routine law enforcement or emergency response to the site .. not list the site as a state park unit or otherwise produce or distribute printed information about the site," Holland said

The assembly will consider whether to fund the Retirement Incentive Program, or RIP Six employees are eligible to take a RIP this year

The borough meeting will begin at 7 30 p m in the borough assembly chambers on Upper Mill Bay Road

Anyone interested in making comments during the meeting can do so in person or by calling 486-3231 For village callers the toll-free number is 1-800-478-5736 Public radio KMXT (100 1 FM) and Kodiak Cablevision (channel 3) will broadcast the meeting live

Kodiak Daily Mirror 2/18/98

Land's End housing project wins OK — with strings

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

By a 5-1 vote, the Homer Planning Commission finally approved a permit for a housing development near Land s End Resort

The permit for a planned unit development granted to Land's End owner Jon Faulkner for a complex of luxury beachside cottages has a lot of conditions attached including one that requires him to use a particular contractor and a particular style of structure Faulkner s plans call for around 30 of the units, a project he estimated at around $6 million

This week Faulkner expressed satisfaction that the permit is now in order but he said he has serious reservations about the restriction on contractor and structural style

'The commission has tied my hands as far as design goes ' Faulkner said "If the intent of the planning commission is to allow themselves an opportunity to review the ultimate design to make sure it meets community standards, I'm all in favor I want to do this responsibly

"But if the intent is to create a potential roadblock so that if the design I present is rejected and they demand that it go back for public hearing, that kind of obstructionist intent is not in the spirit of what I'm trying to accomplish," Faulkner said

The contractor in question is Jim Sheppard, who also represents a company called Topsider Homes

Faulkner said that in the course of presenting his idea for a housing complex to city officials, he used designs by Topsider as examples He said he did not intend that that design should be the final design, though it might be Sheppard, a long-time friend, would be eligible to bid on the project, Faulkner said

"The commission has tied my hands as far as design goes."
— Jon Faulkner

However, Commissioner Bill Smith moved to include the design as a condition on the permit effectively forcing Faulkner to adopt the Topsider design

Faulkner said that cuts out other designers and contractors from what should have been a bidding situation He said he is considering an appeal of that condition

Smith said Faulkner and Land's End Acquisition Corp , the development company, are free to do whatever they choose on the land However, if wholesale changes occur, such as a new design, Faulkner will at least have to return to the commission for a new hearing

Contrary to Faulkner's claim that the Topsider design was to be seen as an example of how the project would meet Federal Emergency Management Administration standards, Smith said, Faulkner s presentation relied heavily on the Topsider design and on Sheppard s experience and expertise — so much so that Smith saw no way to divorce Topsider or Sheppard from the project

"When the presentation was made to the planning commission, the Topsider design and Sheppard were integral parts of that presentation " Smith said "The structures were FEMA approved The engineering data and specifications were from Topsider When we talked about privacy issues, Sheppard testified how he would take care of those details

Though Faulkner says limiting him to Sheppard's company cuts out other potential bidders, Smith said that wasn't something he had thought about when he insisted on including the condition on the permit

"We were accepting what he presented,' Smith said "It was not our choice

The commission also said the design must meet the borough s flood plain regulations which include FEMA requirements

Other conditions the commission approved are things he can live with Faulkner said adding that many he agrees with wholeheartedly

"I want to do this project right he said

Still hanging over the project is the prospect of a freight dock nearly in the cottage complex's back yard Faulkner has said before he might abandon his project if the city builds a heavy-freight capable dock to replace the aging ferry dock — especially if that dock sees the bulk of freight traffic

Port officials have said they want the new dock built capable of handling freight for those times when the Deep Water Dock is tied up Otherwise it would be used primarily for the Alaska ferry the U S Coast Guard and cruise ships

"The dock still is an issue Faulkner said "What I m hearing is that there really is not an effort to emphasize the freight aspect They want to build it strong enough so that if the Deep Water Dock is tied up they have an alternative It is the 'camel s nose under the tent thing, though "

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HOMER NEWS
COMMERCIAL FISHING FORECAST

11th Edition | Thursday March 12 1998 | Published annually by the Homer News Inc

Attorneys optimistic Exxon suit will be settled in '98

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

Attorneys for some 14,000 fishermen and their counterparts representing Exxon Corp should be arguing their cases before the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in the next two or three months in what could be the last round of the civil suit arising out of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill

A panel of three 9th Circuit justices will hear appeals by Exxon that the $5 billion civil settlement handed down by an Anchorage jury in 1996 is too large Attorneys for Alaska fishermen Native groups municipalities and others allegedly harmed by the 1989 spill will argue that the settlement is fair

Exxon will argue that it s too much and should be struck down or reduced

The deadline for submitting briefs on the original issues of the civil case was Nov 11 of last year Exxon, however has since moved for a new trial saying the jury may have been improperly influenced during the original trial

The basis of Exxon s claim is newly discovered evidence of juror coercion by a court security officer said Exxon spokesman Ed Burwell In January U S District Court Judge H Russel Holland granted Exxon s motion for limited post trial discovery — that is to seek evidence to support its claim

"The newly discovered evidence . indicates the court security officer lied to the court ..."

-Ed Burwell

'The newly discovered evidence based upon a U S marshal's investigation conducted in December 1994 but previously undisclosed to Exxon, indicates the court security officer lied to the court when he denied that the incident Exxon believes involved coercion occurred' Burwell said in a prepared statement 'The marshal's office investigation included seven and a half hours of polygraph examination of the court security officer'

Exxon is proceeding with discovery under this motion and expects to file a brief in support of its motion for a new trial with the Federal District Court in Anchorage in March he said

The 9th Circuit put a hold on Exxon's original appeal pending a ruling from Holland on the jury tampering allegation

Exxon is throwing up every roadblock it can" said Minneapolis attorney Brian O Neill, the chief courtroom attorney for the plaintiffs

Nevertheless he said he expects fishermen could receive settlement checks as early as this year

ed both sides will submit briefs on that issue to Holland If the judge denies Exxon's motion for a new trial Exxon likely would appeal to the 9th Circuit The Circuit Court would likely combine the new briefs with those already on file and schedule an argument date for all appeal arguments

O Neill said he doesn t see much substance in the oil giant s arguments that the settlement amount is too great He expects the 9th Circuit to rule for the plaintiffs

'This was the biggest environmental disaster in American history" O'Neill said

Once arguments are heard the justices are expected to rule fairly rapidly Anchorage attorney David Oesting who is the lead attorney for plaintiffs estimated it would take them 6 months to rule on all the motions He called that quick

According to a law clerk at the 9th Circuit in San Francisco the average time between arguments and a ruling is three weeks but some cases have taken much longer Oesting said many of their cases are one page opinions on criminal appeals

Depending upon what happens at the Circuit Court level an appeal to the U S Supreme Court is possible O'Neill said However that shouldn t delay things more than a few months he said

"Exxon is throwing up every roadblock it can."

- Brian O'Neill

I would expect them to decline to hear it but even if they do, it will still be quick," he said

Some 14 000 plaintiffs — mostly fishermen, but also including others harmed directly and indirectly by the spill — stand to share the bulk of any settlement Oesting said that with interest the amount had reached almost $5 5 billion by Feb 26 The settlement is growing at a phenomenal rate

'The clock is running at a rate of $10 a second Oesting said

That's $864 400 a day which could put the final settlement at some $6 5 billion.

Holland has approved 31 plans of distribution which determine the exact percentage each plaintiff will receive from any settlement, but he still must rule on 20 more, according to a Exxon Valdez oil spill case information line

Plaintiffs aren t the only ones waiting for a check Also in line to benefit are attorneys and some 60 law firms involved in the case who will receive some 25 percent of any final settlement

For up-to date information on the Exxon Valdez oil spill litigation call 800-

1998 Alaska Salmon Forecast

(in thousands of fish)

Area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southeast Region	**247**	**2,500**	**3,500**	**43,000**	**11,300**	**60,500**
Prince William Sound						
Common Property	50	2 210	546	11 000	600	14 400
Cost Recovery	0	181	16	12,300	440	12 900
Upper Cook Inlet	17	2,500	300	300	200	3,320
Lower Cook Inlet	1	323	15	2,790	11	3 140
Bristol Bay	84	20,600	90	400	700	21 900
Central Region	**152**	**25,800**	**967**	**26,800**	**1,950**	**55,700**
Kodiak Area	20	2 350	300	6,350	650	9 670
Chignik	7	1 070	235	1,200	270	2 680
South Peninsula	10	2 460	255	6 800	1 600	11 100
North Peninsula	10	2,100	180	200	150	2 640
Aleutian Islands	0	5	0	500	1	506
Westward Region	**47**	**7,990**	**970**	**15,000**	**2,670**	**26,700**
AYK Region	**152**	**185**	**822**	**815**	**1,470**	**3,440**
Statewide Total	**598**	**36,500**	**6,260**	**85,600**	**17,400**	**146,000**

Source Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Another big year due for salmon fishermen

Continued price pressure from record producing Chilean salmon farms is giving Alaska fishermen a headache that will require strong medicine to relieve but this year it looks like the medicine cabinet is closed

Farmed coho and trout are being sold in Tokyo at below the cost of production while the Japanese economy remains mired in the doldrums and those twin problems have depressed prices for every species and fishery in Alaska From troll-caught Southeast kings to frozen Bristol Bay reds and canned Kodiak pinks it appears that prices this summer will be at or below last year s levels

If all goes well however Alaska salmon fishermen could earn more in 1998 than last summer simply by catching more The statewide, all-species harvest is expected to be 146 million fish some 23 million more than in last year and slightly above the 10 year average according to the Department of Fish and Game in Juneau

The big question is whether runs will come in as expected

We missed last year by 50 million so who knows' said Fish and Game statistician Herman Savikko We should be warning people to take it (the forecast) with a grain of salt

Preseason projections are a combination of expert opinion and scientific speculation and many people — including Fish and Game biologists — are wondering what to think of last year s spectacular overestimate Savikko said After 1997 s dismal showing Fish and Game chief scientist Hal Geiger asked the University of Alaska and the National Marine Fisheries Service to review the department's methodology

Looking over the models however 'They said 'Actually you guys do great work' according to Savikko Whatever caused the discrepancy between forecast and return last year was apparently impossible to predict he said

'When Mother Nature throws a wrench into the spokes, there s no way to anticipate that" Unfortunately Savikko added Mother Nature might still have that wrench

No changes were made in the way Fish and Game produced this year s projections because there s no way to know whether 1997 was a one year phenomenon or the start of something bigger If the catch falls short again this year biologists might consider revamping their strategies Savikko said If forecasts are still off in four or five years We all just ought to quit

Snapshot:
Alaska Salmon
1997 Forecast 171 million
1997 Harvest 123 million
1998 Forecast 146 million

Blues over reds

Particularly worrisome to many in the industry is what will happen in Bristol Bay Biologists still don t know why the run failed last year — the harvest of 12 3 million sockeyes was less than half what had been forecast — and whether the failure might repeat itself in 1998

If the run does appear as Fish and Game projects fishermen would land 20 6 million reds The University of Washington s Fisheries Research Institute is even more optimistic putting the catch at 23 5 million

The strongest showing should be in the Egegik District though not by much according to Fish and Game Egegik fishermen should take 7 5 million while those in the Naknek Kvichak are told to expect 6 8 million The Nushagak District could see high levels of interest if the catch comes in at the 3 5 million expected while the Ugashik District should be good for 2 4 million

Copper River drifters are also wondering what the summer will hold Fish and Game projects a catch of 1 9 million last year s projected 1 5 million turned into an actual harvest of 4 1 million But Area Management Biologist Slim Morse in Cordova said this forecast should be closer to the mark because biometricians began using a new model

Based on sibling relationships this forecast is a lot tighter than ones in the past he said I don t think the spread (between forecast and actual catch) will be as much as what we ve seen

Eshamy and Coghill will contribute several hundred thousand more reds but Main Bay Hatchery suffered smolt outmigration problems several years ago and is not expecting much if any returns

Kodiak fishermen should land about 2 3 million sockeyes though the Karluk return is forecast to be weaker than in recent years said biologist Kevin Brennan with a combined early and late run of just 400 000 Last year the catch was nearly 900 000 Fraser River and Upper Station should come in better than last year however

The Kodiak forecast has rarely hit its target Brennan said so biometricians this year worked an error factor into the equation and are hoping the 2 3 million forecast is right on the actual catch

Farther down the Alaska Peninsula Chignik seiners should catch 1 million reds Area M fishermen should land 2 5 million and the North Peninsula should hit 2 million Southeast gillnetters can expect 2 5 million reds Assuming the best Alaska fishermen will catch 36 5 million sockeyes this summer

British Columbia has a potential harvest of 6 2 million reds about half the catch of last year said Wayne Saito of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Of the four major sockeye producing areas only the Fraser River is expecting any substantial return — 5 million — while the Skeena-Nass catch could be 1 1 million Smith Inlet and Barkley Sound are both projecting no commercial harvest

The big question in B C , Saito said is who will catch those reds — Canadians or Americans? The Pacific Salmon Treaty has still not been ratified which is a great concern to B C fishermen he said

We have no commitment from the U S on any kind of arrangement and the U S has the capacity to harvest a large component of the return

Pinks plentiful?

While gillnetters will be holding their collective breath this summer to see whether the Bristol Bay sockeye run hits as expected seiners are wondering about Southeast pinks

Department of Fish and Game statisticians finally settled on a projected total statewide harvest of 85 6 million but again Savikko said it s pretty much anybody s guess The question mark is Southeast

Brood year escapement throughout the region was among the highest ever recorded though overescapement in past years has had disastrous results Overwinter conditions were poor and fry surveys came in lower than expected but El Nino conditions have generally been good for pinks When statisticians used one popular model, the forecast came in at 22 million a different model put it at 83 million

Mix 'em all together and what do you get? A final forecast for Southeast of 43 million — more or less

'The bottom line" said Fish and Game s preliminary forecast ' forecasting 1998 s harvest is tough What's your assessment?'

Prince William Sound should contribute 11 million to the common property fishery plus 12 3 million for hatchery cost recovery operations

Kodiak pink salmon runs are going through some big changes said Kevin Brennan Even year pink runs used to be dominant but that seems to have changed about 10 years ago which suggests this will be a weak year of just 6 3 million West side pink streams which have failed in recent years are now showing improvement while the east side streams are falling behind because of bad winter conditions Kitoi Hatchery s catch should be less than 1 million

Area M should be good for 6 8 million pinks and Chignik for 1 1 million according to Fish and Game

Chums, kings, cohos

Chums are playing a greater role than ever before in the economic health of many fishermen and 1998 looks to be a good year statewide with landings of 17 4 million chums about 1 2 million more than last year

The bulk of the catch will occur in Southeast with about 11 3 million Prince William Sound s common property fishery should be good for 600 000 far below the total harvest of 2 2 million last year The Arctic Yukon-Kuskokwim Region is expecting almost 1 5 million — far in excess of the 530 000 landed in 1997 — while Area M is in line for 1 7 million chums

Copper River kings should be strong again this year at about 50 000 Bristol Bay can expect some 84 000 and AYK fishermen should land 152 000 — about 25 000 less than last year

Coho catches should double from last year to 6 3 million with the bulk — 3 5 million — caught in Southeast

Forecasts agree on slim season for Cook Inlet gillnets

Cook Inlet drifters should spend less time cooped up in the "corridor" than they did in 1997 and less time in the Central District as well given a projected catch of just 2 5 million sockeyes

Assuming the run comes in at that level — the lowest since 1991 — setnetters can also expect more days off

It s going to be pretty tight said Department of Fish and Game biologist Jeff Fox

On the other hand sockeye prices have been stable in recent years hovering around $1 15 and many fishermen go into the season hopeful their ex vessel value will not drop too far

In some years there has been substantial uncertainty over the forecasts developed by department biologists Unfortunately Fox said that s not the case this year The two models that are used to make projections agree almost to the fish One predicts a Kenai River return of 1 047 million the other 1 084 million — a difference of just 35 000 reds

Last year the two models differed by some 3 4 million Biologists split the difference and told fishermen to expect 5 3 million but warned that the final catch could be anything from 3 6 million to 7 million When the last fisherman s gear was hung up to dry drifters and setnetters had caught 4 2 million reds

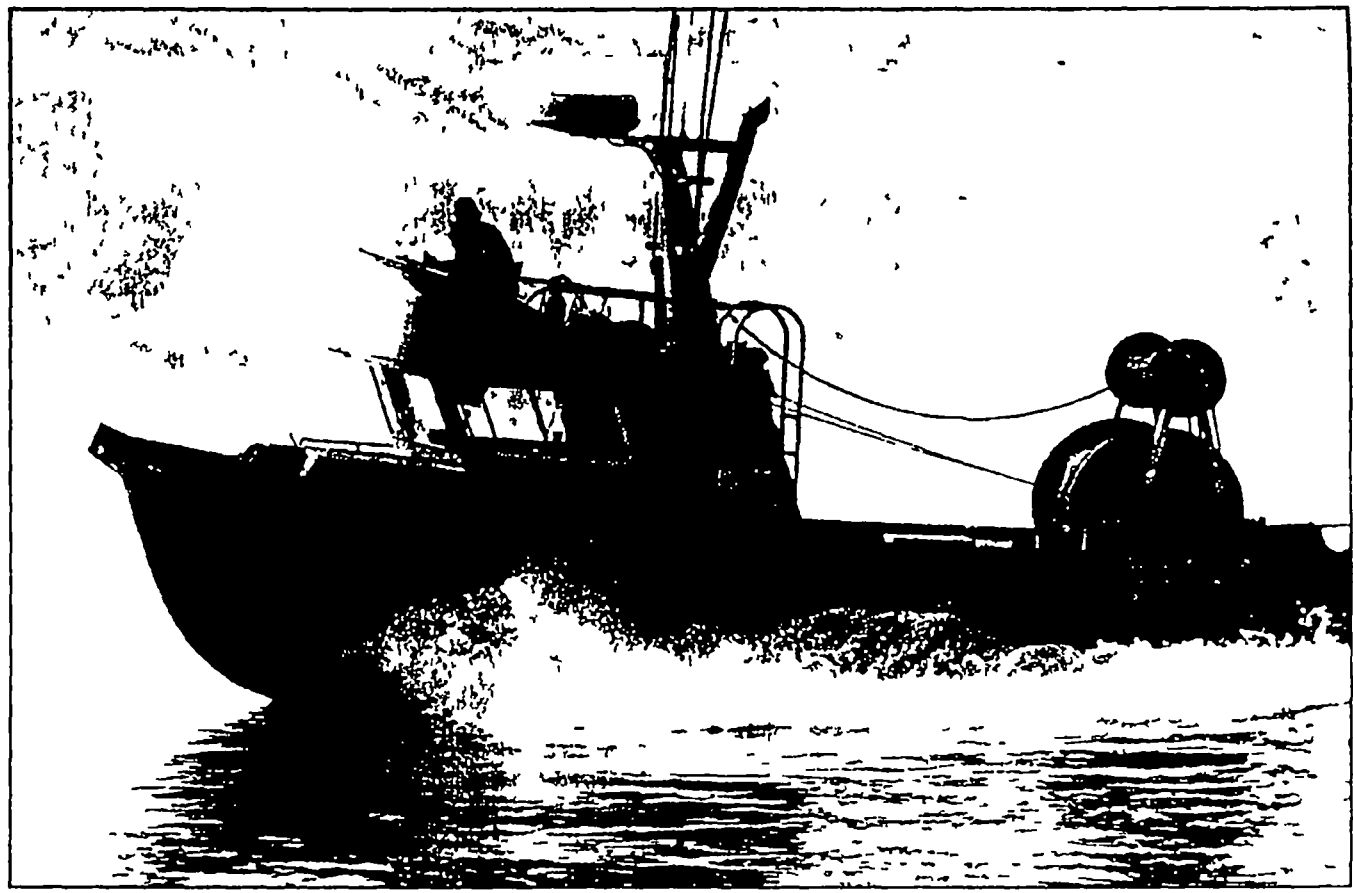
There isn t any single element responsible for this year s projected low return Fox said though high escapements four to six years ago may be a factor

We ve been loading up those systems pretty good lately and not seeing marine survival numbers as high as in the past he said

It s still only a theory but some biologists believe high numbers of smolt reduce plankton levels in Skilak Lake inhibiting the growth and survival rate of succeeding age classes

The parents of this year s returning 5-year olds spawned in 1993 when Kenai River escapement was 800 000 Fox said But in both '92 and 94 1 million reds made it upstream to spawn That inter-year competition appears to have been stiff 1993 was also a year of flooding on the Kenai River which may have disturbed salmon redds

Whatever the reasons the smolt outmigration wasn t spectacular and the 4-year-old component that returned last year was moderate suggesting the same for this year s 5 year-olds



Cook Inlet drifters will be penned up in the Corridor less this summer if fishing time drops because of the meager sockeye return

'It s definitely down from the average of the last 10 years Fox said of the projected harvest, but it s about the average of the last 20 or 30 years

Other rivers are in line for similarly meager returns The Kasilof River return is projected at 800 000 while the Susitna River should see about 600 000 Crescent River has had poor runs the last four or five years and this year s return is likely to be minimal

There will probably be drift restrictions Northern District restrictions and West Side restrictions Fox said The problem is that our harvest capacity is greater than what they (the smaller streams) can produce

Given the small projection the drift fleet can expect fewer openings than last year But it won t be trapped in the corridor as much Fox said so effort is spread out and not focused on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers

That s little comfort to drifters however as the meager size of the run doesn t add up to much of a season

I m not too excited said Homer drift fisherman John Munns It's awful hard to get excited anymore The corridors are the way of the future (Fish and Wildlife) Protection is always looking for ways to screw us and my boat won t stay on the line because it lacks the power to tow hard he said 'How can you look forward to a season like that?"

On the other hand Munns is a member of Seasonal Seafoods the fishermen owned cooperative They made some good choices about when to sell their sockeyes last summer — immediately it turned out — and now are pushing toward $1 30 a pound he said

We were having marketing meetings right there in the Inlet during periods he said The (cooperative) manager was taking votes saying things like I ve got a buyer lined up but we have to make a decision NOW!

If the executive director of Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association is any indication setnetters are looking forward to the season

I m an optimist said Karl Kircher but I think that s part of the job description of a commercial fisherman '

One issue that always affects East Side setnet openings is the abundance of Kenai River kings, and this year shows potential for reduced fishing time The Department of Fish and Game historically monitors the runs with sonar counters but now doubts the accuracy of the counts This year biologists will be counting much more carefully and using a new method of tag and release

We ve always supported using the best biological data possible for management he said "We certainly expect they won t use this new management tool alone to manage with '

Drifters don t expect the king counters to be an issue either said Theo Matthews executive director of the United Cook Inlet Drift Association

He fully expects prices to remain at last year s level Matthews said and if the new corridor line injects a measure of fairness that has been lacking in the fishery drifters will be happy

'Right now everything is looking kind of laid back he said

Snapshot:
Upper Cook Inlet Sockeyes

1997 Forecast	5 3 million
1997 Harvest	4 1 million
1998 Forecast	2 5 million

Deckhands like Richy Hankins can probably expect fewer fish every set in 1998

Tough go for herring roe expected

This could be the year for Alaska herring fishermen to take that long-awaited spring ski vacation

Forecasts call for just average catches throughout Alaska, totaling some 50,000 tons, but with a huge catch expected in British Columbia and prices in the dumps already 1998 may be a year to forget

"I m trying to work up some enthusiasm said veteran seiner Beaver Nelson in late February Optimism was in short supply at that time, but he was still planning to make the annual herring circuit starting in Sitka

Nelson and others in the industry concede the upcoming season has perhaps the worst prospect of any in years

Two years ago the price of herring went stratospheric, in spite of steadily declining sales in Japan and a lingering economic recession That produced a substantial carryover into the 1997 season and forced at least one large herring reprocessor into bankruptcy

Japan's economy still continues to limp along with no sign of recovery in sight and sales of the traditional "kazunoko" gift packs were terrible over New Years according to longtime market observer Bill Atkinson Top level gift packs that sold in 1996 for 8,000 yen went begging for buyers at 6,000 yen in December he reported

In a good year, Japanese markets can absorb some 8,000 to 9 000 tons, according to one longtime herring buyer The carryover from last year is estimated at some 5 000 tons "We'll have maybe 9 000 tons this year — that means we'll be trying to cram 14 000 tons of roe into that market And what're we going to do next year when the carryover is 7,000 tons?

Another processor summed it this way 'This could be the worst season ever'

The sac roe season got off to a depressing start in San Francisco Bay Though fishermen fell dramatically short of their 10,748-ton quota landing just 1,650 tons the price still dropped like a stone Processors who paid $1 000 a ton last year offered $200 to $300 — delivered to the dock

That's not so much depressing as downright scary, said the operations manager for one Alaska processor Starting at $300 a ton then taking into account Alaska's additional costs for tendering and transportation drops the value of the fish below the zero mark "It does not compute," he said

Now everyone in the business is focused on British Columbia where the biggest fishery in years is expected — 36 319 tons That s 10 000 tons more than last year

As usual the B C fishery will produce fish in the 85- to 110-gram range which could put a damper on the market for areas with similar sizes, such as Sitka, Prince William Sound and even the younger age classes in Kodiak and Cook Inlet

Alaska fishermen who had their hopes up that B C would be a bust should prepare for the worst, said Greg Thomas, Region Herring Operations Chief for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Test fishing last week showed the fish are coming in as expected and healthy

1998 Alaska Herring Forecast

Area	Forecast (in tons)
Kah Shakes	635
Sitka Sound	6,900
Other SE Area	891
Prince William Sound	
Seine	3,367
Gillnet	197
Cook Inlet	1,780
Kodiak	2,000
Port Moller	100
Togiak	
Seine	15,841
Gillnet	5,280
Kuskokwim Area	2,259
Nelson Island	1,070
Nunivak Island	756
Cape Romanzof	753
Norton Sound	
Gillnet	7,324
Beach seine	814
Port Clarence	165
Total 1998 forecast	**50,132**
1993-97 average	**50,386**

Source Alaska Department of Fish and Game

In the Gulf of Georgia, he said "We ve got more fish than you can shake your willy at" Translated from Canadian, that means "equal to or greater than the forecast"

To ensure the quota is taken but not exceeded, Canada has introduced a new management system for seiners, Thomas said The quota was split evenly between the license holders and the fleet divided into vessel pools When one pool reaches its limit, its excess fish will go to other pools whose catch is lagging As the season progresses fewer boats will be allowed to fish

Our plan is to come in exactly on target" Thomas said

. . . Carryover in Japan spells difficult season in Alaska

From Page One

Gillnetters in most areas will have a similar pool system

Sitka Sound will pour even more small fish on the market, according to Bill Davidson, who manages the area for the Department of Fish and Game in Sitka. Strong recruitment boosted the quota to 6,900 tons, but with the older fish virtually gone, 4-year-olds constitute some 60 percent of the biomass. Five and 6-year-old fish make up another 32 percent.

And the fish are smaller than usual, he said. Test fishing over the winter showed the average size of a 4 year old is 100 grams, down from 107 grams in years past. Combined with the older fish, the average size of the entire catch should be just 110 grams. Last year in contrast, the average was upwards of 140 grams.

In spite of the prospects, Davidson said he expects a full fleet to arrive. "This is the first large fishery in Alaska so everyone's planning on being in Sitka as usual."

Meetings have started already between Fish and Game, fishermen and processors, Davidson said. Everyone's very cautious of what the market is going to do."

Perhaps more than ever before, management will work toward obtaining the highest possible value from the fish, he said. As usual, that means timing openings for the highest roe content.

In addition, however, biologists may start doing in Sitka Sound what they've done in Togiak in recent years — have more but shorter openings.

We'll poll processors on a daily basis on their freezing capacity, ensuring we don't get ahead of the capacity with the catch, Davidson said.

That doesn't necessarily mean a succession of 10 minute openings, however. We don't want to handcuff management and miss out on an opportunity in order to stick with a preconceived notion of what should happen.

While Sitka herring shrank a little, Prince William Sound fish grew, according to Slim Morse, Area Management Biologist in Cordova. That allowed Fish and Game to boost the quota slightly, giving seiners 3,366 tons and gillnetters 197. Pound fishermen can take 823 tons, while the wild spawn on kelp quota is 464 tons.

As was the case last year, Fish and Game's management will be tailored to meet the minimum size established by processors, Morse said. That may be a tough order to fill, as they wanted 130 gram fish.

"If it's the same (size limit) as last year, it'll be hard to find, given that the average size this year is projected to be just 110 grams.

Kodiak fishermen should have some bigger fish than that, according to Dennis Gretsch of the Department of Fish and Game. The west side bays still have a supply of the 1988 age class, and those 10 year-olds should weigh in at 280 to 320 grams, he said.

The Kodiak office is starting to produce age class analysis of its many fishing areas, and a closer look at last year's results caused Gretsch to shave about 500 tons off the preliminary forecast, down to about 2,000 tons. That could drop further in the future, he said, if recruitment doesn't pick up a little.

> *"Both catching and processing capacity have to shrink."*
>
> **— Seattle processor**

Because the costs associated with buying herring in Western Alaska are higher than elsewhere, the fisheries of Togiak, the Kuskokwim area and Norton Sound could easily be seen as expendable this year.

Though one processor said the carcass value of the large fish expected throughout Western Alaska could be an incentive, another said he doubted it will make much difference. Maybe $10 a ton," he said.

Togiak's biomass is expected to decline slightly from last year's level, according to Jim Browning of the Department of Fish and Game in Dillingham, but the area still should put more than 21,000 tons on the market.

The seine quota is 15,840 tons; gillnetters will get 5,280 to harvest.

Unlike most Gulf of Alaska fisheries, Togiak is still getting a boost from its older fish. Seven and 8 year-olds will comprise almost 30 percent of the catch, while 9-, 10- and 11 year olds should make up another 40 percent. Those older fish will range in size from 375 to 425 grams.

Herring 6 years old and younger will make up less than one third the harvest.

As has been the case for several years, managers will work with processors to maximize the value of the harvest, Browning said. The goal is to limit the harvest to an amount that can be processed in three days or less. Last year seiners had seven openings ranging from 10 minutes to three hours. Gillnetters had six openings of two to seven hours each.

Kuskokwim and Norton Sound fisheries should be substantial this year, totaling some 13,100 tons. The biggest catch should come out of Norton Sound, where gillnetters are in line for 7,324 tons and beach seiners will take another 814 — almost twice the historical average in recent years.

The big questions facing fishermen in Northern Alaska — and perhaps in other areas of the state as well — are whether processors will show up at all, and how much they plan to buy.

Trident Seafoods Inc. will return to all of Alaska's herring grounds as usual, though with some restrictions, said Operations Manager Bart Eaton. Like all processors this year, Trident will be watching every penny, he said.

We're going to run the wheels off two (processing) boats, which is just half the number Trident usually has in place, Eaton said. If we have four boats running at three-quarters speed, we lose. With two running at full capacity, we may get less fish but we cover our capital costs."

> *"We've got more fish than you can shake your willy at."*
>
> **— Greg Thomas, B.C. biologist**

Eaton and others in the processing business said they expect to see limits on the size of fish they will buy, and perhaps on the total tonnage.

One said he believes the herring business has a future, but it's going to be different than that of the past. As profits shrink, permit holders will either be forced to skip certain fisheries, thus reducing fleet size, or they will have to sell out and reduce the cost of entering the herring game.

The same will hold true for processors, he said. Some will go bankrupt, others will buy less at each stop on the herring circuit.

"Both catching and processing capacity have to shrink," he said, adding, "It's a bloody transition getting from point A to point B."

Kamishak herring quota down as old fish die out

When fish prices are in the dumps fishermen can only hope that sheer volume will bail them out, but Cook Inlet herring seiners this year are likely to be disappointed on both counts

The harvest guideline of 1,780 tons is one of the smallest in recent history, but the age-class composition of the fishery could work against fishermen and bring the catch down further yet

"The management will be as conservative as we can make it said Wes Bucher, who manages the Kamishak Bay fishery for the Department of Fish and Game ' I'd much rather save these younger fish not only for future recruitment but for a better day when they may be worth more

As the big age class spawned 10 years ago that has sustained the Cook Inlet fishery in recent years dissipates the biomass has declined to just under 20,000 tons Bucher said At that level the department s herring management plan mandates that the exploitation rate be reduced to 10 percent It has been 12 to 15 percent in recent years

With the total biomass expected to be about 19,800 tons seiners can take 1,780 tons with another 200 tons set aside for the Shelikof Strait food and bait fishery

The herring class of '88 that has sustained fishermen from Sitka to Togiak the last five years is now just about exhausted Bucher said Ten year old fish will comprise just 17 percent of the biomass — about half the level of last year

Spotter planes and snow-covered hillsides are familiar sights over the herring grounds of Kamishak Bay

This year the majority of the Cook Inlet harvest will be 4- 5- and 6-year olds Together they constitute almost two-thirds of the biomass the 5-year-olds are fully one-third the total

The length and strength of those age classes will make fishermen happy in the future but could make for a conflicted season in '98, Bucher said When they arrive on the grounds, generally the younger age classes are immature and need days to ripen while the older fish are ready to spawn Timing the openings is the problem he said

"The management will be as conservative as we can make it"

–Wes Bucher

'If we re waiting to harvest the younger fish, the fishery could be delayed On the other hand, targeting older fish usually requires us to fish earlier That s going to be the rub In the past we've had some bad results when we had large age classes of fours and fives" mixed in with older fish

If large schools of 10 year old fish can successfully be targeted it could make a decent payday for a few fishermen — the herring should weigh almost 290 grams apiece Only about 300 tons are expected to be caught in that size range however

The younger fish should weigh in at 128 to 194 grams according to Fish and Game estimates

Snapshot: Cook Inlet Sac Roe Herring

1997 Forecast	3,420 tons
1997 Harvest	1,691 tons
1998 Forecast	1,780 tons

Cod, rockfish help fishermen make their season

Alaska groun fishermen are turning to jigging machines more often, as on this rockfish trip Seward several years ago

Jigging for groundfish still hasn t become a big money-maker for local fishermen, but between the state-waters Pacific cod fishery and rockfish more every year are trying their hand at the gear

Some are even using electric and hydraulic jigging machines to fish small amounts of halibut quota according to Kenny Quinn of Kachemak Gear Shed

Sales of the machines which run upwards of $1 000 by the time they re installed and fitted out with a season s worth of tackle are running at about the same pace as last year Quinn said

It s not anything crazy but it s a boost in business

Though cod boats are limited to five machines for the state fishery many fishermen are buying them two or three at a time Quinn said trying to figure out whether they re worth the time and effort

Like any gear jigging machines take time to learn he said

Jig fishermen last year did better than expected in the state cod fishery and Department of Fish and Game Area Groundfish Biologist Charlie Trowbridge said he expects even more effort this year

I ve had quite a few calls on the fishery he said mostly from people who heard that the jig fleet last year caught 600 000 pounds That was a much better showing than anyone anticipated

Jigging machines come in both electric and hydraulic varieties and the electrics are either 12 or 24 volt Each has a spool of heavy line with a heavy sinker and half a dozen or so leaders at the end Fishermen attach an artificial lure to each leader and throw the whole thing overboard and hit the jigging machine s down button

When the sinker hits the bottom the machine senses the change and stops spooling out Then it starts jigging alternately reeling in and spooling out some distance set by the operator — usually one fathom

Some machines can sense when a fish hits which feels like additional weight The operator can program them to reel in when that weight reaches a certain level such as when several fish have been hooked Then it reels to the surface

Rockfish fishermen have found jigging machines especially useful and that s what some local fisherman are buying them for Quinn said That season began Jan 1 for state waters with a quota of 150 000 pounds though trip limits are in place — 1 000 pounds for the Cook Inlet District and 4 000 for the North Gulf District Most are caught in the North Gulf

Bycatch of rockfish in other fisheries is so high however that Fish and Game plans to close the season when the combined directed fishery and bycatch reach 75 000 pounds leaving the remainder for bycatch

Pacific cod are also harvested with jigging machines That season opens July 1 with a drastically reduced quota of 35 000 pounds That s only half the recent average because lingcod recruitment has been low in recent years Trowbridge said

The cod fishery is likely to get the most attention from fishermen this year The jig quota is 1 2 million pounds with another 1 2 million available to pot fishermen in state waters Both seasons begin seven days after the federal season closes in the Central Gulf of Alaska Pot fishing closes when the quota is caught or on April 7 whichever comes first If there is quota remaining the pot fishery will reopen June 15

Fishermen who want to participate in the state cod fishery must r with Fish and Game Trowbridge s ven if they fished in federal waters

Snapshot:

Cook Inlet Groundfish

Pacific cod	2 4 million pounds
Rockfish	150 000 pounds
Lingcod	35,000 pounds

San Francisco Examiner

A section of the San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle

★ ★ Sunday February 8 1998 T-1

TRAVEL

destination

alaska

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND IS HEALING FROM OIL SPILL,

BUT WOUNDS LINGER BENEATH THE SURFACE

in the

wake of the VALDEZ

ALDEZ, Alaska — Stan Stephens couldn t help smil ing as he steered the 82 foot Glacier Spirit through the portion of Prince William Sound known as the Valdez Narrows

Alongside his tour boat killer whales knifed through the fiord to feast on a run of homecoming salmon Har bor seals hitchhiked aboard rafts of glacier ice Snoring sea lions lounged on a navi gation buoy

As if on cue, a bald eagle spread its great wings over the Columbia Glacier and swooped to a landing on a pillar of blue white ice next to the Glacier Spirit Pas sengers cheered

Suddenly I felt a chill, and the crowd aboard the boat fell silent Ahead of us, the silhouette of a giant oil tanker — inbound to Valdez for a cargo of North Slope crude — filled the south western horizon

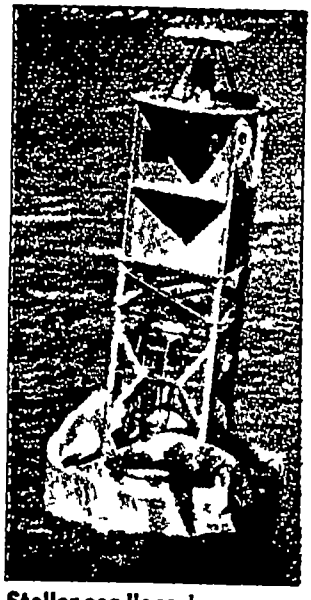
We were abreast of a pile of rocks known as Bligh Reef the very spot where, on Good Friday, 1989, the super tanker Exxon Valdez went aground, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of oil into the sound's pristine waters

Stephens, dean of Prince William Sound's tour opera tors was among the first on the scene that night Memories flooded back, it was as if my old friend was reading my thoughts

"Never again," he said, with a shake of his head

Nine years after the most damaging and costly oil spill in U S history, Prince William Sound — one of the most heartbreakingly beau tiful places in a state known for superlatives — appears at first glance to have recovered completely But, like the oily undersides of the rocks lining some of its remote coves, the legacy of the disaster often lingers just beneath the surface

Some species of marine



Stellar sea lions *lounge on a navigational buoy near the site of the Exxon Valdez spill The species is listed as "still recovering"*

Cordova, *a fishing village on Prince William Sound, has yet to recover financial ly from the disaster and its aftermath*

A bald eagle *surveys its realm from a tree in Valdez A recent study found this species had returned to its pre spill population size*

mammals and birds seem to have bounced back fully, others are still struggling to return to health Money from Exxon's legal penal ties is building a new wildlife center in Seward and has purchased 1,000 miles of coastline for parks and wildlife refuges But at least one local fishing community has never recovered financially from the spill

Visitors to Prince William Sound these days might be excused for forgetting the disaster ever happened Passengers aboard cruise ships, Alaska state ferries and excursion vessels that roam the sound almost never see evidence of the massive oil spill

The drifting crude stained more than 1,500 miles of shoreline, from the Valdez area as far west as the Alaska Peninsula, but somehow missed the main tourism channels Beaches appear unblemished No oil smears ring the sound's galaxy of glaciers Wildlife seems abundant

But the picture is blurred A recent report by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, an Anchorage-based panel formed to oversee restoration efforts funded through the legal settlement with Exxon, found that many species are still feeling the impact from the spill

Of the species it examined, only the local population of bald eagles has recovered completely Pink salmon sockeye salmon common murres (sea birds) and mussels are listed as "recovering" Harbor seals, killer whales (orcas), sea otters, Pacific herring, cormorants, harlequin ducks marbled murrelets and pigeon guillemots are "not recovering The status of black oystercatchers common loons, clams cutthroat trout and river otters is listed as "unknown" (See accompanying story)

Biologists though warn that it's wrong to blame every wildlife problem on the oil spill Several species, including harbor seals, marbled murrelets and pigeon guillemots were already in decline before the accident Scientists are not sure of the reasons

Oil lingers

The sparkling blue waters of Prince William Sound may look pristine from the tour boats, but pockets of oil still linger

"Yes, you could kick over rocks in a few places and find oil," said Stanley E Senner science coordinator of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council "But it is not widespread, and you would have to know where to look"

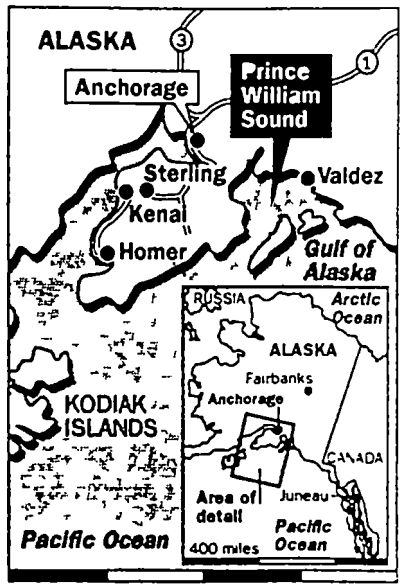
Most of the gravel beaches still soaked with oil are in the southwestern section of the sound, in remote areas visited by only a few kayakers and campers

Last summer a cleanup crew from Chenega Bay, a village in southwestern Prince William Sound, found plenty of leftover oil at Sleepy Bay and other sites on nearby Latouche Island In a $2 million effort funded by the Trustee Council, the villagers worked six weeks to flush oil from island beaches with injections of air and solvents

"We recovered a lot of oil," said Larry Evanoff, a Chenega Bay resident "There is a lot more of it out there"

Exxon points out that it spent $2 5 billion on "unprecedented and successful" cleanup efforts, and that in June 1992 government officials agreed the cleanup was complete and in compliance with federal and state standards

In addition, the oil company said it has paid more than $300 million to 11,000 people businesses and communities directly affected by the spill



"Exxon promptly accepted responsibility for the oil spill in Prince William Sound and voluntarily established a claims program to compensate actual losses," said the firm in a prepared statement

Beyond that, Exxon agreed to pay nearly $1 billion in a 1991 federal court settlement Criminal fines totaled $50 million each for the federal government and the state of Alaska But it is the civil settlement — $900 million, spread over 10 years — that is buying important environmental protection for Prince William Sound

New public lands

So far, the federal state Trustee Council has spent nearly $270 million from the civil settlement to acquire wilderness for state and national parks, wildlife refuges, marine sanctuaries and national forest lands around the sound Recent acquisitions cover more than 1 000 miles of coastline and segments of 280 salmon spawning streams

Among the acquisitions

▶ The Trustee Council last February bought 59,520 acres of wilderness in western Prince William

VALDEZ CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Rebuilt and *moved after the 1964 earthquake, Valdez commands a stunning position at the head of Prince William Sound and the foot of the Chugach Mountains*

Sound from the Alaska native-owned Chenega Corp The transaction protects 22 salmon producing streams, plus habitat for wildlife ranging from sea otters to harlequin ducks Much of the land was added to Alaska's Chugach National Forest.

▶ Last May the trustees added about 32,000 acres of coastal habitat to Kenai Fiords National Park and the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge with lands acquired from the native owned English Bay Corp

▶ In July the trustees announced an agreement with directors of the native owned Eyak Corp to acquire more than 75,000 acres of forested shoreline near the town of Cordova The property is to be divided between Chugach National Forest and the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Dividends for Alaskans and visitors include the opening of new public areas for kayakers, hikers, boaters and sport anglers, expanded protection for wildlife, prevention of logging in several environmentally sensitive zones and the safeguarding of riverbanks needed for the successful rearing of salmon

For travelers this year, the most visible post spill project will be the new Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward (Seward is about 120 miles south of Anchorage, by way of the Seward Highway and the Alaska Railroad It is one of Alaska's busiest cruise ports)

The $52 million SeaLife Center, scheduled to open May 2, will blend science with entertainment Sponsors are hoping it will become one of Alaska s most popular visitor attractions and are forecasting first season attendance at 275 000 — in a community with only about 3 000 year round residents

The Trustee Council has allocated $25 5 million for the science side of the complex The state of Alaska and the city of Seward are providing the rest of the money

Visitors will find a series of natural style habitats with a marine menagerie of sea lions seals sea birds fish shellfish and other specimens from Alaskan waters And they can peek into laboratories where marine scientists will be conducting research to learn more about Alaska's ecosystems

The center also will provide ... for sick and injured marine mammals and sea birds — facilities that were missing at the time of the Exxon Valdez disaster

Cordova still suffers

Little of the settlement money, however, has found its way to the little fishing town of Cordova, where several families lost their commercial-fishing boats — their livelihoods — in the lean years that followed the oil spill

"We came out on the short end of things," says Mayor Margy Johnson "We were the most impacted community, but we have received very little from the settlements"

Johnson says it would help Cordova to have an oil spill information center for visitors and Cordova's young people Also needed, she says, is more global marketing of Alaska's seafood products

Cordova is still waiting for Exxon to pay the $5 billion award an Anchorage jury in 1994 to Alaska fishermen and others who could prove they had been damaged financially by the oil spill Exxon is appealing the ruling

In a prepared statement the oil company said "Exxon believes these punitive damages are unwar ranted, failing every legal or logical test of reasonableness and pur pose"

With bluntness uncharacteristic for an elected official Johnson said. "Exxon is a big pain in the behind Exxon ain't one of us nev er was and never will be Alaskans make a deal, shake hands and stick with it."

Cheri Shaw executive director of Cordova District Fishermen United, said many in town have lost hope of seeing any money "The settlement would be nice" she said, "but nobody here is bet ting the farm on it"

Shaw who represents about 200 commercial fishermen said the in dustry's comeback has been slow and painful

"Some of the fishermen have given up Some have moved on to fish in other parts of Alaska It's sad. But we'll survive We always have"

Few travelers know Cordova The town has no highway connec tion to the rest of Alaska Because Cordova is without a deep water harbor, Alaska's booming cruise in dustry long has bypassed the pretty Prince William Sound port.

That is about to change Alaska Sightseeing/Cruise West, which last year pioneered small ship overnight cruising in Prince Wil liam Sound, will add Cordova to its itineraries this year Two of its ves sels have been assigned to the sound this season — the 82 pas senger Spirit of Alaska and the 54 passenger Spirit of Glacier Bay

There is talk in town of develop ing a deep water harbor for big cruise ships — a move that would dramatically alter Cordova's sleepy character but put it on stronger financial footing

"It could happen — some day," said Johnson

New safety measures

In the nine years since the disas ter, a number of changes have been put into place to try to ensure that it doesn't happen again — or at least that if it does, the impact of the spill can be limited

These changes range from an upgraded, radar controlled traffic system for tankers shuttling in and out of Valdez to placement of barges, loaded with emergency re sponse equipment, around the sound

STANTON H. P

Yutaro Shimomura, *4 and his mother Kazuko Shimomura, of New Jersey examine a chunk of glacier ice during a day cruise in Prince William Sound.*

"The improvements are excel lent — we're much safer than we were before," said tour boat owner Stan Stephens "But I worry about complacency and the fact that a lot of the tankers coming here are get ting old and should be replaced

Valdez is end of the line for the 800 mile long pipeline that winds down from Prudhoe Bay in Alas ka's Arctic to deliver about 1 4 mil lion barrels of oil daily to the Alyes ka tanker terminal across the har bor from Valdez Visitors can take a guided tour of the marine termi nal Cruise ship passengers also get close up views of the terminal and tankers filling with Alaskan crude

Two oil tankers call here on an average day but one that's con spicuously absent is the Exxon Valdez The tanker was renamed SeaRiver Mediterranean after the oil spill and now is operating in the Mediterranean

Congress at the urging of Alas ka Sen Ted Stevens banned the tanker from ever again sailing in Alaska It was largely a symbolic act but it was one that sat well with the people of Alaska Never theless the old Exxon Valdez could be back in Prince William Sound one day SeaRiver Maritime, Exx on's shipping subsidiary has filed a lawsuit seeking to return the vessel to Alaskan waters

By any name the tanker would be unwelcome Alaskans insist Rick Steiner a University of Alas ka fisheries professor, put it this way It would be like telling the people of Hiroshima you want to bring the (bomber) Enola Gay back to Japan for passenger service"

Prince William Sound and the people of Alaska it's clear still

Murre deaths baffle scientists

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

Five years ago an estimated 120 000 common murres died in the Gulf of Alaska apparently from starvation but scientists investigating the die off could not be sure

This year again dead murres are washing ashore in the northern Gulf of Alaska, and just as in 1993, no one knows why

' I thought it was local, but it turns out that it's happening from California to Dutch Harbor said Peter Armato, a coastal ecologist with the National Park Service

Armato said he returned recently from a conference at which colleagues from California Oregon and Washington state told him they too were finding large numbers of dead murres

Armato may not be strictly an avian researcher, but he is familiar with the murre and has been conducting some research of his own

He said of the couple dozen birds he s recovered, all but one appeared to be small young birds

He said he has taken measurements of the head the beak and a leg bone of each bird, which confirmed that they were born in 1997

He said he doesn't really have a large enough sample to be able to generalize about the entire population of dying birds, but it is enough to help him hypothesize

'There's something going on and it seems to be restricted to the 1997 age class ' he said

When those birds were examined after death many had bellies full of herring, others still had empty stomachs

It s difficult to understand the cycles of nature because the lives of researchers are short when com pared to natural cycles He said it may take hundreds or thousands of years for a natural cycle to play itself out

We could be looking at problems associated with global or regional warming Armato said the Gulf is warmer than normal, the result of El Niño, and that may be a contributing factor

It could be that the water has warmed up enough that the herring are more energetic and thus burn more of their fat reserves, which causes them to starve to death And the murres dependent on the herring, would be similarly affected

Roger Kane/LOG photo

Ryan O'Leary examines a dead murre he and his family found while walking on the beach in Seward March 21 The O'Learys found about six dead murres that day

Armato said he and friend Mike Tetreau have counted 253 live murres flying near the small boat harbor a fairly high number And he said there are thousands more in the head of the bay instead of out further in the ocean

It s certainly puzzling We just don t understand, he said

' What we need to do now is try to understand and unravel the puzzle Armato said

Exxon Valdez spill wild animal recovery a mixed picture

Bald eagles recover; harbor seals, orcas still declining

NINE YEARS after the Exxon Valdez spill, the recovery of Prince William Sound's wildlife is a mixed picture The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, an Anchorage-based panel formed to oversee restoration efforts funded through the legal settlement with the oil firm, recently issued a status report.

Among its findings

▶**Sea otters** Most stocks are recovering now, but numbers remain low in parts of western Prince William Sound

▶**Harbor seals** The oil spill hit Prince William harbor seals hard at a time when they already were in serious decline The decline continues Biologists are asking if natural changes in the seals' food supplies could account for the long term losses Warming ocean waters may be displacing their fat rich diet of herring, capelin and other forage

▶**Killer whales** A much-studied pod of 36 orcas inhabiting Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska lost 14 of its members and produced no young in the two years following the oil spill The pod still has more losses than births However, the link between these losses and the oil spill is considered circumstantial Today more than 80 killer whales, in six "resident" pods, regularly use Prince William Sound There also are transient groups of orcas whose predation may be contributing to the drop in the number of harbor seals.

▶**Common murres** These sea birds took the brunt of the oil-spill toll, accounting for about 74 percent of the 30,000 oiled bird carcasses recovered Production at key colonies was back to normal by 1983

▶**Pigeon guillemots.** It is estimated that the spill claimed 10 to 15 percent of these sea birds in the Prince William Sound area. There is no evidence of a post-spill recovery Natural changes in food supplies, as in the case of harbor seals, may be playing a role

▶**Marbled murrelets** This is another species that had declined before the oil spill Perhaps 7 percent of the spill area population was killed. There is no evidence yet of recovery

▶**Harlequin ducks** There continues to be concern about poor reproduction in western sections of the sound

▶**Bald eagles** The eagle population along the coastline of Prince William Sound has returned to the pre-spill level of about 5,000 birds

— Stanton H Patty

Stanton H Patty, born and raised in Alaska is the retired assistant travel editor of The Seattle Times

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

★ ★ Sunday, February 8, 1998

Good Friday in Valdez? Forget it!

8.6 earthquakes and oil spills are some past moments

By Stanton H Patty
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

VALDEZ, Alaska — Forgive this town's 4,000 residents if they don't get too excited about Good Friday For them, it has been anything but good.

On Good Friday, 1964, Valdez was rocked by an earthquake measuring 8 6 on the Richter scale, the most powerful ever recorded in North America. Then came tsunamis and fires Thirty-two people died here Survivors moved 4 miles west, to solid bedrock, and built a new town from scratch

Twenty-five years later, on Good Friday, 1989, the tanker Exxon Valdez smashed into Bligh Reef, 25 miles south of Valdez, spilling almost 11 million gallons of Alaskan crude into Prince William Sound In addition to the environmental damage, the spill effectively wiped out the town's tourist industry for several years

"But that's history now," said Kim Park, a Valdez tour guide "Prince William Sound is healing So are we"

Almost 150,000 people visited Valdez last year for nature cruises, river rafting, sea kayaking, sport fishing, extreme skiing — and what must be about the world's oddest film festival

The finale of the Valdez Snowman Festival each March, the film festival seems straight out of the old television show "Northern Exposure" Audiences arrange their vehicles in the parking lot of Prince William Sound Community College, and a local radio station broadcasts the film's audio The projection screen is a snow bank

Valdez never lacks for snow Almost 47 feet here in the winter of 1989 90 That year they projected the movie on the tummy of what was claimed to be the world's tallest snowman 76 feet, 4 inches

The film was "Back to the Beach."

These days Valdez bills itself rather grandly as "the Switzerland of Alaska" The town might not have alpine meadows with the music of cowbells — but then, Switzerland doesn't have Prince William Sound.

Icy peaks of the Chugach Mountains, some nearly 10,000 feet high, rise directly behind the fiord town Dazzling glaciers and lofty waterfalls complete the setting

Cruise ships deliver thousands of passengers to Valdez each summer But it is what locals call the "rubber tire traffic" — independent travelers, many with RVs — that is fueling much of Valdez' tourism growth

Visitors find they don't have to go far to see wildlife In many cases, it comes right to them Bald eagles wait alongside spawning creeks, ready to dine on salmon runs. Arctic terns, long distance flyers that commute between the Arctic and Antarctic, nest in patches of grass by the harbor Clown-face puffins are occasional visitors. So are sea otters, harbor seals and killer whales

Through her company, "Sentimental Journeys," Park gives historical tours of Valdez. First stop the site of Old Valdez There's not much there now, just the stubs of a few pilings from the quake torn city dock poking up like grave markers along the mud flats

Bronze memorial tablets list the names of Prince William Sound residents who perished when south central Alaska shook for more than four terrifying minutes back in 1964

"Almost everybody in Valdez lost a family member or a friend," Park said. "But, hey, things are great now"

Still, as Good Friday, 1998, approaches, don't expect a large celebration in Valdez

PENINSULA CLARION 2/4/98

Letters to the Editor

Fish and Game biologists among most dedicated, competent in world

Since the end of the fishing season, there have been a large number of letters to the editor as well as some op/ed columns very critical of sport, commercial and personal use salmon fisheries management in Cook Inlet Some of these pieces have called for ' heads to roll in the Department of Fish and Game while others have merely charged the department with incompetence or mismanagement

As anyone who has spent the time to find out knows, the Upper Cook Inlet salmon fishery is a very complex management system The management plan for Upper Cook Inlet is the result of thousands of hours of work by the public and the department staff in meetings of the Board of Fisheries, local advisory committees and the Cook Inlet Regional Planning Team which deals with salmon enhancement Some of the letters which have appeared are so filled with erroneous information that it is extremely difficult, with the staff time available, to respond in a brief and timely manner

The Department of Fish and Game staff in Cook Inlet are trained biologists, many of whom have 20 years, or more, professional experience They live and breathe the fisheries they manage You will not find more competent or dedicated biologists anywhere in the world.

Next time you see a letter to the editor or an opinion piece calling for heads to roll, or charging ADF&G with mismanagement I encourage you to spend some time and talk to sport, commercial, subsistence and personal use fishermen, contact your local biologist from either the Sport Fish Division or the Commercial Fisheries Management and Development Division, get all the facts, and then draw your own conclusions These issues are important to us all and deserve debate founded in fact That is what has made Alaska s management program uniquely successful

Frank Rue
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

CORDOVA TIMES 2/19/98

Area update

Science Center presents programs at spill workshop

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Workshop for 1998 brought top scientists together Jan 29-31 to discuss and display the work being done in the Sound The Prince William Sound Science Center from Cordova featured its Sound Ecosystem Assessment program, the knowledge researchers have gained and its improved technical capabilities

Following the presentation, representatives from the National Science Foundation approached PWSSC scientists and said they planned on modeling their programs in the Pacific after the SEA program

"It was invigorating after four years of hard work to have the public and reviewers applaud our work," said Gary Thomas, president of the center "Things went really well Now we have to transform the support into some kind of funding so that our ideas can be applied "

The program is currently building models for estimating changes in population size of pink salmon and herring "We need to put our projects in place to allow the transfer of research to management," Thomas said

The Cordova branch of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Monica Riedel of the Native Harbor Seal Commission in Cordova also presented at the workshop

CORDOVA TIMES 2/5/98

Ecosystem database now available

The Prince William Sound-Copper River Ecosystem Bibliographic Database is now available from the Alaska Biological Science Center It contains citations to more than 3,500 scientific reports on the physical or biological environment of the region from 1886 to 1996 It has a read-only version of Pro-Cite for DOS, Windows, or Macintosh The database is free and requests can be sent to Karen Oakley, ABSC, 1011 E Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503 or e-mail karen_oakley@usgs gov

CORDOVA TIMES 2/26/98

Healthy returns forecast for Prince William Sound herring

The Associated Press

ANCHORAGE — After several years of returns so low the fishery was closed, Prince William Sound s herring harvest should be robust, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game said

The department is predicting a return of 38 640 tons of herring this spring and is setting aside 15 percent, or 5,796 tons for harvest

The fisheries will include a food and-bait fishery which was sched uled to open Feb 19, as well as purse seine, gillnet and spawn on kelp openings that have not yet been scheduled

Low spawning populations had closed the fishery from 1993 to 1996 but herring returned in high enough numbers last year to allow a 3 500 ton harvest

Panel slows volcano-center land deal

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — The Kenai Peninsula Borough government has slowed its approach to delivering 84 acres with a Cook Inlet view to a group that wants to build a tourist-oriented volcano research center

The Borough Assembly still is considering buying land at the mouth of Stariski Creek for $450,000 and handing it over to the fledgling North Pacific Volcano Learning Center Inc The center would begin paying back the borough after five years

But at its regular meeting Tuesday in Soldotna, the Assembly voted 6-3 to have the land appraised first It also put off a decision on acquiring the land until Borough Mayor Mike Navarre answers questions that have dogged the land deal since it was first suggested a few weeks ago Navarre is expected to furnish a report on his findings by April 21

"This is the best thing the borough could do," said the learning center's development director, former state Sen Judy Salo At least the project wasn't sent back to square one, she said

The volcano center has been the subject of letters to the editor and radio talk shows on the Peninsula for weeks People question the $450,000 price, and many have asked if local government should be buying land and turning it over to nonprofit groups

Most Assembly members said they support the volcano learning center concept But some said backers will need to win public approval if the $12.5 million project is to get off the ground.

"This is a good project, but you can't make the public feel it's cut out of the process," said Assembly member Ron Drathman of Homer, who argued for an even longer delay than the one the Assembly settled on

Backers of the volcano center say it could become one part of a network of educational research centers across the Kenai Peninsula, including the soon-to-open SeaLife Center in Seward and the planned Alaska Challenger science learning center in Kenai

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

A billion's worth

HAS THE PUBLIC received the benefits anticipated from the billion-dollar settlement between the state, the federal government and Exxon? Sen Frank Murkowski has asked the U S comptroller general to do a special audit to find out the answer

In the 1991 settlement, Exxon agreed to pay $900 million to settle civil claims by the state and the federal government, in addition to paying $100 million in fines

Under terms of the settlement, the money — to be paid in annual installments over a 10-year period — was to be spent by a new federal-state agency, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council It was to be used to "restore, replace, rehabilitate, enhance or acquire the equivalent of the natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the oil spill "

Members of the council are confident they have carried out their assigned task. Murkowski is not as sure

In his request for the audit by the General Accounting Office, the senator noted concerns about the "implementation and administration of this historic settlement and whether or not the terms of it have been met."

Since the council set up operations, there have been periodic allegations that state and federal officials were using some of the fund to feather their nests — tapping the settlement money to supplement agency operating budgets The GAO audit can determine if there is any validity to this charge

ANOTHER CONCERN is the amount of money spent by the trustees on self-promotion through public relations campaigns and slick publications The audit can put this into perspective

But by far the greatest challenge for the auditors — and the primary reason for Murkowski's request — will be to determine the appropriateness of the trustees' purchase of vast acreage of Native lands in the region

"Already more than $380 million of the $900 million settlement has been committed to buying up some 750,000 acres of Alaska — more land than the entire state of Rhode Island," the senator said.

He wants the auditors to determine whether too much money has been allotted to a government land grab, as opposed to aiding residents of the region and to doing long-term scientific research and fisheries development.

Murkowski wants to know, specifically, if the secretary of Interior is fulfilling his trust responsibility to Alaska Natives to protect their land holdings, when instead he is buying their land and adding it to federal-state conservation system units

It will be particularly interesting to learn where all the money has gone — how much of it was pocketed by middlemen and lawyers, and how much actually is benefiting Natives who lost their land

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS FEBRUARY 4, 1998

Senator seeks audit of spill council buys

By DAVID WHITNEY
Daily News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — U S Sen Frank Murkowski, who has criticized the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council for spending too much money on land acquisitions, has asked congressional investigators to audit its books

Deborah Williams, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt s top Alaska aide, said she welcomes the audit

"We believe this will show that we've implemented outstanding processes and met the terms and conditions of the court settlement," she said

The trustee council, made up of representatives of state and federal agencies, is responsible for spending the $900 million in proceeds from Exxon Corp 's settlement of civil and criminal cases arising from the 1989 Alaska oil spill The settlement fund is overseen by the U S District Court in Anchorage

Under current plans, the trustee council will spend about $380 million on land acquisition By the time the last

COUNCIL: Murkowski wants an audit

Continued from Page B 1

anticipated deal is closed, the trustees expect to have picked up title or conserva tion easements to about 700,000 acres

That acreage includes about 1,000 miles of coastline that was oiled after the Exxon Valdez tanker ran aground on Bligh Reef nearly nine year ago

Murkowski, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natur al Resources Committee, said he believes more money should have been dedicated to studying and protecting "human" uses of the spill area rather than buying private property for inclusion in state or federal reserves

"The audit will show where expenditures have gone and what administrative and legal expenses there have been," Murkowski said in a telephone interview

Murkowski said he anticipates that his committee will hold a hearing on the trustee council's activities after the audit is completed

The request for an audit by the General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of the Congress, was contained in a Dec 18 letter to the GAO Murkowski made the letter public Tuesday

"Concerns have been raised regarding implementation and administration of this historic settlement and whether or not the terms of it have been met," Murkowski wrote

"Concerns such as the amount of past, present and future expenditures on ad ministration and habitat acquisitions vs enhancement appear to be legitimate issues to review as well as the rela tionship of the purchase price of acquisitions to the appraised values," Murkowski said

Some of the land purchases by the council, though from willing sellers, have been at prices exceeding what federal appraisers have said the properties are worth The council has defended the expenditures, saying that the property is so unique — in most instances, lands that have no comparative values — that the price has been well worth the investment

The idea behind the land acquisitions has been to protect the areas from logging or other forms of development in an effort to ease environmental stresses along areas affected by the 11 million-gallon spill

Murkowski and others have complained that the money might have been better spent to help people who live in the spill zone, including for research into improved fisheries technology

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 2/10/98

Murkowski asks for oil spill audit

By ROSANNE PAGANO
Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE (AP) — U S Sen Frank Murkowski, who has publicly questioned land purchases made by the Exxon Valdez oil spill trustees, has formally requested a General Accounting Office audit of the agency to satisfy his concerns

It will be the second GAO audit since 1992 for the trustees, a panel of federal and state officials responsible for overseeing Alaska's $900 million settlement stemming from the Prince William Sound oil spill

The council approves spending to compensate for losses following the tanker wreck in 1989, which dumped 11 millions gallons of oil into Alaska waters and marred hundreds of miles of coast Polluted tracts included wildlife and recreation lands

In a letter to the council received Tuesday, Murkowski, R-Alaska asked for the trustees' cooperation as the audit focused on land acquisition He also said he was considering oversight hearings before the U S Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee which Murkowski chairs

The senator, who is campaigning for reelection, expressed concern in December over the Interior Department s support of settlement monies to buy Alaska Native lands The department has a seat on the trustee council

"Once it (Native land) is gone, they've lost their heritage," Murkowski said in December ' It's very similar to what happened in Manhattan, where (Indians) traded Manhattan Island for beads "

Molly McCammon, the trustee council executive director, said Tuesday her office had undergone a GAO audit in 1992 and has complied with subsequent requests over the years for followup reports

That audit had concentrated on the council's early efforts to begin a program and included questions about why more restoration projects were not yet under way The accounting office is a nonpartisan congressional agency that audits federal programs

' We're proud of the program we have in place," McCammon said "We believe it's cost efficient and we welcome an audit of this nature We'd welcome a chance to explain the program "

The council is putting into place a spending plan that went through public review in 1993 and 1994, McCammon said She said another round of public reviews to take up future spending is planned

' This program is highly responsive to the public in the spill region," McCammon said

Murkowski wants the audit's scope to include a review of sums paid for land, which could question the council s appraisal process

He also attacked the council's $31 million expenditure for administration and public relations

McCammon has said those funds, spent over several years, supported scientific peer review and public outreach to help villagers understand technical spill-related research

Oil spill trustee welcomes audit

Sen Murkowski wants federal General Accounting Office to examine acquisition of Native lands

By ROSANNE PAGANO
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PENINSULA CLARION

OPINION

Are oil spill funds being well spent?

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In his request for the audit by the General Accounting Office, the senator noted concerns about the 'implementation and administration of this historic settlement and whether or not the terms of it have been met "

Since the council set up operations, there have been periodic allegations that state and federal officials were using some of the fund to feather their nests — tapping the settlement money to supplement agency operating budgets The GAO audit can determine if there is any validity to this charge

Another concern is the amount of money spent by the trustees on self-promotion through public relations campaigns and slick publications The audit can put this into perspective

But by far the greatest challenge for the auditors — and the primary reason for Murkowski's request — will be to determine the appropriateness of the trustees' purchase of vast acreage of Native lands in the region

"Already more than $380 million of the $900 million settlement has been committed to buying up some 750,000 acres of Alaska — more than the entire state of Rhode Island," the senator said

He wants the auditors to determine whether too much money has been allotted to a government land grab, as opposed to aiding residents of the region and to doing long-term scientific research and fisheries development

Murkowski wants to know, specifically, if the secretary of the Interior is fulfilling his trust responsibility to Alaska Natives to protect their land holdings, when instead he is buying their land and adding it to federal-state conservation system units

It will be particularly interesting to learn where all the money has gone — how much of it was pocketed by middlemen and lawyers, and how much actually is benefiting Natives who lost their land

— Voice of The (Anchorage) Times
Feb 12

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR FEBRUARY 17, 1998

Where is oil spill money going?

What others say

From The Voice of the (Anchorage) Times

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SeaLife Center assembling a cast of creatures

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG FEBRUARY 19, 1998

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

When the Alaska SeaLife Center opens in May people and animals will converge on the research, rehabilitation and public education facility

Researchers will be drawn by a state-of-the-art cold-water facility Visitors will come because of advertising and marketing So who's bringing the critters?

"It's a big job so far," said executive director Kim Sundberg "We've got it under way and it's progressing but we still don't have all the pieces in place like the permitting and the logistics

Fifteen tufted puffins and seven common murres are already here, waiting in quarantine at the Seward Marine Center of the Institute of Marine Science

The puffins came from the Oregon Coast Aquarium, a research project in Homer, and the Central Park Zoo in New York City The murres, from Sea World in Florida, are getting used to the cold weather, Sundberg said

Those species were chosen first for the covered and netted bird habitat because they're readily available in captivity and are hardy, said husbandry director Vic Aderholt "In a start-up scenario, it's good to have birds that are easily adaptable "

The birds will eventually be used in research, but no projects have been scheduled yet

As specific research projects are funded, the scientists themselves will collect animals, under procedures approved by a SeaLife Center panel, and with permits from the U S Fish and Wildlife Service or the state Department of Fish and Game

This spring, Oregon State University scientists plan to collect pigeon guillemot eggs from sites in the Gulf of Alaska for a study on whether artificial nests can help increase the population, which declined in Prince William Sound after the 1989 oil spill

The nestlings would be raised inside the SeaLife Center and then released possibly to live in artificial nest boxes on the center's grounds

The center also expects to receive injured or abandoned birds to rehabilitate Some of those could become part of the permanent collection if they can t make it in the wild, Aderholt said The bird enclosure can hold up to 100 birds he said

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Some rehabilitated birds would be transferred to other institutions Others would be euthanized if a center committee believed they couldn't survive in the wild, said SeaLife Center veterinarian Dr Pam Tuomi

Tuomi heads the animal care and use committee, which includes Aderholt Castellini, and laymen Mike Brittain and Harley Hess

The committee will review research projects for necessary permits, scientific soundness, humane use of animals, adequate space and food, and whether the animals can be safely released, Tuomi said

Three Steller sea lions, who have spent their lives as research animals, will come from the Vancouver (B C) Aquarium, where they were hand raised from pups and even trained to hop on scales The center hopes to fly them directly to Seward in late March

Having them is like a gold mine, said research director Mike Castellini, an associate professor of marine science at the University of Alaska Fairbanks

' These animals are of extreme value because we know everything about them since they were two weeks old," Castellini said

Researchers can watch captive animals over time a luxury scientists don't have in the wild in which animals are caught and released and rarely caught again

Scientists will be able to vary the captive sea lions' diets and see how their blood chemistry and weight are affected

The sea lions' age also adds to their value Recent research on severe population declines has focused on young adults The single male and two females are about 4 1/2 years old, younger than breeding age And it's virtually impossible to catch non-breeding sea lions in the wild, Castellini said

The SeaLife Center has received a $1 million federal grant over two years to study Steller sea lions

Eight harbor seals, the other mammal that will be live in an outdoor habitat at the SeaLife Center, will be transferred from the University of British Columbia and aquariums in Oregon and Connecticut

The seals will the subjects of a long term University of Alaska Fairbanks research project on the effects of various fish diets Controlled diets of pollock, salmon, herring and several groundfish will quantify the amount of fish needed to maintain seal body mass, a project summary said

Another research project will bring 15 adult male river otters, live trapped from Prince William Sound, to the SeaLife Center in the spring

The river otter population in the Sound isn t recovering, Sundberg said The project will study the interaction of otters and their prey, and the effects of oil in the otters' food

The otters will be kept in an enclosure on the west side of the building, visible to the public from an overlooking window and possibly through a video monitor

As with birds, the SeaLife Center expects to receive injured or abandoned marine mammals for rehabilitation

Besides helping to develop rehabilitative medicine, the presence of sick animals gives scientists the opportunity to compare them with the normal populations they see in the field Castellini said

The center also will have several smaller tanks indoors of fish invertebrates, octopus, crabs, and other marine life, down to algae

Fish and Game permits are being processed now to allow the center to collect the creatures Divers will be used in some cases And the center expects that some specimens will come from the bycatch of commercial fishermen, who will be given tanks to hold them

ALASKA JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & COMMERCE MARCH 9, 1998

SeaLife Center crafts must-see image before opening its 'windows to the sea'

MARKETING

By Carrie Sloan Lehman
Journal Reporter

The Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward will open its doors May 2 to a throng of visitors who can shake the octopus' hand," view the feeding habits of puffins or come face to face with Steller sea lions — underwater

Billed as the "windows to the sea" the center is a one-of-a-kind facility that combines research, rehabilitation and education into one building, said Donna Harris, director of marketing for the Alaska SeaLife Center She said the center has been working hard to promote the educational and research aspects of the multi-million dollar project, and planning and marketing the center has been going on for several years now

"We are trying hard to create a must-see image and awareness of the Alaska SeaLife Center by looking for leverage in marketing to maximize the efficiency of the center," Harris said "We are a $12 50 (admission) item, so we need to use a lot of leverage"

Harris did stress that education is the heart of the center's project Students of all ages can explore the world of marine biology by taking advantage of several programs including the Discovery program — where they shake the "hand" of an octopus Another specially designed tour, already proving to be very popular, brings students to the center for an overnight stay

The overnight education-based program includes interactive, hands-on, marine studies for students, and then dinner at the center with marine experts

Folks older than 55 also can take an interactive part in the center with elder hostel programs in the spring and three in the fall, Harris added

Research also plays a big role in the success of the center, Harris said The center has several research offices that can be rented out, with all research materials provided by the center

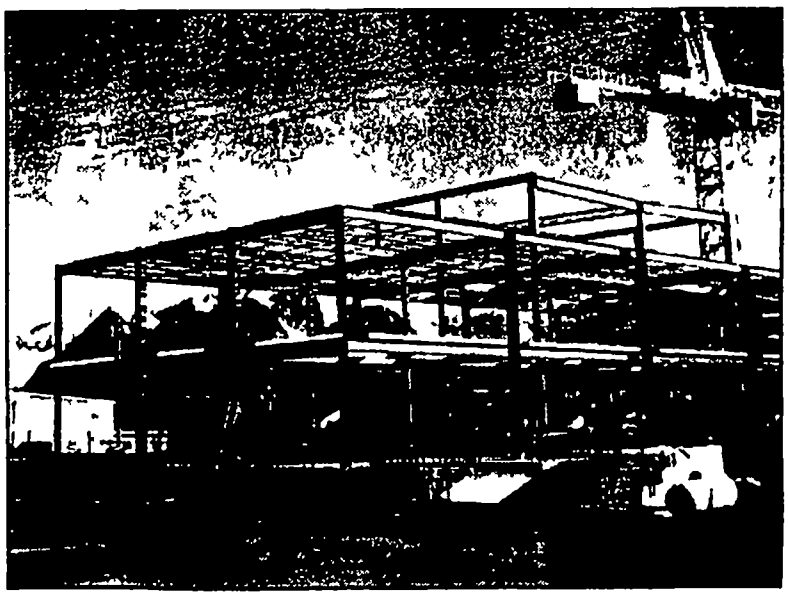
"Researchers get their funding, the center gives them the OK, and then they can come right into the facility with everything a researcher needs to finish the project provided by the center," Harris said

Partially funded by the Exxon Oil Spill Trustee Council, to the tune of $37 5 million the center also has received support from the Seward community 'The city alone helped raise $1 million toward the center," she said

ALASKA JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & COMMERCE FEBRUARY 23, 1998
SUPPLEMENTAL TABLOID FOR ENGINEERS' WEEK (PAID ADVERTISEMENT)

Windows to the Sea

EBA Engineering Salutes Alaska Sealife Center Windows to the Sea EBA has been involved with this project in Seward Alaska since 1995 providing quality assurance on 9 000 yards of concrete in additional to grout and soils testing and fireproofing inspection EBA Engineering in operation continuously since 1982 offers a complete range of construction testing and special inspection services and actively bids projects through the state Current projects include the Elmendorf Squad Ops Facility Alaska Fire Training School EBA also provides geotechnical engineering geophysical and environmental services to our Alaskan clients



SEWARD PHOENIX LOG 2/19/98

Science bowl slated for SeaLife Center

By Roger Kane
LOG Staff

If all goes well, 13 teams from high schools throughout the state will compete in the Alaska regional competition of the National Ocean Sciences Bowl a game show style contest at the Alaska SeaLife Center Feb 28

Students from schools as far away as Hollis, on Prince of Wales Island in the Alexander Archipelago, will fly in to test their scientific knowledge The winning team will earn a trip to Washington, D C , to compete in the national competition April 25-27

In the contest a moderator will ask two competing teams a toss-up question, worth four points The team that buzzes first gets to answer it, and if it's answered correctly that team will be asked a bonus question worth 10 points

If the toss up question is answered incorrectly, the opposing team is give the opportunity to field it and if they answer correctly the bonus question

Teams will compete head to-head answering tough questions about biology chemistry geology, physics, history current events and economics of the ocean, with winning teams advancing and losing teams ending their play

Winning teams will advance until only four teams remain Those four teams will compete in the double-elimination finals for a trip to Washington, D C

Trips aboard oceanic research vessels, visits to oceanographic research laboratories and other prizes will also be awarded

Each team will consist of four students with one alternate The game's play will be conducted in six rooms simultaneously

Monitoring each room will be a moderator a rules judge, a science judge a scorekeeper and a timekeeper

Judy McDonald, a labratory technician at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Seward Marine Center, is organizing the affair and has been working overtime trying to arrange transportation, delegate official duties, simplify the rules, raise money and train the volunteers

"I've learned that this is not a two-week project,' she said

In order to properly coordinate the event, McDonald attended a

See Bowl, Page 4

Bowl ...

From Page 1

training seminar in Washington, D C , Jan 9, where she participated in a mock session of the game and learned the rules and how to use the equipment

This is the first year of the nationwide contest, which is being held in 16 cities, including Seward

McDonald said the idea for the Ocean Sciences Bowl came from a retired U S Navy man, Jim Mitchell, who was tired of meeting Navy recruits with poor science skills

She said with a little luck and a lot of support, the contest will be around for quite a while

Getting Sewardites involved in the contest has been successful thus far and she is hoping to have a minimum of 35 volunteers trained as officials for the contest She said she's already rounded up about 30 people

One of the most difficult tasks the officials will face is familiarizing themselves with the rules To make that task a little easier, McDonald has painstakingly created a six-page flowchart of them and has also divided them into categories based on who or what they pertain to

There are audience rules, moderator rules, pre-game rules, game rules and end of-game rules

The only stumbling block thus far has been raising enough money to get the kids to Seward The Hollis team for example, needs to raise $2,360 just for the airfare The team from Juneau-Douglas is also paying a high price, as are all the off the-road teams

McDonald said there are a number of different organizations sponsoring teams but they still have a ways to go before every team has enough money to make the trip

All of the off-the-road schools are engaged in fund-raising drives for transportation

Corporate contributions from Seward businesses have come from Seward Fisheries which contributed $250 and Anderson Tug and Barge, which pitched in $100

Private contributions from Sewardites have come from Abuid and Ramon Gonzales who gave $500 and Dolly Deeter who also gave $500

The National Marine Fisheries Service office in Juneau gave $1,000, and the Kodiak Lions Club gave the Kodiak team $1,500 As a condition of the donation, the kids making the trip have to help the Lions with their fund-raiser in March

Initially there were supposed to be 16 teams competing in Seward, but because of conflicting sports schedules, Bartlett's and Tok's teams will not be making the trip

The Sciences Bowl is presented by the Consortium for Oceanographic Research & Education and the National Marine Educators Association

The Bowl is sponsored by the Chief of Naval Research Oceanographer of the Navy the National Sciences Foundation the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Its supporters hope that this educational project will create a strong link between oceanographic institutions and communities, as well as promote scientific and mathematic literacy

PENINSULA CLARION 3/2/98

Watered-down answers allowed

Ocean Sciences Bowl tests depth of students' knowledge

By SHANA LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

Students found themselves in deep water at the first Ocean Sciences Bowl on Saturday in Seward No one knew quite what to expect at the new academic competition, and the questions were darn hard

After seven hours of brain strain, Anchorage s East High School team came out on top The four girls won a trip to Washington D C , to compete in the nation al finals at the end of April, with a chance at the grand prize an all expense paid trip to Lisbon, Portugal, for the Expo '98 world s fair They also won a 24-hour cruise on the research boat Alpha Helix

Juneau Douglas High School took second and Anchorage s Dimond third

Soldotna's Skyview High School placed fourth, Seward High School also competed but did not place

The competition was held at the Alaska SeaLife Center on the Seward waterfront The massive complex is still under construction, but staff treated students and chaperones to tours of the facility, due to officially open May 2-3

SeaLife Director Kimbal Sundberg addressed the Ocean Bowl crowd during the lunch break The event was the first official function held at the center he told them, the first of many planned

Students faced tough questions during the competition but scientists face other questions that no one has been able to answer The mission of the SeaLife Center will be to help people find those answers he said

During each round of competition four-person teams competed in pairs Judges asked multiple choice toss up ' questions The first person to set off a buzzer got first crack at the answer If wrong the other team had an opportunity to answer Any team getting a correct answer got a ' bonus" question on which the entire team could confer for extra points

The questions, compiled by a national committee, dealt with physical oceanography marine biology water chemistry geology geography and social science Some questions were so complex students needed to make calculations on scratch paper, and even the best teams blanked on a high per-

See BOWL, back page

...Bowl

Continued from page A 1

centage

Saturday morning all teams competed in a round-robin tourney The eight teams with the most wins then went into a double-elimination tourney for the afternoon

A dozen teams from all over the state attended, coming from large urban high schools and Bush villages alike The Southeast hamlet of Hollis sent four of its seven high school students

The Skyview team was pleasantly surprised with its showing

The four students — juniors Jeanie Baysinger, Sheila Honeysett and Rachel Cook and sophomore Dee ' Gus" Morrell — and their coach, Mark Larson attended to have fun and see what the competition was about

We came with no huge expectations ' Larson said "We did real well

He teaches marine science and put together a team of five from class volunteers One student originally on the team had a conflict so Cook, the alternate filled in on short notice

Judy McDonald of the Alaska Sea Grant College Program the Alaska organizer said the Seward event was one of 16 regional competitions National sponsors are the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education and the National Marine Educators Association

Those involved hope the Ocean Sciences Bowl will become an annual event, but no final decisions have been made about the event s future, she said

Larson and his students hope it will continue and grow so they can return next year for another shot at the championship

' We didn t study as much as we could have,' he said I m already full of ideas for next year "

Developer stops wetlands project

State may attempt to buy river parcel

By DOUG LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

Soldotna fishing guide Pat Carter stopped the clock Friday on review of his controversial proposal to build a road across wetlands adjoining the Kenai River The state's top habitat biologist says she'll try to arrange a state purchase of Carter's land

Janet Kowalski, director of the Division of Habitat and Restoration, said both she and Frank Rue, commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game, think the wetlands should be protected

Kowalski said she also will explore other ways to protect the wetlands, which her staff has called "the best of the best"

There may be other ways to access Carter's property For example, she said, Carter could import construction materials across frozen ground in winter with no damage to wetlands

The Kenai Peninsula Borough planning commission was to reconsider Carter's project during its meeting Monday But since Carter stopped the review, Planning Director Lisa Parker said she'll remove the project from the commission's agenda

Borough officials said Carter owns six lots, totaling roughly 27 acres appraised by the borough at $171,000 Kowalski said Fish and Game might buy the land, using money the Legislature appropriated for Kenai River habitat projects from the criminal settlement after the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Habitat biologist Mark Kuwada said $300,000 remains in the land acquisition fund Carter's land would compete with several other purchases under consideration

"There's not enough money to buy them all," he said "We'll have to look at the values associated with each one and look at the bang-for-the-buck involved with buying each

Lance Trasky, Southcentral region supervisor for the Habitat Division said Rue also might ask the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to buy Carter's land Private conservation groups might also be interested in helping, he said Meanwhile, Kowalski said owners of several adjoining parcels have also expressed interest in selling

Carter's proposed road follows rights of way platted by the borough, she said If the state buys his land, she said, it will likely also ask the state to vacate the rights of way, "so we don't have to go through this again"

Carter has been seeking approval to build nearly a mile of road, extending Cheechako News Drive, off the Kenai Spur Highway near Soldotna, to provide access to lots 1-9 of Larry's Fishing Hole Subdivision and lots 1-4 of M S Stewart Homestead Subdivision, King Country Addition The Larry's Fishing Hole lots are beside the river

Critics, including Trasky say the road would disrupt the flow of water and crucial nutrients to the river, and that cumulative effects of many such projects could destroy the Kenai's bountiful salmon runs just as development has destroyed runs to Pacific Northwest rivers

Kenai Peninsula College professor David Wartinbee a Ph D stream ecologist who also holds a degree in law, said approval of Carter's project would set a legal precedent If the state allows Carter to build nearly a mile of road through wetlands the Habitat Division calls 'the best of the best" it won t be possible to stop any project until present laws and regulations are changed, he said

Fish and Game recommended against finding the project consistent with the state and borough coastal management plans But the borough planning commission and the state departments of Environmental Conservation and Natural Resources recommended finding the project consistent with the coastal plans, subject to certain mitigation measures The U S Army Corps of Engineers has already issued a provisional permit for the road

In December, the Division of Governmental Coordination, which coordinates agency reviews, found the project consistent, subject to stipulations recommended by the borough and other agencies DGC project review coordinator Jeff Davis said the road would follow a natural divide, reducing chances that it will disrupt flow through the wetland

To maintain natural flow, Carter would have to build the roadbed with coarse gravel and install culverts Trasky cited roads built with gravel and culverts that have still dammed flow through wetlands

Agencies could appeal DGC's decision to a conference of higher-ups within Fish and Game, Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation — a process known as elevation Or, citizens who commented during the public review period could appeal to the Alaska Coastal Policy Council that their comments hadn't been adequately addressed

Fish and Game never elevated DGC's decision But several citizens appealed to the Coastal Policy Council, which turned the project back to DGC DGC asked the agencies for additional comments by Feb 11, then extended the review until Feb 24 so that the borough planning commission could discuss the project at Monday's meeting But Friday Carter stopped the clock

Kowalski said Fish and Game is now prepared to request an elevation

"This wetland is extremely important for the protection of the river," she said

She said water from nearby bluffs probably works through the wetlands and upwells beneath salmon spawning beds in the river — a function Kowalski thinks would be impaired, even if Carter builds the road with coarse gravel bed and culverts

But because Carter stopped the review, she said Fish and Game can work on buying the land, rather than taking an adversarial role through elevation

"I think we're going to put all of our energy into something that's win-win,' she said "An elevation is not win-win"

Carter did not return calls Friday Davis said he could restart the review at any time If that happens, Davis said DGC won't issue its final decision until the borough planning commission has had time to meet and forward comments

PENINSULA CLARION 2/22/98

PENINSULA CLARION 2/22/98

Sky is falling if borough fails to adequately protect Kenai River

Mr Carter, in his Letter to the Editor of a few weeks ago, indicates that he believes that a Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission member has re-enacted a version of "Chicken Little, The Sky is Falling" Mr Carter contends that concerns expressed about the proposed road extending Cheechako News Drive and Tyee Lane were overstated

I would like to point out that the "sky *is* falling" if we do not take the most cautious approach to development through "high value" wetlands These wetlands provide numerous ecological functions important to the Kenai River The Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Department report on this project indicates that "resource professionals from all of the agencies have expressed concern that the proposed road will contribute to significant cumulative impacts on the river over time" We should insist that the planning commission, and all governmental agencies involved, thoroughly review scientific studies in making decisions that are irreversible and have so much potential to damage the Kenai River

The "sky *is* falling" if there is not a more thorough review process for each proposed development adjacent to the Kenai River In a Department of Natural Resources report concerning this project, reference is made to formerly approved projects in Honeymoon Cove and Fall In Hole The report indicates a concern that "functions of wetlands are indeed more 'complex' than originally imagined" The U S Fish and Wildlife report has classified the wetlands at the end of Cheechako News Drive as "the best of the best' Shouldn't we be questioning building a road through wetlands classified as such?

The "sky *is* falling" for the Kenai Peninsula if we lose the Kenai River The Kenai River is the largest recreational fishery in Alaska and the tie to our local economy is obvious to all who reside and visit here Many neighbors, various community members, local residents and governmental agencies want to preserve this most vital resource and thus are calling for a halt to this project

I believe that close scrutiny of this and future developments adjacent to the river is the only responsible course of action I would encourage residents to contact the local planning commission and other local government officials about this project

I would also encourage local residents to read the available governmental studies concerning this proposed road I think that you will find enough questions, concern and caution expressed in these reports to convince one that this project poses potential severe damage to the river

Mick Wykis
Kenai

PENINSULA CLARION 2/26/98

Letters to the Editor

Platted easement doesn't mean it's OK to build road

This letter is in response to Mr Pat Carter's effort to build a road across wetlands adjacent to the Kenai River In his letter to the editor, Mr Carter made some comments that are inaccurate or misleading at best.

Mr Carter accused one of the borough planning commission members of using this road for his own personal agenda What Mr Carter failed to mention in his letter is the fact that a dozen or so concerned citizens voiced their opposition to the development of a road across an important piece of wetlands Mr Carter also made it sound like the rest of the commission members saw through the one commission member's agenda and supported the road He failed to mention that it was a split vote and two members were absent The discussion during the meeting was based on the merits of the road not on one member's agenda.

The other comment I would like to address is Mr Carter's statement that the road was platted in 1990 The fact is the road easement was already platted in 1982 when I purchased my property, which is just upriver from Mr Carter's property My point is just because a road easement is platted in doesn't make it OK to build it across wetlands I don't think that people had the knowledge and concern about wetlands habitat in 1982 that they do in 1998

The term Mr Carter and his experts continue to use is "minimal impact" to the wetlands Nobody can define minimal impact but once there is damage to the wetlands there is data to show that it can't be repaired to its original state

And just for the record, I am simply a private property owner who is happy and willing to use a boat to access my private property if it will help protect the wetlands

Rick McCrum
Sterling

OUTDOORS
PENINSULA CLARION
2/27/98

El Nino spawns uncertainty

While bad weather slams Lower 48, scientists try to calculate effect on fish

By JON HOLLAND
Peninsula Clarion

As El Nino slammed the Lower 48 recently, Alaska enjoyed unusually mild late winter weather Some scientists are beginning to wonder about what it means for this year's salmon runs

"This has been an incredibly strange El Nino It laid low this winter, but it's really kicking up lately," Jack Helle of the National Marine Sciences Auk Bay lab in Juneau said "This one showed up six months early and is only now showing the intensity that was predicted for it."

Unusual affects of this particular warm current out of the South Pacific really hit Bristol Bay last summer, Helle said The sockeye return was dismal There was a huge phytoplankton bloom that left Bristol Bay looking like "broccoli soup" and was even visible on satellite images, he said And there was virtually no wind compared to what is normal for the usually blustery bay

To the south, mackerel, a deadly predator of juvenile salmon, moved from their normal feeding ground off the California coast to the waters off British Columbia Ocean sunfish and even tuna showed up in the Gulf of Alaska Storm patterns in the North Pacific have also been very unusual this winter with the Aleutian Low moving north and east of its customary location

The mackerel may have even made it to Southeast Alaska. By the time they arrived, however young salmon should have outgrown their vulnerable place in the food chain

In the past, Helle said the influence of an El Nino current has been beneficial to Alaska fisheries, but this is an odd one.

"Here (in Alaska) it warms the water to an ideal growth environment for young salmon,' Helle said 'But this one is different than any El Nino we ve seen

Of course he added, our weather records don t go back far enough to document long term causal relationships Scientists however are hoping to change that

"From the biological point of view this is incredibly interesting," Helle said I ve got two extra cruises going out this spring and Tom Weingartner at UAF (University of Alaska Fairbanks) has six cruises scheduled There's going to be a lot of people out there looking This is going to be the best-studied El Nino ever"

Weingartner, an oceanographer with the university's marine sciences program, said the six cruises the university has planned will be spread out during the next three years and not exclusively devoted to El Nino

We re trying to understand how weather affects the subsurface climate and its affects on plankton production, which in turn affects target species of fish," Weingartner said

Theories abound on what the latest El Nino means David Welch of the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans thinks the trend to more frequent and more intense El Ninos experienced in the later part of the 20th century may be symptoms of global warming

Prior to the 1990s, Welch said, conventional wisdom dictated an El Nino roughly every seven years

Meteorologists have recently classified the years 1990-95 as one constant El Nino In 1996 there was a one year remission of El Nino and now in 1997 and 1998 we have what one of my colleagues calls 'the mother of all El Ninos " Welch said If you look at global warming climate model projections for northern latitudes, they all say we should see a significant increase in temperature in the late 1990s '

According to Welch five of the warmest years in recorded history have occurred in the 1990s and 1997 may prove to be the warmest on record.

Of course, global warming is not perfectly understood, either, said Bruce Finney who has been studying the historical relationship between climate change and salmon abundance

He does it by measuring stable nitrogen isotope levels in sediments of lakes where sockeye spawn

In a nutshell, we try to estimate the runs before commercial fisheries existed," Finney said

Long before commercial fisheries existed in fact Finney's records of the 'salmon history" from Karluk Lake on Kodiak Island and in other lakes go back 500 years to the early 1500s

He compares his nitrogen readings to tree growth rings from the same period and and nitrogen isotope readings from years where the abundance of salmon is known to identify any correlations between salmon abundance and climate

In general, Alaska seems to do better during warmer periods Finney said But this is just a starting point to work from, there is no simple pattern."

There may be some as yet unidentified controlling factor, FInney said, and there may be more than one way to cool off the North Pacific

In general he said, the 20th century has been warmer than normal but it was preceded by a mini ice age in the 19th century that seems to defy the relationship between weather and ocean temperature Finney added

In the early 1800s when John Muir came to Alaska, it was cold, the glaciers were advancing and salmon abundance was low everywhere ' Finney said ' But in the late 1800s, there also was a very cold period that did not seem to affect salmon abundance at all '

And what about next summer s returns of salmon?

"Boy wouldn t we all like to know about that Helle said

Mussels may signal sound's health

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Scientists examining the aftermath of the 11-million gallon Exxon Valdez oil spill say fish waste could be the early warning of an ecosystem in peril

'It might allow us to see it (trouble) coming in enough time to do something scientist Jeff Short said

Short presented findings Friday to more than 250 scientists gathered in Anchorage for a science symposium stemming from the Prince William Sound tanker wreck in 1989

Gatherings are held annually to review oil spill research and plan the next year s studies

Short and Patricia Harris Juneau-based biologists working at the National Marine Fisheries Service, have spent about $400 000 on fish waste studies over the past four years

Funding is through a $1 billion oil spill settlement paid by Exxon Corp to resolve government claims Most spending so far has gone to acquire coastal lands while $90 million has been used for scientific research

Short and Harris are tracking a nontoxic hydrocarbon called pristane, contained in shrimp like crustaceans that young fish consume for essential fat

Most of the pristane is absorbed across the intestine but some is excreted as feces, ' Short said Waste is then ingested by mussels, where it can be tracked by scientists

Research is starting to correlate high levels of pristane with booming populations of species that seek out the food, such as salmon and herring Low levels of pristane could indicate a problem

Since 1994, the scientists have been collecting mussel samples sometimes monthly and biweekly, from 30 sites in the sound

Short, who also studied pristane levels in the sound in the 1970s, says data so far show a link between a significant drop in pristane and salmon population collapse

The oil spill trustees' chief scientist Robert Spies, says work by Harris and Short is ' very innovative'' — and could prove a key tool in monitoring the sound's relative health

Kodiak Daily Mirror
February 2, 1998

Hatchery pinks easily identified

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

In recent years, pink salmon have returned to Prince William Sound in a mix of hatchery-reared and wild fish For every three hatchery pinks returning to the sound, one wild pink is among them, searching for its home stream To keep from overfishing the wild stocks, fisheries managers have to be able to tell them apart

For years, coded-wire tags were implanted in the hatchery salmon before they were released as fry This was a labor intensive process, in which tiny wires are punched into the noses of about one in 600 fish When the salmon return as adults, technicians pick them out of a sample of the commercial catch with a metal detector

Biologists used this system to estimate the number of hatchery and wild fish being caught in the commercial fishery, but it has two shortcomings

"It doesn't tell you which hatchery (the fish are from) and the confidence intervals are generally very large," said Tim Joyce, fisheries biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Because such a low percentage of fish were tagged, the real number of fish from the hatchery could fall between a wide range of numbers

"You couldn't just look at one fish and know it was a hatchery fish," said Joyce "If you're tagging one fish in 600, what you're picking up may or may not be a hatchery fish You don't know unless you find a tag And then you have to expand that so each tag represents a certain number of fish and it may or may not be exactly what's going on "

Two years ago, boilers were installed at Prince William Sound hatcheries which produced pink salmon The boilers made it possible to adjust the water temperature of the incubators, which leaves an identifiable mark on the earbone or otolith of each salmon

Under a microscope, the otolith mark looks a lot like the rings of a tree Each hatchery has its own special series of marks, or signature, that lets biologists identify the contribution of each individual hatchery to the commercial catch in each district

When the salmon returned last summer technicians read the otoliths like a book

"They're easy to read and we can distinguish those marks nearly 100 percent of the time from anything else," Joyce said

Last summer, instead of sampling a thousand fish, technicians only had to look at a hundred fish to get a more precise estimate on the number of wild and hatchery fish in the commercial catch

The otolith marks have another use in addition to being a tool for managing the commercial fishery They may soon yield clues to the problem of hatchery salmon straying into wild streams Biologists can now use the telltale earmark to sort wild fish from hatchery fish found in individual streams

All the pink salmon hatcheries have boilers Gulkana and Main Bay hatcheries do not. They still mark their sockeye salmon with coded wire tags

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Build it, they will come

More than 30 years after the 1964 earthquake destroyed some prime salmon spawning habitat, chums have returned to newly opened tributaries of Port Dick Creek

Port Dick, on the outer coast of the Kenai Peninsula, got hit hard by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and commercial fishing was closed for the summer To help restore the area, biologist Nick Dudiak, who recently retired from the Department of Fish and Game in Homer, promoted an idea he had been talking about for years — the revival of Port Dick Creek

The creek has two tributaries which were part of a system that contributed heavily to salmon runs in the '50s and 60s Then the earthquake hit, raising the elevation of the stream, piling up rock, mud and woody debris, and wiping out the salmon runs

Dudiak and biologist Mark Dickson felt that the two tributaries could again be good producers of pink and chum salmon, if the stream could be restored to its original state "Build it and they will come" was Nick's motto

They were a little concerned, however, that if they went to all the trouble and expense of scooping out the streams, Mother Nature might step in again with another earthquake or perhaps another huge flood

Sure enough, a 1995 storm resulted in a 100-year flood on some parts of the Kenai Peninsula While the flood took a heavy toll in some areas, Port Dick Creek remained unscathed, much to Dickson's relief "There was no additional deposition," he said "It gave us more confidence that the direction we were headed was the right direction"

The excavation took place in 1996 Engineers studied the grade and curves of the stream carefully, attempting to exactly reproduce the earlier path Technicians laid down rocks, trees, stumps, and other natural features in places exactly determined to match the stream's flow Everything came from the creek itself, with the help of some heavy equipment

The idea was to create spawning habitat and they must have done it pretty well Even though more than 20 years had passed, the next summer 450 pink salmon and 300 chums charged up both tributaries, without any extra enticements, like they'd actually emerged from their egg sacs there

The following spring there were many more fry than either of the biologists ever expected A preliminary count showed more than 290,000 pink and chum fry in the tributaries — almost a 40 percent survival rate

Now ADF&G is predicting a harvestable surplus of chums by the year 2000 They'll continue to monitor the stream for any changes

Kodiak Daily Mirror
ISSN-0740-2112
Published daily Monday through Friday except holidays by Kodiak Publishing Co., 1419 Selig, Kodiak, Alaska 99615. (907) 486-3227 Fax 486-3088 Postmaster Send address changes to Kodiak Daily Mirror 1419 Selig, Kodiak, Alaska 99615

PENINSULA CLARION 2/15/98

Researchers go clamming for clues to sea otter recovery

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

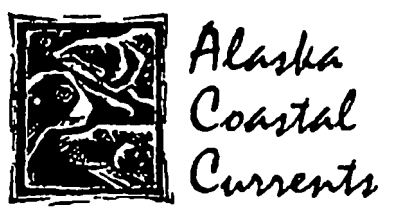
By JODY SEITZ

KNIGHT ISLAND — Eight years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill many people are still dogging it out, trying to find out what s recovered, what isn't and why One of those people is Glen Van Blaricom of the University of Washington I spoke with him in Bay of Isles last July

Sea otters have been slow to recover in Bay of Isles, which was heavily oiled in 1989 Van Blaricom is one of several scientists who think that one reason might be their food supply

For any one of several possible reasons, we think the food supply in the heavily oiled areas isn't as good as it used to be for sea otters, ' he said "We're trying to see what the patterns are, and if that's true, get some ideas as to why it might be less adequate here (in Bay of Isles) "

Van Blaricom was wearing a dry suit, getting ready to go out for his daily underwater expedition The job is anything but glamorous He uses a dredge to winnow away the mud from clams in randomly chosen plots about 25 feet under the surface and 18 inches square



Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

'It's basically a lot of time laying on the bottom sucking mud out of a hole he joked But that s where the sea otters dig for their favorite food butter clams, littlenecks, cockles and bent-nosed clams They also eat crabs mussels and other invertebrates but in Prince William Sound their diet is mostly clams, according to Van Blaricom

"We think that their diet in the sound is half to three-quarters clams, and primarily those which come from the subtidal environment and are dug out from the mud or the sand,' he said

Clams produce billions of larvae each year but it takes just the right combination of currents plankton and mud for the larvae to settle to the bottom and develop into clams Ten years may pass before they grow large enough to appeal to sea otters

To find out how the clams are progressing researchers record the sizes, ages and number of clams they dig up in the Knight Island bays and compare them to places that were not oiled at Montague Island

If it turns out that the clams grow and reproduce at the same rate in both areas, but oiled areas have fewer clams, it's possible the spill affected them However he cautioned there could be natural causes as well such as different growing conditions or predators

Sea stars, for example, eat clams But when researchers investigated, they found that the stars ate fewer clams than they first thought

'We found that the rates of predation by sea stars were equal in both areas and that they weren't really eating as many clams as we thought they were They re mainly eating other things, said Van Blaricom

As of last July Van Blaricom and his field crew had sampled 70-80 sites around the sound dredging four to five plots at each site His preliminary impression was that there did appear to be fewer clams in the oiled sites However he still needs to compare reproduction in the oiled and non-oiled areas before any conclusions can be drawn he said

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

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 2/20/98

Clamming for sea otter recovery

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

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Van Blaricom was wearing a dry suit, getting ready to go out for his daily underwater expedition The job is anything but glamorous He uses a dredge to winnow away the mud from clams in a randomly chosen plot about 25 feet under the surface and 18 inches square It s basically a lot of time lying on the bottom sucking mud out of a hole he joked

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Seward Phoenix Log Wednesday, February 18, 1998

Coastal Currents

Researchers track cause of scoter declines

By Jody Seitz

Scoters come in three flavors here in Alaska surf, white-winged and black Surf scoters are the most often seen in Prince William Sound In winter you see flocks of 20 to several thousand along the coast. Like some other seabirds of the northern Gulf of Alaska their numbers have been steadily dropping, collectively, by about 30 percent since 1957

Three generations of subsistence users noticed the difference in Prince William Sound and lower Cook Inlet Now a study by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is using satellite transmitters to discover the mysterious migratory patterns of this long-lived sea duck In turn, knowing where they nest and molt may give clues about their decline

Some of the scoter's basic biology is a matter of scientific record They mature at two to three years of age In June, adult pairs migrate inland to bogs and lakes to nest. While the female settles in for a good long 28-day incubation, the male takes off on a molt migration Some years they'll produce several young, other years none They can live up to 15 years As with other long-lived birds, the number of surviving females is the most important factor in keeping the population healthy

But exactly where they go to breed and molt is completely unknown And that makes it hard to find out if their problem is food or habitat or toxin-related Biologist Dan Rosenberg hopes to sort it out by tracking the movements of 10 birds which have been implanted with satellite transmitters

"We hope to learn a lot more about their nesting and migrating habits, where they go to nest, where they go to molt, and where they go to winter," Rosenberg said

Mink, foxes, gulls, eagles, sea otters, and humans all love scoters, but, at present, predation is not the top culprit in Rosenberg's book He's thinking habitat loss or pollution or, perhaps, climate change

In winter, surf scoters search for snails and mussels along the shore, the area hardest hit by the 1989 oil spill and the most susceptible to contamination There were die-offs of scoters in southeastern Alaska in August of 1990, 1991, and 1992, and biologists found traces of contaminants in the carcasses they sampled.

"There was a scoter die-off in the Cape Yakataga area recently and no one's quite sure what caused that," Rosenberg said "There was some preliminary indication that it may be caused by trace metals or organochlorines or something of that nature "

To know for sure, scientists have to find out where the birds might have picked up the pollutants And that means they have to learn where they nest, molt, and spend most of the winter, according to Rosenberg

For help understanding the long-term picture, researchers are turning to Native elders and their families "We hope to piece together a longer history — how people use them, and how their population may have changed over time," said Rosenberg

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

Fisheries management gets a boost from otolith-marked salmon

By Jody Seitz

For The Times

Coastal currents

In recent years pink salmon have returned to Prince William Sound in a mix of hatchery reared and wild fish

For every three hatchery pinks returning to the Sound one wild pink is among them searching for its home stream To keep from overfishing the wild stocks fisheries managers have to be able to tell them apart

For years coded wire tags were implanted in the hatchery salmon before they were released as fry This was a labor intensive process in which tiny wires are punched into the noses of about one in 600 fish

When the salmon return as adults, technicians pick them out of a sample of the commercial catch with a metal detector

Biologists used this system to estimate the number of hatchery and wild fish being caught in the commercial fishery, but it has two shortcomings

It doesn t tell you which hatchery (the fish are from) and the confidence intervals are generally very large said Tim Joyce fisheries biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Because such a low percentage of fish were tagged the real number of fish from the hatchery could fall between a wide range of numbers

You couldn t just look at one fish and know it was a hatchery fish said Joyce If you re tagging one fish in 600, what you're picking up may or may not be a hatchery fish You don't know unless you find a tag And then you have to expand that so each tag represents a certain number of fish and it may or may not be exactly what s going on '

Two years ago boilers were installed at Prince William Sound hatcheries which produced pink salmon The boilers made it possible to adjust the water temperature of the incubators, which leaves an identifiable mark on the earbone or otolith of each salmon

Under a microscope the otolith mark looks a lot like the rings of a tree Each hatchery has its own special series of marks or signature that lets biologists identify the contribution of each individual hatchery to the commercial catch in each district

When the salmon returned last summer technicians read the otoliths like a book

'They re easy to read and we can distinguish those marks nearly 100 percent of the time from anything else Joyce said

Last summer instead of sampling a thousand fish technicians only had to look at a hundred fish to get a more precise estimate on the number of wild and hatchery fish in the commercial catch

The otolith marks have another use in addition to being a tool for managing the commercial fishery They may soon yield clues to the problem of hatchery salmon straying into wild streams

Biologists can now use the tell tale earmark to sort wild fish from hatchery fish found in individual streams

All the pink salmon hatcheries have boilers Gulkana and Main Bay hatcheries do not They still mark their sockeye salmon with coded wire tags

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

PENINSULA CLARION 2/1/98

Hatchery pinks 'ear' marked for manageable return

Editor s note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

In recent years, pink salmon have returned to Prince William Sound in a mix of hatchery-reared and wild fish For every three hatchery pinks returning to the sound one wild pink is among them, searching for its home stream To keep from overfishing the wild stocks, fisheries managers have to be able to tell them apart

For years coded-wire tags were implanted in the hatchery salmon before they were released as fry This was a labor intensive process, in which tiny wires are punched into the noses of about one in 600 fish When the salmon return as adults, technicians pick them out of a sample of the commercial catch with a metal detector

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PENINSULA CLARION 2/22/98

Stabilizing river banks also stabilizes fish habitat

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Restoration and recovery following the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill

Bank stabilization on the Kenai River has been going on for decades

But until recent years, protection of the river bank was not considered in the same breath with protection of habitat Today, thanks to a change in awareness, they are one and the same

Over the last 30 years, the state let landowners stabilize their banks with just about anything, according to Gary Leipitz of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

'We've allowed brick walls, rock rip rap on Typar (a permeable fabric), rubber-tired banks, aircraft landing mat bulkheads Things like that, that helped armor and protect the bank, were actually allowed on the river," said Leipitz

Unfortunately, those are not good habitats for fish They reduce plant cover and increase the velocity of the current, making it harder for young salmon to get to their wintering grounds

Now there is more science and some art to stabilizing river banks

Scientists actually recreate fish habitat using natural materials The 1,300-foot bank at River Bend Campground was denuded and trampled from ye irs of heavy fishing In 1995, it became the premier test site on the Kenai River for a restoration project using willows and coconut fiber logs

Biologists call it bioengineering For some of us it's a new term, but the practice has roots that go back to 3000 B C on the Yangtze and Yellow rivers, according to Leipitz

The coconut, or coir, logs are among the new biodegradable materials used to stabilize banks They degrade slowly enough that willows and small plants have a chance to establish good root systems in the bank

Reuben and Kelly Hanke own the Harry Gaines fishing business on a prominent bend in the Kenai River They used rock rip rap to stabilize their banks It worked, but it had some problems, and it wasn't pretty

"As a commercial operator, it was a tremendous liability to us trying to load people in and out of the boats," said Reuben Hanke "A big problem with rip rap was that at the end of the year you had to go back and pull up a lot of the rock that had slid down the banks "

The Hankes had just finished landscaping their yard and putting down a new layer of rip rap when the hundred year flood hit in 1995 When they saw how well the River Bend Campground banks held up, they made up their minds to try the same thing

The Hankes installed the coconut fiber logs and small willow along their banks The logs, which degrade within 10-15 years, give the willows a place to grow until they are large enough to do what the logs do now — stabilize the banks

Hanke said he'll wait to pass judgment, but so far, it's looking good The logs are holding, and the willows are growing "You've got vegetation, plus top-shelf fish habitat," he said

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

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 2/27/98

Habitat helps salmon

Bank stabilization on the Kenai River has been going on for decades But until recent years, protection of the river bank was not considered in the same breath with protection of habitat Today, thanks to a change in awareness they are one and the same

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Mussels might provide clues about sea otters' recovery

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Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

KNIGHT ISLAND — On a rocky outcrop in the upper tidal zone of Bay of Isles, young men and women in lightweight yellow bib overalls are poised with tweezers in one hand and glue in the other, squinting and pasting markers on blue mussels The crew marks the mussels lining the rock crevices, so they can measure them later, without cutting them off the rocks

All sounds of waves and birds vanish as a man drills a hole into the rock face Another screws a bright plastic pot scrubber into the hole It's for catching mussel larvae brought in by the tides

Blue mussels are a staple for animals still recovering from the oil spill, such as sea otters and harlequin ducks Sea otters are still few in number in the Knight Island bays, which were heavily oiled during the Exxon Valdez spill Scientists are studying the mussels to see if the bays have enough food to support more otters

Last year the mussel crew recorded sizes, abundance, and distribution of the most common mussel in the sound mytilus trossulus Chuck O'Clair of the National Marine Fisheries Service Auke Bay Lab is now studying how fast they grow

"We're also putting down some settling substrates," O'Clair said "We want to have mussels settle there and then we can try to measure their first year of growth "

Mussels less than 40 millimeters in length are more common than large ones in Prince William Sound That may be due to predators When the mussels reach 40 millimeters they become attractive to female sea otters and their pups

"If you go to an area with mainly females and pups — the size frequency distribution tends to be truncated at about 40 millimeters and you don't see any large individuals," he said "Whereas if you go to an area with males, there are quite a few mussels above 40 millimeters in length "

There is also still oil in the vicinity as O'Clair and his crew discovered earlier in the summer 'One of the workers was just kind of casually moving his foot in the sediment and this sheen came up — so it's still here," he said

It seems that the reason sea otters haven't moved back to the Knight Island bays is likely not because of a shortage of mussels The data from last year are preliminary, but O'Clair reports that there are more mussels in Herring Bay and Bay of Isles than at the control sites, those which were never oiled, on Montague Island

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

PENINSULA CLARION 3/1/98

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Mussel may have clues for sea otters' recovery

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ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
JANUARY 31, 1998

Sound's waste tells tale

Scientists read feces for clues

By NATALIE PHILLIPS
Daily News reporter

A couple of scientists studying the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez oil spill have figured out that tracking fish poop could turn out to be the canary in the coal mine that indicates when Prince William Sound s ecosystem is headed for trouble

"It might allow us to see it coming in enough time to do something about it,' said Jeff Short, one of the lead scien tists conducting the study

Short presented his work Friday morning to more than 250 scientists gathered at the Hotel Captain Cook for the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council two-day sci ence symposium Scientists gather annually to review study results and begin plot ting next year's work Over the past four years, about $400 000 in spill settlement money has been spent on the study done by Short and Pa tricia Harris, both biologists with the National Marine Fisheries Service at Auke Bay in Juneau

The scientists who conduct spill studies are mostly em-ployed by federal and state agencies Each year, they ap ply to the Trustee Council for study grants The council is charged with spending the $1 billion the state and federal governments got from set-tling lawsuits with Exxon fol lowing its 11 million gallon spill in 1989 Much of that money has been spend on purchasing coastal land About $90 million has been spent so far on scientific studies

The council's chief scien-tist, Robert Spies, has called Harris and Short's study "a very innovative" approach that could turn into an impor-tant tool for monitoring ma-rine productivity in the Sound Compared to most other monitoring programs, their system is considered cheap

Short and Harris are tracking a nontoxic hydro-carbon called pristane that makes it way through the fishes' digestive systems

Pristane is produced by copepods, which are small shrimp-like crustaceans Copepods are considered the Big Macs of the sea Short ex plained Though only 1/8 inch in size, they are full of fat And for fish fry that have to eat fast and grow big in a hur ry or be eaten, the copepods are a favorite fast food

"When (fish) ingest these copepods, most of the pris tane is absorbed across the intestine, but some is excret-ed as feces, Short said The fish poop is then ingested by mussels And that s where the scientists go to look for it

Scientists are starting to correlate high levels of pris-tane with booming popula-tions of species that feed on the copepods like salmon and herring Low levels of pris tane could indicate a problem

Since 1994, the scientists have been collecting mussel samples, sometimes monthly and biweekly, from 30 sites in the Sound In some cases, the samples are collected by vol-unteers and by students liv-ing in the Sound who volun-teer through a program with the Chugach School District called Youth Area Watch

The study is an offspring of work that Short did back in the late 1970s as the trans Alaska pipeline was about to spring into operation He was in the Sound taking mussel samples looking for base lev-els and presence of hydrocar bons He collected a lot of data but 'it wasn t very sexy," he said Then the spill hit His data turned out to be a gold mine "

Going back and analyzing that data now shows that there was a significant drop in pristane levels in the late 1970s that correlated with a collapse of salmon popula tions, Short said

So far, the scientists can demonstrate an annual rise in pristane levels in the mussels from mid April to mid May If those numbers were to drop it might be an early in-dication of a population drop in near shore aquatic species like salmon and herring Short said

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
JANUARY 28, 1998

Workshop to focus on spill research

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is sponsor-ing a workshop at the Hotel Captain Cook on Thursday and Friday to review and discuss research findings af-ter the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill The topics to be dis-cussed include the effects of oil on the pink salmon in Prince William Sound, the condition and health of har-bor seals and whether harlequin ducks and common murre populations are returning to the same numbers that existed before the spill For more information about the workshop, call 278-8012

Daily News staff reports

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
VOICE OF THE TIMES

Murkowski: Legislature must act this year

Following is an excerpt of Sen Frank Murkowski's address before the Alaska State Legislature on Jan 22

By SEN FRANK MURKOWSKI

The challenge for the Legislature is to come to a resolution on subsistence before the moratorium on the federal government's take-over of our fisheries ends

The federal government is already managing game on federal lands in Alaska and they intend to control our fisheries — and more — by year-end

This Legislature has the opportunity to provide me with recommendations on amendments to ANILCA

As chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my intention after Alaska lawmakers complete their work and make their recommendations is to conduct hearings and to legislate any additional changes to ANILCA

However, a full repeal of Title 8 is politically unrealistic, because it would face a certain presidential veto The Legislature has a decision to make if we are going to avoid the federal takeover of our fish and return management of our game to our state

Murkowski

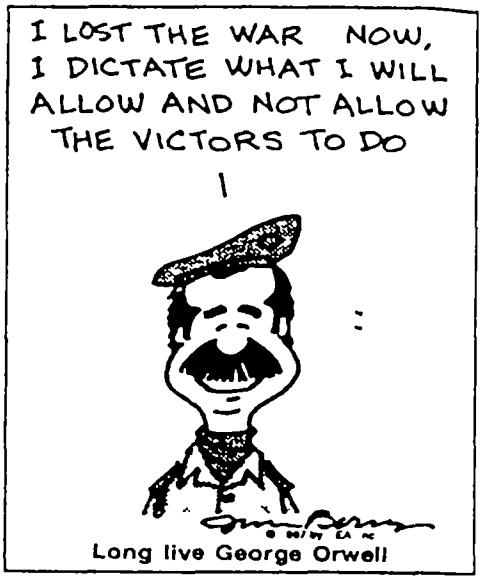
We all have a fundamental responsibility to the people of Alaska The time to act is now! Do not Do not — by your failure to act — allow Secretary Bruce Babbitt on Dec 1 to take control of our fish and game We fought hard to become a state Do not, by your inaction, turn the clock back 40 years to territorial days

Indian Country

Last month the Supreme Court heard the state's appeal of the Venetie decision What is at stake is whether tribal governments will replace the authority of the state on over 40 million acres of Native lands If the lower court decision is not reversed, what will follow is a resurgence of the authority of the BIA and other federal agencies that will become intimately involved in the lives of Alaskans

How this is resolved is fundamental to our future

While we wait for the court's decision we need to act on the needs of rural Alaskans Clean water safe sanitation education and economic opportunities health care law enforcement — all are in need of vast improvement Residents of



Long live George Orwell

Upper and Lower Kalskag are entitled to the same life opportunities as residents of Anchorage or Juneau

You know that a state is only as strong as its communities, and the best way to make Alaska's rural communities stronger is to increase the amount of control local residents have over the decisions that affect their lives We need to empower village Alaska with more self determination — morally legally, and economically

Whether it be greater local powers to handle misdemeanor offenses, setting educational curriculum, control of alcohol or encouraging job training and economic development a workable government structure must be set in place in rural Alaska with emphasis on real jobs that use the latest technology for resource development in their areas

Also we must hold the secretary of Interior accountable for his trust responsibility for the welfare of Alaska Natives This secretary has an on going conflict between his desire to appease environmentalists and his responsibility to enhance the welfare of Alaska Natives through the development and preservation of their lands

This has been evident in the secretary's aggressive attempts to use the Exxon Valdez oil spill fund to acquire Native-owned lands and put them under the control of his department Already more than $380 million of the available $900 million has been committed to buy up to 750 000 acres of Alaska land — more land than the entire state of Rhode Island

Future generations of Alaska Natives have lost their land heritage as a result of these sales with no guarantee that they will benefit from these cash payments in the future

Alaska resources at crossroads

Today, I see our Alaska economy in a state of transition — a transition that blends our gift of abundant natural resources with the skills discipline, and scientific capabilities of our hard working people

Soon we will be dedicating the new International Arctic Research Center at the University of Alaska, a partnership with the government of Japan, that will study the planet and our global environment as never before

We're building a spaceport in Kodiak that could become the Cape Canaveral of the North for commercial satellites We have built air cargo transhipment points in Anchorage and Fairbanks that are the gateways between Europe, the Orient and North America

These are new and exciting opportunities for our future But Alaska cannot ignore its traditional base for economic development — energy mining timber fishing and our growing tourism industry Our great strength is the development of our abundant natural resources

And in Alaska we have shown that with the application of science and advanced technology, we can do it right — preserving and protecting our natural bounty for our children and future generations I have the greatest faith that the people of Alaska can meet any challenge and overcome what others may think are near impossible obstacles

I share with you a vision of Alaska where every child can grow and prosper without the fear of abuse neglect or the scourge of drugs alcohol and tobacco Where a mother does not fear for her child's health because she lacks proper sanitation safe drinking water or health coverage

- An Alaska where every citizen has the opportunity for a first-class education that enables every Alaskan to get a good job and build a family Alaskans must come first Local hire is the watchword
- An Alaska where Alaskans make decisions for themselves not let far away bureaucrats dictate our lifestyles

You in the Legislature know the issues that you must address this year I know you will put aside your differences and provide the leadership that all Alaskans expect of you

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 1/30/98

Knowles OKs funds to preserve wetlands

Gov Tony Knowles has followed through on a promise to end a legislative logjam that threatened a popular effort to use Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement funds to buy Homer wetlands important to migratory birds

On Wednesday, Knowles sent a letter to Sen Randy Phillips, R-Eagle River, chair of the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee, to say he had authorized spending $996,100 to buy 67 acres on Homer Spit and 40 acres along Beluga Slough

The governor took advantage of a state law that allows him to approve spending rejected by lawmakers, as long as he does it within 45 days of their vote Phillips' committee had voted against the land purchase Dec 12

Knowles said he took the action because the purchase had broad public support, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council had agreed that the land had important resource value, and options to buy the five separate properties involved in the deal were set to expire between Jan. 29 and March 13 The Legislature was expected to take up the issue later this session, after some of those options to sell had expired.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 1/31/98

Put Alaskans before birds

Concerning your article on Gov Tony Knowles funding of a Homer bird sanctuary (Jan 24)

Excuse me, hello! We have more important needs to be spending our money on! Like Alaskans!

Alaska is rated among the highest in domestic violence and sexual assaults — people who are caught up in these abuses need help the victims as well as the perpetrators

Alaska has the Alaska Psychiatric Hospital and other counseling centers but there is no specific program for those caught up in the vicious cycle of abuse

It s been proven that trauma and psychiatric disorders are connected Trauma is caused through abuse, and abuse victims are caught in a vicious cycle

Alaska needs a sanctuary for our mentally ill — not for birds! So many people could be helped by a program set up specifically for victims of trauma — the incredible trauma caused by lifelong abuses as well as the present day abuse

We already have enough places that herd people in and out without receiving any long lasting help

Spending $1 million on birds is senseless Alaskans need a solid, positive, helpful sanctuary for existing people in need of mental health care

Funding a sanctuary for our mentally unhealthy yes! For birds no!

— Bonnie Hartman
Anchorage

PENINSULA CLARION 1/25/98

Knowles approves Homer land purchase for birds

SOLDOTNA (AP) — Gov Tony Knowles has approved spending nearly $1 million to acquire Homer spit area lands to benefit migratory birds

The purchase had been jeopardized by a legislative logjam The tracts total 107 acres on Homer spit and nearby Beluga slough

Proponents say preserving the lands also will help the small tourism boom that the migratory birds attract Knowles tapped money paid by Exxon Corp to settle government claims following the 1989 oil spill in Prince William Sound

The land deal lumped several small properties into one piece and was put together by a San Francisco-based nonprofit called Trust for Public Lands which worked with the city of Homer and the Kachemak Bay Heritage Land Trust

We re thrilled with that ' Homer Mayor Jack Cushing said Friday I think the people of Homer and the tourism industry 100 years from now are going to thank the governor the Legislature, the Trust for Public Lands and Kachemak Heritage Land Trust "

Tens of thousands of birds feed along the spit s muddy shore each May during their annual migration north The stopover has become fostered the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival, which attracts tourists to local hotels weeks before the summer tourist season begins

The land purchase will put the acreage at Mud Bay and Beluga Slough under control of the city which envisions boardwalks better parking and gazebos for bird watchers

Homer had worked more than a year to forge an arrangement that would appeal not only to the five private landowners who will sell their property but also to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council which decides how settlement money will be spent

Only legislative approval held up the package deadlines in the real estate agreements would have expired long before lawmakers took up the issue as part of the supplemental budget in February

Knowles funds bird sanctuary

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
JANUARY 24, 1998

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — Gov Tony Knowles has broken a legislative logjam that threatened a complex effort to set aside 107 acres on Homer Spit and nearby Beluga Slough for migratory birds and the small tourism boom they generate

Knowles announced late Thursday that he has approved a nearly $1 million purchase of the land using money paid by Exxon for damage caused by its 1989 oil spill

The deal lumped several small properties into one piece and was put together by a San Francisco-based nonprofit called Trust for Public Lands, which worked with the city of Homer and the Kachemak Bay Heritage Land Trust

We re thrilled with that Homer Mayor Jack Cushing said Friday "I think the people of Homer and the tourism industry 100 years from now are going to thank the gover nor, the Legislature, the Trust for Public Lands and Kachemak Heritage Land Trust '

Tens of thousands of birds feed along the Spit s muddy shore each May during their annual migration north Their stop has become the focal point of the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival, which in recent years has plugged area hotels weeks before the traditional Memorial Day kickoff to the sum mer tourist season

Cushing said his phone started ringing with calls from relieved supporters as soon as word of the approval spread through Homer Not only do residents enjoy the birds, he said, but the shore bird festival now entering its sixth year, is quickly gaining national attention

The land purchase will put the land in Mud Bay and Beluga Slough under control of the city, which envisions boardwalks, better parking and gazebos for bird watchers "Getting the land was the keystone to making a lot of this happen," Cushing said

The city had worked for more than a year with the two public-interest real estate groups to forge an arrangement that would appeal not only to the five private landowners who will sell their property, but also to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, which decides how settlement money will be spent

Only legislative approval held up the package, and deadlines in the real estate agreements would have ex pired long before lawmakers took up the issue as part of the supplemental budget in February

While the Legislature is supposed to make spending decisions, Knowles stepped in to prevent the deal from unraveling, according to a press release issued late Thursday by the Oil Spill Trustee Council

The administration was a little vague Friday in explaining just how Knowles did it, but said he followed existing state law

We re working on ways to allow this to go forward," said Annalee McConnell, director of the Office of Management and Budget "Obviously the purchase has not been consummated yet, but we do believe we'll be able to make this all come together I think it ll be well received by the public "

McConnell pointed out that the Homer Spit purchase en joyed approval from just about everybody, including lawmakers House Speaker Gail Phillips, R Homer, and Sen John Torgerson, R Kasilof, both have said they favor the deal and expected eventual authorization

The Legislative Budget and Audit Committee rejected the Homer Spit purchase Dec 12, when it convened prior to the session At the time, committee members said their decision wasn't based on the merits of the Homer purchase Rather, they said, spending decisions should be made by the entire Legislature

Some also echoed a theme repeatedly voiced by U S Sen Frank Murkowski, who has questioned the spill trustees' decision to spend millions of dollars on land, rather than put money into fisheries research and economic development

Legislative Budget and Audit Committee chairman Sen Randy Phillips R Eagle River said he suspects Knowles took advantage of a law that allows the governor to authorize certain types of spending rejected by law makers, as long as he does it within 45 days of their vote

' We re not too crazy about this particular statute Phillips said

Phillips said Knowles has used the rule more than any governor in recent memory The senator said he hoped to call a meeting next week to see if the loophole can be closed ' Not because of Homer,' he said but because this has happened over the last year four or five times

THE CORDOVA TIMES
Thursday, January 29, 1998

Biologists restore salmon run at Port Dick Creek

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

More than 30 years after the 1964 earthquake destroyed some prime salmon spawning habitat chums have returned to newly opened tributaries of Port Dick Creek

Port Dick, on the outer coast of the Kenai Peninsula, got hit hard by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and commercial fishing was closed for the summer To help restore the area biologist Nick Dudiak, who recently retired from the Department of Fish and Game in Homer, promoted an idea he had been talking about for years — the revival of Port Dick Creek

The creek has two tributaries which were part of a system that contributed heavily to salmon runs in the 1950s and 60s Then the earthquake hit raising the elevation of the stream, piling up rock mud and woody debris and wiping out the salmon runs

Dudiak and biologist Mark Dickson felt that the two tributaries could again be good producers of pink and chum salmon if the stream could be restored to its original state 'Build it and they will come was Nick's motto

They were a little concerned however that if they went to all the trouble and expense of scooping out the streams, Mother Nature might step in again with another earthquake or perhaps another huge flood

Sure enough, a 1995 storm resulted in a 100-year flood on some parts of the Kenai Peninsula While the flood took a heavy toll in some areas, Port Dick Creek remained unscathed much to Dickson s relief

"There was no additional deposition, he said It gave us more confidence that the direction we were headed was the right direction "

The excavation took place in 1996 Engineers studied the grade and curves of the stream carefully attempting to exactly reproduce the earlier path Technicians laid down rocks trees stumps and other natural features in places exactly determined to match the stream s flow Everything came from the creek itself with the help of some heavy equipment

The idea behind the whole project was to create a spawning habitat that was as close to a natural area as possible Considering the results the team succeeded — even though more than 20 years had passed 450 pink salmon and 300 chums charged up both tributaries the next summer without any extra enticements It was as if the fish actually emerged from their egg sacs there

The following spring there were many more fry than either of the biologists ever expected A preliminary count showed more than 290 000 pink and chum fry in the tributaries almost a 40 percent survival rate

Now Fish and Game is predicting a harvestable surplus of chums by the year 2000 They ll continue to monitor the stream for any changes

CORDOVA TIMES
1-29-98

Trustees approve archaeology plan

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council agreed recently to seek proposals for development of a regional archaeological repository and several local community based display facilities in the Chugach region

The Council allocated $2 8 million to create archaeological facilities to serve Valdez, Cordova/Eyak, Chenega Bay, Tatitlek, Seward Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek The repository would be located in one of the communities with funding up to $1 million and the remaining seven would share $1 6 million to establish museum quality exhibits

The Restoration office will soon begin seeking proposals for the regional facilities Any proposal must show that the facility can generate the funds for long-term maintenance and operation, said Craig Tillery trustee designate from the Department of Law

THE CORDOVA TIMES
Thursday January 22 1998

Planners, residents talk about civic center

By Jennifer L Strange
The Cordova Times

If all goes as planned in a few years Rise Alaska program manager Sarah Barton and architect Lewis Stackpole will be able to meet with Cordova residents in a new civic center instead of in the City Hall s conference room where they met with project stakeholders earlier this week

The design team from Rise Alaska was hired to perform a feasibility study on the proposed civic center project through a City of Cordova/Prince William Sound Science Center joint expenditure of up to $60 000 On this their first trip Barton and Stackpole listened to what stakeholders identified as the whats wheres and hows of the city s civic center needs

We learned a million things and there s lots of potential here said Barton Cordovans are very proud of their community and of their institutions

This pride can be interpreted as Cordovans having a strong sense of place said Stackpole and wanting a way to express that A civic center could be a location in which to gather such energy he said

This facility has to be essentially useful to the community not just serving those coming in from outside said Stackpole We heard loud and clear from quite a range of people that this should primarily be a place to meet and gather

Stakeholders also said the center should be a place to exhibit contemporary and historic art and artifacts to hold conventions conferences and retreats and to house performing arts functions such as Stage of the Tides productions But the most oft heard need was for a safe and appropriate place for Cordova s youth to gather said Stackpole

Opportunities for young people to recreate safely was at the top of many people s lists Stackpole said Suggestions ranged from a bowling alley to a video movie theater

But don t count on a bowling alley said City Manager Scott Janke who said finances have to kept at the fore of all civic center planning Although the main funding for the construction of the project would come from the EVOS Trustee Council (if it approves the joint City/Science Center application) Janke said the city would be responsible for all future maintenance and operations costs

This can t be something we can t afford said Janke The building must be multi purpose with every room in use as much as possible We can t afford any dead space

Janke envisions a two-story building with a foyer that might house the Black Waters exhibit (which features historical and scientific documentation of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill) The museum and a comprehensive city library that combines resource material from as many Cordova agencies as possible would also be on the first floor

The second story could house a large room big enough to accommodate 250 people that can be divided into smaller areas This room would serve as a town auditorium and conference rooms said Janke

The facility could also be split into two buildings but that probably won t be as cost effective said Janke But I want to keep an open mind — let s first agree on what the facility should do

A city library and museum will probably be foundational institutions in a future civic center said Barton with a strong educational component Barton foresees being able to upgrade and expand the library and museum with uplinks to the city s schools and high tech computer access

The design team will now compile their information regroup rethink and map out an approach to the next step which will be a hard working public session to be held in Cordova sometime in late February or early March said Barton

This is only the beginning — everyone should know they will be heard Barton said Comments can be sent to Barton and Stackpole via fax at (907)2768609 or e mail at barton@pobox alaska net

Stakeholders were invited to meet with the team based on their past involvement in the issue and included representatives from CDFU Native Village of Eyak Eyak Corporation Tatitlek Corporation ADF&G Cordova Public Schools National Bank of Alaska First National Bank of Anchorage U S Forest Service PWS Science Center Cordova Dance/Drill Team PWS Community College Cordova Chamber of Commerce Stage of the Tide Cordova Library Board Cordova Historical Society Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission Planning & Zoning Commission and the Port & Commerce Development Advisory Board

Council OKs dock pact

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

The City Council has approved a tidelands lease with Kenai Fjords Tours for a floating dock at the Alaska SeaLife Center

The dock would be built, owned and operated by Kenai Fjords Tours, but one berth would be available for competitors at rates capped by the city at $2 per passenger

The final version of the agreement, which has been discussed for months, addresses two concerns of the council that the dock not be a monopoly, and that tickets not be sold from the dock or uplands Additionally, the SeaLife Center said it will not sell tour company tickets inside the building

Council members were concerned partly that the area not be cluttered with commercial kiosks and partly that no company appear to be the "official ' tour company of the city-owned center

The city has taken the extra step to preserve a multi user dock, and has forced Kenai Fjords Tours to let competitors take advantage of its investment, said Councilman Jerry King There has to be some level of reward for a risk-taking entrepreneur, he said Monday when some council members were still talking about a monopoly

The tidelands lease of about 34 500 square feet south of the metal breakwater is for 20 years, with two optional five year extensions Rent will start at about $1,380 a year

Kenai Fjords Tours also will lease about 3,000 square feet of uplands from the SeaLife Center, for a covered waiting area, and pay rent of $1 per passenger that embarks or disembarks That provision applies to any tour company using the dock

Tom Tougas, president of Kenai Fjords Tours, said he's glad the process is over The floating dock, which is basically a barge 28 by 116 feet will be anchored about 80 feet from the seawall A 114-foot ramp will connect it to the uplands

The dock could be in place by mid-May, Tougas said It will cost about $50 000 a year to pay for the construction and yearly maintenance costs, he said

PENINSULA CLARION 1-8-98

SeaLife center wants entertainers

The Alaska SeaLife Center, in Seward, is looking for entertainers to participate in the grand opening celebration events, April 25 and May 2

Opportunities include but are not limited to, musicians, singers, dancers clowns jugglers and face painters Groups of all ages are encouraged to participate

Those who would like to participate should submit a brief proposal and if possible, a video tape or audio cassette of their performance to Alaska SeaLife Center Grand Opening Committee, c/o RISE Alaska, 880 H St, Suite 101 Anchorage 99501 Deadline for submission is March 15

Artist and photographers also are invited to submit proposals for solo or group exhibition of their work for the grand opening season, May 1 through Oct 31 Emphasis should be Alaska's marine mammals, sea birds and coastal scenery

Those interested in displaying their work need to submit 10 slides of their work, labeled with the name, title of the work medium and dimensions Do not send originals

Also include a resume or brief history of experience, previous exhibits and current address and phone number Proposals can be mailed to the above address

For more information, call Maureen at 276-8095

PENINSULA CLARION 1/8/98

KPTMC announces 1998 board

The Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council has chosen Phil Morris of Homer Ferry Terminal as president of its board Other new officers are Kathleen Tarr of the Kenai Visitors & Convention Bureau vice president and Dee Dee Alletson of Major Marine Tours secretary treasurer

Chosen for two year terms on the board are Southern District representative Don Mack of Moose Hill B&B Eastern District representative Angie Colon of the Alaska SeaLife Center and Central District representative Kelly Lee of Accommodations and Tours Alaskan Style and Raven s Nest B&B Continuing on the board are Morris and Maggie Kelly of Alaska Windsong Lodge who were elected for two year terms last year

Marketing partners with one year terms are Randy Becker representing Renown Charters Bob Favretto representing Kenai Chrysler Center Jeff Johnson representing Kenai Fjords Tours Tarr representing the Kenai Visitors & Convention Bureau and Alletson representing Major Marine Tours Rick Swenson of the Homer Chamber of Commerce was a marketing partner last year He ll continue to represent the chamber this year in his capacity as past president of the KPTMC board

ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE 1/19/98

The Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council has announced its 1998 board Elected directors serving a two year term are **Don Mack** of Moose Hill B&B Angie Colon of Alaska SeaLife Center and **Kelly Lee** o Accommodations and Tours Alaskan Style and Raven s Nest B&B Completing their final elected year terms are **Maggie Kelly** of Alaska Windsong Lodges and **Phil Morris** of Homer Ferry Terminal **Rick Swenson** will maintain his seat by acting as past president

THE PENINSULA CLARION 1/15/98

Fire ravages Port Graham cannery

By JON HOLLAND
Peninsula Clarion

A fire in Port Graham on the southern Kenai Peninsula destroyed a community-owned cannery heavily damaged two nearby buildings and sent eight people to the hospital early Wednesday morning But it could have been a lot worse without heroic efforts by the community, said Homer Fire Chief Robert Purcell

"The community of Port Graham did a superb job of controlling the fire," Purcell said

Working in cold, clear conditions volunteer firefighters were able to keep the fire from spreading to four 25 000-gallon fuel tanks containing a total of 75,000 gallons of diesel fuel and 25,000 gallons of gasoline

"It was a huge challenge to the community, but they were able to keep the fire out of the fuel tanks and other buildings in the area,' Purcell said 'Not having any wind really helped"

The Homer Fire Department sent two firefighters to Port Graham by helicopter to help battle the fire and picked up the casualties for transportation to South Peninsula General Hospital in Homer

Kenai Peninsula Borough spokesman Richard Campbell said six of the evacuees were treated for smoke inhalation and released at about 7 15 a m Wednesday Two others remained at the hospital for cardiovascular monitoring but there were no trauma injuries he said

The borough Office of Emergency Management became involved in the blaze because of the threat to the fuel tanks

'Fortunately, village firefighters were able to shut down the fuel lines, Campbell said

Estimates of property lost in the fire were unavailable Wednesday afternoon but the borough assessor s office valued the cannery at $435 000

Of course nobody's been down there for a few years to update the assessment,' said Joe Meyer of the assessor s office

Coast Guard officials were notified at 12 35 a m that the Port Graham cannery was on fire

The fire broke out in the generator room of the cannery building Campbell said the cannery was a total loss and the two adjacent buildings were 50- to 75-percent destroyed

'Clearly there was substantial damage to buildings that were being worked on and improved at the time Purcell said

Villagers' dreams go up in fire

THE HOMER NEWS

Thursday, January 15, 1998

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

A devastating fire and explosion destroyed the hatchery and cannery at Port Graham late Tuesday injuring more than 20 people engaged in the battle to prevent the blaze from spreading — some seriously enough to be flown to South Peninsula Hospital in Homer

The blaze which erupted just before midnight produced far more than an economic loss though that will be substantial It also ruined a project aimed at re establishing viable salmon runs in local waterways at Port Graham and Nanwalek, an effort those Native communities saw as a step toward reaffirming the villagers subsistence lifestyle and their intimate connection to the sea

It hurts To me the cannery was not just an economic thing it was a spiritual subsistence thing This is so painful said Village Chief Elenore McMullen who had to pause often to fight back tears

Last night when I watched those buildings burn there were all those hard times going through my mind People dedicated their lives to it McMullen said It has taken a lot of money I don t know if we can start over again Everything s wiped off the wall

Fire Chief Melvin Malchoff said the Port Graham Volunteer Fire Department got the call about 11 45 p m and were on scene a few minutes later Soon scores of villagers were arriving to help prevent the fire from spreading to nearby buildings including a bulk fuel depot where more than 100 000 gallons of fuel oil and gasoline was stored

There were mass people there Malchoff said People came over from Nanwalek There were firefighters from Homer

The Coast Guard Cutter Roanoke Island on patrol in Cook Inlet was diverted to the scene at about 1 a m arriving at around 3 a m The cutter crew provided the foam normally used to fight electrical fires and fired up the ship s pumps to shower the building with seawater from Zodiac inflatable rafts off shore according to Chief Rod Lyons of the U S Coast Guard station at Kodiak

A Coast Guard helicopter also was dispatched delivering Homer firefighters Marge Dillon and John DeHart to the scene and then transporting seven people suffering from smoke inhalation to South Peninsula Hospital Three more were flown out by airplane

Injury reports were sketchy There may have been other injuries such as bruises and at least one injured leg possibly occurring when an explosion erupted from the fire according to McMullen who runs a medical clinic in Port Graham She said the clinic treated more than 20 in all

One of those treated for smoke inhalation in Homer was Malchoff He said everyone was OK

It took more than four hours to contain the blaze Homer Fire Chief Robert Purcell said Homer s involvement was limited Besides the two Homer volunteers who went to Port Graham an operations center was established at Homer Fire Hall to aid in communications Purcell said Some elements of the Kenai Peninsula Borough s South Zone emergency plan were put into effect he said

Malchoff said the cannery is an important part of Port Graham s economy but its presence may be even more significant to the Native community s lifestyle

I feel that it is very important Malchoff said

Long time Port Graham residents Tom and Leona Sawden said there may be some work if the cannery is rebuilt but the fire will mean the loss of wages in the community

It is the way the people here have always made a living Tom Sawden said There have been times when it has not operated and those have been tough on the village

Pat Norman president of the Port Graham Village Corp said villagers were elated when the cannery reopened in 1996 after being closed since 1989

It s a big emotional shock to have something like this happen he said

An insurance adjuster and a state fire marshal are expected to arrive today to determine how the fire started As for what the future holds Norman said it is too early to tell

McMullen said the hatchery had contained sockeye eggs whose fry were destined for the lakes near Nanwalek and pink eggs that would have ended up in Port Graham River Coho salmon eggs also being cultivated in Port Graham were in another building and were not lost she said Norman said a crew was working to get water to the coho building Water had been supplied from the main hatchery

A company called Port Graham Seafoods reopened the cannery in 1996 By this summer the community saw its first return of hatchery fish and the cannery had people employed McMullen said

Port Graham Seafoods spokesman Jay Lind speaking from Seattle said he was still in shock about the fire

I m sitting here trying to gather my wits together he said yesterday morning shortly after learning the cannery he helped reestablish in 1996 was gone He said he was very thankful no one was seriously hurt

There has been a cannery in Port Graham since the early part of this century he said The old cannery closed in 1989 and stayed closed until 1996 when the company rebuilt it and reopened So far close to $1 million has been spent getting the cannery operating again Lind said

In the height of the summer season some 85 people had jobs through the cannery The hatchery operated year round and had a small permanent staff

The prospects for the future were tremendous he said This is hard

The welfare of much of the village was tied to the continued operation of the cannery and the successes of the hatchery projects Lind said he doesn t yet know whether the cannery would be rebuilt

As far as what is going to happen I don t see the light at this moment he said I don t know if operations can be mounted for this year

Wes Bucher area management biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game said the hatchery had contained about 9 5 million pink eggs and another 1 5 million sockeye eggs

The hatchery has gone through quite an evolution Bucher said It first started in the late 1980s with a sockeye incubation project for Nanwalek initiated by the department s Fisheries Research Enhancement and Development Division Bucher said Later the Nanwalek salmon enhancement project was taken over by the villages with money from the Chugach Regional Resource Commission he said

It s been pretty successful Bucher said They had more than 50 000 fish return last year and were looking forward to a cost recovery project this season Some 56 000 sockeyes are projected to return this year he said

Pinks released this year would be expected to return to Port Graham in 1999 Now that s not going to happen The sockeye project is more complicated Hatched eggs would have been penned in English Bay area lakes and released in the fall to return as two and three year fish Bucher said

Speaking of the sockeye project Bucher said the wild run had been very depressed for years and that commercial as well as subsistence fishing had been curtailed The hatchery project had begun to change that

Basically it s gone from no harvest to limited subsistence harvest to a limited commercial harvest until last year when they fished from the beginning of the subsistence season to end of return in late July he said I guess there have been side benefits in re emphasizing the importance of the returns for subsistence and commercial fishing and they (Port Graham and Nanwalek villagers) can take credit for it

PENINSULA CLARION 1/28/98

Port Graham decides to rebuild cannery, fish hatchery after fire

HOMER (AP) — Port Graham s villagers have decided to rebuild their cannery and salmon hatchery that were destroyed by fire earlier this month

The village corporation wants to have a fish processing operation running by June 15 council chief Elenore McMullen said

The hatchery owned by an arm of the village council plans to take eggs this summer to keep its program going then build a new permanent hatchery when it can raise the estimated $2 million that would be needed

The decision to rebuild emerged from two talking circles in the village, attended by 30 to 40 people each where villagers talked about the loss and what to do McMullen said She said the way the village came together to fight the all-night fire Jan 14 and save nearby buildings provided the inspiration to rebuild

The spirit of the people was really contagious McMullen said

Insurance covered only part of the loss, she said

The council will need to find more than $100,000 to use an existing building for the hatchery this summer, while a new hatchery could cost as much as $2 million said fisheries consultant Dave Daisy who has worked on the Port Graham hatchery project since its start in 1991

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 1/28/98

Port Graham to rebuild facilities

By TOM KIZZIA
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

HOMER — The village of Port Graham, which lost its cannery and salmon hatchery in a devastating fire earlier this month, has decided to re build both facilities as soon as possible

The village corporation wants to have a fish process ing operation up and running by June 15 said council chief Elenore McMullen The hatchery owned by an arm of the village council, plans to take eggs this summer to keep its program going, then build a new permanent facili ty as funds become available

The decision to rebuild emerged from two "talking circles in the village, attend ed by 30 to 40 people each, where villagers talked about the loss and what to do, Mc-Mullen said She said the way the village came together to fight the all night fire and save nearby buildings provided the inspiration to re build

'The spirit of the people was really contagious,' Mc-Mullen said

Insurance covered only part of the loss, she said

The council will need to find more than $100,000 to use an existing building for the hatchery this summer, while a new hatchery could cost as much as $2 million, said fisheries consultant Dave Daisy, who has worked on the Port Graham hatchery project since its start in 1991

At the time of the fire the cannery operator said it might cost several million dollars to restore the operation

Port Graham is applying for disaster relief funds to help with the rebuilding, Mc Mullen said

Daisy said the two facilities would probably end up sharing a building for efficiency

HOMER NEWS
OPINION
Thursday, January 22, 1998

Editorial

Our support to Port Graham

It hurts said Elenore McMullen village chief of Port Graham in response to a fire that last week destroyed the village s hatchery and cannery She was fighting back tears To me the cannery was not just an economic thing It was a spiritual subsistence thing This is so painful

The hatchery and cannery were at the heart of the effort by residents of Port Graham and Nanwalek to re establish salmon runs in local waterways It was an effort those Native communities were taking toward reaffirming a subsistence lifestyle and their strong connection to the sea

McMullen expressed pessimism about the ability of the community to start over again – certainly a reasonable response in the immediate aftermath of such a tragedy All of Kachemak Bay however hopes that the vision of re-establishing traditional ways will not be lost with the fire

Can anyone envision the existence of the greater Kachemak Bay community without the spiritual contribu tions of its Natives? For most of those who live in this area tradition goes back at most a generation or two For the Natives tradition dates back hundreds of years – and even those of us who have been here only a few years are nourished by the Natives strong ties to its sea and land The absence or diminishing of Native communities would affect us all, cutting at the very strength and substance of our larger community

Let us all encourage Port Graham to take steps to recover from this setback and let us all lend what help we can in assistance

• • •

Community counts

Dear Editor

I would like to commend the village of Port Graham for their incredibly quick and organized response to fighting the devastating fire that occurred last Tuesday Their emergency preparedness and the community pulling together was truly awesome to witness Though the damage was extensive, they did an incredible job of containing it with limited resources through the quick thinking and hard work of the community members and emergency response personnel

A potentially far worse disaster was averted by the all-night Herculean efforts of the community the firefighters who were there within minutes trying to contain the fire and mobilize reinforcements the EMTs who established a triage center to monitor the firefighters for smoke inhala tion hypothermia exhaustion and other injuries the health aides and others who helped in the clinic the community members who ferried people to the clinic made sandwich es provided shovels etc and the quick response by their neighbors in Nanwalek all helped to prevent serious injury and avoid spread of the fire to fuel tanks and nearby struc tures Not to forget help provided by Homer Air the Coast Guard the Homer Fire Department and the staff at South Peninsula Hospital in getting firefighters with smoke inhalation evaluated in a timely manner

I stand in awe of the communities across the bay and im reminded about the main reason I live on the South Peninsula — community

My best wishes to the Port Graham community in recovering from their devastating loss

Terri Bramel

Night of miracles

Dear Editor

Many have read or heard of our cannery fire and the loss of the main part of our hatchery building I would like to take a moment of your time to send my sincerest thanks and blessing out to all who took part in defeating this monster that tried to consume everything in its path

To all in Port Graham including our teens who couldn t be held back and ran errands made sandwiches coffee and helped to provide water to quench the thirst of many exhausted men and women fighting the fire adults who took the time to comfort and protect our children many of whom could see the fire from their homes those teens and adults who handled the airport traffic and those who helped the clinic staff as they prepared for the worst that thank God never happened the clinic staff for their professionalism the volunteer fire department for their (I believe) God directed wisdom in fighting the fire and Nanwalek for appearing at a (God sent) divine moment to relieve exhausted men and women and assisting in any way they could

Thanks also to the two firefighters who came and helped as well as the crew off the Coast Guard vessel Roanoke Island to assist with equipment and manpower Laura McMullen and her persistence in being the connec tion to bring the fire department crew from Homer and the Coast Guard and last but not least the women who manned the relief station for those on the front lines and provided them with a warm dry place where they could rest a moment and have a sandwich and something warm to drink as well as provide a quick medical check Also the unselfish donations of gas for the fire truck and shovels

Thank you seems so weak compared to the feelings have for everyone and especially for God who took us through all of this God bless you all in your unselfish act of love Now starts the rebuilding I pray the miracle con tinues through the reconstruction also

Linda Norman
Port Graham

PENINSULA CLARION 1/12/98

Contracts signed to open Seward shellfish hatchery

SEWARD (AP) — The city, state and Qutekcak Native tribe have signed agreements to get a new shellfish hatchery up and running this year

"We're trying to get it up as fast as we can because everyone wants us to have some production by spring Qutekcak hatchery manager Jon Agosti told the Seward Phoenix Log

The $3 2 million shellfish hatchery the first of its kind in Alaska, has been empty since construction ended in April It's intended to raise shellfish, such as oysters and clams, which would be sold to ocean farmers, who would continue to grow the shellfish to a marketable size in undersea cages

Under the five-year, rent-free contract, the city accepted responsibility for operating, insuring, maintaining and repairing the hatchery The city then contracted with the Seward-based Native group, which has run a small pilot hatchery from a building at the Institute of Marine Science for several years

Agosti said he hopes to have young Pacific oysters and little neck clams ready for sale by May Farmers "all want to have it ready to plant in the first spring bloom in the ocean, which is April through June," he said But Agosti conceded that target could be optimistic

The hatchery isn t quite ready to go The concrete floor has cracked already and needs to be repaired The state has a one-year warranty for workmanship from the contractor, Janssen Contracting Co of Anchorage

The Legislature awarded an additional $250 000 last year for some of the water pipes and tanks That money has not yet been released Agosti said

Qutekcak also will have to spend about $100,000 of its own money to complete installation of the seawater treatment and distribution system, Agosti said

Even with the facility fully functioning, officials say problems during the first year would not be unexpected Two new hatcheries built in the Pacific Northwest in the past 15 years couldn t rear anything for the first year, Agosti said The animals died Gradually, the problem went away Hatchery managers think the problem may have been caused by latent toxicity in the new pipes

Pacific oysters are the main shellfish being farmed in Alaska Farmers sold about $300 000 of the oysters in 1995, according to the state Department of Fish and Game

But Pacific oysters are not native to Alaska and don t spawn in the cold water here Farmers have had to buy seed from the Pacific Northwest and haven t always been happy with the quality or availability

HOMER NEWS
1/15/98

LOCAL OYSTER FARMERS could finally get the high quality spat they ve longed for when the new shellfish hatchery in Seward goes into production The $3 2 million facility was built with state and federal funds but the Department of Fish and Game would not turn over the keys without assurances it would be managed well and it has been empty since construction finished last April according to the Seward Phoenix Log Last week Seward accepted responsibility for the h itchery turning over the operation to Qutekcak Native Tribe Though hatchery manager Jon Agosti told the paper he thought spat might be available for purchase by May he also said the building is far from oper ational The concrete floor needs repair and a seawater treatment and distribution system must be finished

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 1-26-98

Sue Jeffrey photo

Jay Ballenger, Kodiak National Wildlife Manager, hands Kodiak Island Borough Mayor Jerome Selby $390,926 for payment-in-lieu-of-taxes, a program which compensates local governments for land owned by the federal government. The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council bought Native lands and turned the parcels over to the wildlife refuge, increasing the size of the refuge and the payment. Since Native lands are tax exempt until developed, the borough was not receiving tax revenues from them. The money will go into the borough general fund to help pay for the addition to Peterson Elementary, Selby says.

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

New generation learns digging into the past

Last summer Monica Riedel of the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, invited me to visit Afognak Island Twenty children and elders attended the week long spirit camp there, organized by the Afognak Native Corporation with funds from the criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Here archaeologists and visitors excavate abandoned sites that were once occupied for hundreds of years Camp days revolve around the dig and Alutiiq culture and history Participants made drums, sewed skins built a barabara (dugout house), learned about plant lore and scientific sampling of marine mammals, and visited the old village of Afognak

It seemed like several days rolled into one First I visited an excavation site at the Russian artel a provisioning post from the early 1800s There beneath the boughs of large spruce young and old were intently scraping away layer upon layer of dirt from house pits mapped out by the archaeologists Cloth beads, iron pieces of a stove and shoes were just some of the artifacts they found

Casey Hoge, of Kodiak said that she thoroughly enjoyed the dig You get to do stuff that they [the archaeologists] actually do he said 'And the stuff that you find can be pretty exciting I found glass and a piece of porcelain or china it was dated to 1810

Archaeologist Katharine Woodhouse Beyer of Brown University was impressed with the quality of the students work "They come here and they dig just as we ask them to do with care and respect In fact when we have about eight kids working on the site we get a lot of dirt moved she said

The first day a hunter brought in a harbor seal On the spot Monica taught everyone how to take biological samples for scientific research The sampling is needed to help researchers understand marine mammal declines in the north Gulf of Alaska Teacon Simeonoff of Ahkiok taught the Alutiiq way of caring for the spirit of the seal as he carefully skinned and butchered the animal

Patrick Mullen Jr saw the camp as a way to help children better understand how their parents lived I think by doing this by seeing the seals being brought in by working on the net and by seeing Ed and I come in with a load of drift wood it gives them an idea Like even having to struggle through a cold night in a tent That s what we lived in year round We had one heater in the whole house and it was cold all the time No matter what room you were in you were cold

They got to see more of that life when they visited old Afognak Martha Randolph s grandmother and mother spent the winters at Afognak — until the 1964 earthquake Mullen also lived in Afognak until he was sent to study at Mt Edgecumb

For the elders the visit brought back memories of their grandparents The young people were moved by their elders memories of the community s closeness the hard work play the cold and the earthquake

I think what I really wanted to show them was what the village was like Mullen said and realize not how difficult but maybe how different it was for us

Students, archaeologists rub elbows at old Afognak village

By Jody Seitz
For The Times

Coastal currents

Last summer Monica Riedel executive director of the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission invited me to visit Afognak Island Twenty children and elders attended the week long spirit camp there, organized by the Afognak Native Corporation with funds from the criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Here archaeologists and visitors excavate abandoned sites that were once occupied for hundreds of years Camp days revolved around the dig and Alutiiq culture and history Participants made drums sewed skins built a barabara (dugout house) learned about plant lore and scientific sampling of marine mammals and visited the old village of Afognak

It seemed like several days rolled into one First I visited an excavation site at the Russian artel, a provisioning post from the early 1800s There, beneath the boughs of large spruce, young and old were intently scraping away layer upon layer of dirt from house pits mapped out by the archaeologists Cloth beads, iron, pieces of a stove and shoes were just some of the artifacts they found

Casey Hoge of Kodiak said that she thoroughly enjoyed the dig

You get to do stuff that they (the archaeologists) actually do, he said And the stuff that you find can be pretty exciting I found glass and a piece of porcelain or china, it was dated to 1810 '

Archaeologist Katharine Woodhouse-Beyer of Brown University was impressed with the quality of the students' work "They come here and they dig just as we ask them to do, with care and respect In fact, when we have about eight kids working on the site we get a lot of dirt moved, she said

The first day a hunter brought in a harbor seal On the spot, Monica taught everyone how to take biological samples for scientific research The sampling is needed to help researchers understand marine mammal declines in the north Gulf of Alaska Tecon Simeonoff of Ahkiok taught the Alutiiq way of caring for the spirit of the seal as he carefully skinned and butchered the animal

Patrick Mullen, Jr saw the camp as a way to help children better understand how their parents lived I think by doing this, by seeing the seals being brought in, by working on the net and by seeing Ed and I come in with a load of drift wood it gives them an idea,' he said Like even having to struggle through a cold night in a tent That's what we lived in year round We had one heater in the whole house, and it was cold all the time No matter what room you were in, you were cold

They got to see more of that life when they visited old Afognak Martha Randolph s grandmother and mother spent the winters at Afognak until the 1964 earthquake Mullen also lived in Afognak until he was sent to study at Mt Edgecumbe

For the elders the visit brought back memories of their grandparents The young people were moved by their elders' memories of the community's closeness the hard work, play, the cold and the earthquake

I think what I really wanted to show them was what the village was like " Mullen said, 'and realize not how difficult, but maybe how different it was for us

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

PENINSULA CLARION 1/18/98

Visit to Afognak Island means close encounters with past

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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

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Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

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PENINSULA CLARION 1/25/98

Unique ties between tourism, science developing

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By JODY SEITZ

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

In a short while basic research on marine mammals and birds in Alaska will get a boost — from a new facility that runs on tourism dollars

Several marine species, including puffins and pigeon guillemots, will be housed at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward by the time it opens next May Having the mammals and birds housed in controlled conditions will allow scientists to study the same animal over time This is a big advantage to researchers like Amy Hirons a University of Alaska Fairbanks biologist trying to learn why harbor seal populations in Prince William Sound are in a 20-year decline Hirons is studying the whiskers of seals and sea lions to learn more about their diets First, she must find out how fast the whiskers grow That means she has to measure the whiskers of the same sea lions and harbor seals as they age Until recently, the closest place to do the studies was an aquarium in Washington state Now she's in luck The sea lion and the seal she's been studying are moving to the SeaLife Center

The center is the first of its kind in the northern hemisphere because it is intended to serve both scientists and tourists Seawater from Resurrection Bay circulates through the facility There are quarantine tanks and habitats that mimic natural environments of harbor seals, sea lions and seabirds

But its most intriguing feature is its symbiotic design Aside from the animals, visitors are also able to view and learn about ongoing research Scientists and non-scientists can benefit each other, says Education Director Leslie Peart

"Researchers need a constituency now to find their funding," Peart said "They've got to be able to communicate the findings of their research to us And people want to know what's really happening in the world of science and want very much to be able to understand it"

Victor Adderholt, director of aquatics, hopes the facility will heighten public awareness of the need to care for the marine environment "I'm hoping that the SeLife Center will serve as an instrument to make the public aware of what we have and how much we have to work to protect it"

Scientific work with marine mammals requires that scientists obtain a permit guaranteeing the proper care and humane treatment of the animals The center can hold these permits for the scientists and provide that guarantee "We are here to provide folks with a facility to carry out their work, be it rehabbing stranded animals, be it research or what have you And to have at their disposal a ready pool of expertise to help them in their goals, said Adderholt

The center's staff hopes to fund research on Alaska's seabirds and marine mammals indefinitely through tourism It seems possible The expected number of visitors in the first year is a whopping one quarter million people

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

Editorial

Regarding three individuals who made longlasting decisions

In recent days three individuals have made decisions that have had effects that aren t of the ordinary kind These will have lasting effects for years

The decision last week by Gov Tony Knowles to authorize the purchase of 107 acres on the Homer Spit and Beluga Slough for preservation will have an effect that will preserve an element of the soul of Homer indefinitely

Knowles approved the use of almost $1 million of Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement money to buy the land which is prime migratory bird habitat

Birds are such a part of Homer that each year their arrival is celebrated in the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival

Our area is known and valued for its natural splendor and preserving the land that will be purchased is in recognition of that

• • •

We d like to take note of the remarkable fortune of a Mexican man whose life was saved by the quick action of a Homer youngster, 16-year-old Holli Mitchell in Puerto Escondido

Holli gave the breath of life to Juan Francisco after onlookers had pulled him from a shoreside resort pool She saw the incident from her hotel room and knowing CPR, ran to see if she could help When she got to the pool side two men were making an attempt to evive Francisco but none was giving the kind of first aid needed

Holli asked someone to call for help and began administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation Francisco survived thanks to her quick action

But it isn't by luck that such happy events transpire A lot of thanks goes to those who made it possible for people like Holli Mitchell to learn life-saving skills Holli learned CPR as part of a course for babysitters offered by South Peninsula Hospital and has gotten refresher courses in Homer Schools

Her mother Margot Kilcher said she was never more proud of her daughter Well we re all proud of her and of those who made her knowledge possible

• • •

This week Elmer Rasmuson the man behind the National Bank of Alaska personally donated 1 42 acres worth $180 000 to the Homer Chamber of Commerce That benevolence was a great step forward for the chamber s plans to play a greater and stronger role for the business community in Homer and surrounding areas

Years from now Homer will feel the positive effects of this decision by this individual benefactor Our hats off

HOMER NEWS
OPINION
1/29/98

Letters

For the birds ... not

Dear Editor

I think Brother Asaiah has been wrong all these years It s not whirling on the cosmic vortex but swirling down the cosmic vortex

The city of Homer must be just tickled by the governor s action to secure its new tourist park and in truth I am somewhat glad the city will have a new park too But what I believe has really happened is that we have all just continued the paving of that famous road straight to you-know where

In 1989 Exxon oiled a good part of the state of Alaska s coastline They were punished with large fines money that was meant to be spent to conserve sensitive biologically important marine and estuarine animal habitat A portion of that money became available to the Homer area and a group of citizens (well intentioned) and local organizations (self-interested) thought it would be a good idea to use the money to buy up about 60 acres at the base of the Spit and about 40 in the Beluga Slough — not to protect critical wildlife habitat as they claimed or hoped but to protect the visitor industry s Shorebird Festival

Neither of these two pieces of land in my opinion has value as a critical conservancy district They might have at one time but from when the road split the slough in half through the building of the Bypass and the development of both the airways (which are right in the path of both pieces of property) the creation of the city sewer and water plant right up to when Herndon & Thompson dozed all the grassland on the Spit I have watched the steady decline of migratory birds in the city of Homer to the point where I question the significance of these pieces of land as important wildlife areas

If we are going to have a city with two main flyways basically downtown who could really expect any birds to want to hang out in their flightpath? I am not a biological scientist or a bird expert I am only basing my opinion on 30 years of watching the flocks steadily shrink

There are a lot of truly wild areas in and around the bay that are not as well protected as one might think The Fox River Delta comes immediately to mind all the native land on this and the other side of the Inlet seems to be open to the highest bidder hell the state is so short of cash these days I bet they d take a cool mill to make Mars Cove a conservancy district then at least that park would have some kind of symbolic meaning

I can see a lot of benefit in creating the two mini parks as planned It will certainly benefit the current landowners who will be receiving an average of $10 000 per acre for the tideland (about what a prime view lot on the hill with power gets) It will benefit the city fathers and associated organizations who will have appeared to have done something environmental It will benefit the tourist industry Now they will be able to sell out the area by creating even more ways to draw more gas guzzling trash-spewing A-mer kin tourists to town whether or not there are birds to see

It will benefit our (Republican?) governor who needs to buy back some support from this area after selling us out on various oil lease sales It may even benefit me if I happen to have earplugs to filter out the plane noise when I walk the beach in these area

But the one thing it will not benefit is the birds and other marine life so much in danger from our careless encroachment in this fragile cold world If the city of Homer wants a park then it should procure and pay for one and not use what precious few dollars there are for true conservancy to create a tourist park The oil shipping industry gave the wild world a big old stab in the guts in 89 and the tourist industry twists the knife sweetly now

Earth first

Craig Phillips

Knowles seals buy of Spit land

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

Gov Tony Knowles signed an order Thursday of last week approving the use of nearly $1 million of Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement money for the purchase of 107 acres on the Homer Spit and Beluga Slough for migratory bird habitat

Some 67 acres on the east side of the Spit near Mud Bay and 40 more acres edging the Beluga Slough will be freed of any threat of development The deal has been widely supported by residents, business owners city and Kenai Peninsula Borough officials as well as hordes of bird watchers thousands of whom descend on Homer each spring for the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival

It was great news! exclaimed Barb Seaman executive director of the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust which had worked hard to bring the land deal about She said Knowles is due a lot of thanks for using a 'rarely used tool to make the land deal happen

"It will provide long-term protection for a place that s pretty valuable to Homer s peace of mind and its economy' Seaman said It's the kind of project that appeals to all kinds of people It's hard to live with the idea it might have gone down It has secured something special for Homer for a long time to come It s wonderful

The land deal had been hammered together by the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust and a California based nonprofit called The Trust for Public Land which has expertise in arranging land purchases Together they negotiated purchase options with landowners but some of those agreements had January deadlines attached

Knowles move was supported by Rep Gail Phillips and Sen John Torgerson who had been working to find a way to ensure the deal s success after the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee late last year declined to consider approving use of spill money for the land deal Instead the committee chose to defer any decision to the full Legislature meaning the next likely funding device would be the Supplemental Budget a bill not expected to reach a vote until sometime next month

In addition some lawmakers were showing agreement with Alaska Sen Frank Murkowski who recently had said that enough spill money had been spent on land purchases already and that there ought to be a moratorium on more

Expiration on some of the purchase options was imminent when Knowles gave the go-ahead to proceed with the deal under statutory authority relating to the use of the oil spill money According to Torgerson the legislature cannot reverse the governor s OK

The land deal had received some opposition from city councilmen Luke Welles and Ray Kranich who said it was overpriced and the money was better used elsewhere But they lost in a 4-2 vote in which the Homer City Council favored the purchase

"Purchase of these properties will protect the unique and diverse resources associated with the Homer Spit and help support the economic growth associated with tourism ' Homer Mayor Jack Cushing said

Tens of thousands of migrating birds use the two areas during their long journeys north toward the Interior each spring Several years ago, local organizers initiated the shorebird festival that now draws thousands of visitors to the Homer area each spring It is recognized not only as a valuable educational experience but as a boon to the local economy as well

Scientists: Fish waste could sound warning for marine life in peril

PENINSULA CLARION
2/2/98

ANCHORAGE (AP) — Scientists examining the aftermath of the 11-million gallon Exxon Valdez oil spill say fish waste could be the early warning of an ecosystem in peril

"It might allow us to see it (trouble) coming in enough time to do something," scientist Jeff Short said

Short presented findings Friday to more than 250 scientists gathered in Anchorage for a science symposium stemming from the Prince William Sound tanker wreck in 1989

Gatherings are held annually to review oil spill research and plan the next year s studies

Short and Patricia Harris, Juneau-based biologists working at the National Marine Fisheries Service, have spent about $400,000 on fish waste studies over the past four years

Funding is through a $1 billion oil spill settlement paid by Exxon Corp to resolve government claims

Most spending so far has gone to acquire coastal lands while $90 million has been used for scientific research

Short and Harris are tracking a nontoxic hydrocarbon called pristane, contained in shrimp-like crustacean that young fish consume for essential fat

Most of the pristane is absorbed across the intestine, but some is excreted as feces ' Short said Waste is then ingested by mussels, where it can be tracked by scientists

Research is starting to correlate high levels of pristane with booming populations of species that seek out the food such as salmon and herring Low levels of pristane could indicate a problem

Since 1994, the scientists have been collecting mussel samples sometimes monthly and biweekly, from 30 sites in the sound

Short who also studied pristane levels in the sound in the 1970s says data so far show a link between a significant drop in pristane and salmon population collapse

The oil spill trustees' chief scientist, Robert Spies says work by Harris and Short is "very innovative ' — and could prove a key tool in monitoring the sound's relative health

PENINSULA CLARION 1-23-98

Volcano center land purchase considered

Assembly plans hearings in Soldotna and Ninilchik

By DOUG LOSHBAUGH
Peninsula Clarion

Organizers would like the Kenai Peninsula Borough to buy a $450,000 site near the mouth of Stariski Creek for the proposed North Pacific Volcano Learning Center, then lease it for $1 a year for up to five years After that the center would have to lease or buy the land for the going rate on the open market

The borough assembly agreed after some debate Tuesday to consider the idea It set public hearings for Feb 3 in Ninilchik and Feb 17 in Soldotna on an ordinance to buy the land

Kenai assembly member Tim Navarre who introduced the ordinance, said the borough purchase would allow North Pacific Volcano Learning Center Inc to focus on raising construction money without fear of losing the 84-acre parcel by Stariski Creek The $12 5 million center would include $5 million in interactive volcano and seismic exhibits and research equipment, plus nature trails along lower Stariski Creek

The center has already paid $50,000 on the land, but must soon make two balloon payments of $200,000 each That will be difficult for a fledgling group that just started fund-raising three months ago, wrote Judy Salo development director, in a Jan 7 letter to the borough

Emmitt Trimble, president of the center s board, said the nonprofit group will make its payments even without the borough s help but borough help to complete the purchase now would make fund-raising easier

Some opposed that, though During testimony Tuesday, Kalifornsky Beach Road resident John Kistler called the ordinance a $450 000 gift to the center

Our borough government isn t here to dole out charity ' he said

Navarre said it s not a gift If the borough buys the land the center would lease it for $1 a year for up to five years After that, the center would pay the going rate on the open market Or it could buy the land at fair market value or $450 000 whichever is more Until it did, the borough would own the land

Navarre said the assembly has cut better breaks for other groups Just before taking up the volcano center issue, it donated borough land worth $195 000 to the Cooper Landing Community Club It previously sold the city of Kenai land for a well for $1

Kistler said the borough shouldn't buy new land for public use until it distributes some of the land it already owns

Soldotna's Francis Riley said spending $450,000 is absurd when the borough already owns land suitable for the volcano center But Trimble said the group could find just one other borough parcel on the bluff That s a former landfill south of Ninilchik now used as a Dumpster site

The borough owns land at the mouth of Stariski Creek adjoining the 84 acres But that s in the estuary he said, and not suited for development

Seward assembly member Patrick O Brien said that while the center s group leases the land for $1 a year the borough would forego roughly $30,000 a year in lease payments He said he wouldn t object to spending the money if there were life-safety issues at stake and wouldn t mind giving the volcano center land the borough already owns But it s not in the borough s interest to provide $450 000 start-up funding for a local economic development project he said

Afterward Trimble said the new Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward will bring boroughwide benefits and the volcano center would be no different

Trimble said he s seen class trips travel to the Epcot Center at Disney World in Florida Why shouldn t Florida students come here? Imagine visiting the Kenai Fjords, the SeaLife Center, Exit Glacier the Challenger Center, the Volcano Learning Center the Pratt Museum and the proposed Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge visitor center, he said

'If I were in junior high or in high school that would be an incredible trip," he said "I've spent money for my daughter to do things like that People are much more likely to come to an area if there s more than one thing to visit

While the borough may forego some lease revenues, he said it would gain from appreciation of the land One bluff parcel the center s land selection committee looked at doubled in appraised value in just two years, he said Trimble a Realtor, said bluff land sells well and would likely appreciate faster than borough investment accounts Jeff Sinz, borough finance director said borough investments now earn about 5 81 percent a year

Meanwhile the borough owns land surrounding the Stariski Creek estuary and has selected state land that separates the 84 acres from the Sterling Highway The three parcels together form an extraordinary property, Trimble said As a developer he d love to have it but it has higher purposes — the volcano center and preservation of the Stariski Creek estuary nature trails and public access to the beach

Trimble said the volcano center would bring hotels, restaurants RV parks, gas stations and gift shops — all the private enterprise that follows such projects If O Brien wants revenue he said, what s the borough tax on a $3 million hotel?

' Should we purchase land to get some of these projects off the ground? Homer assembly member Drew Scalzi asked Tuesday ' In this case I think we should '

Scalzi said the idea deserves a public hearing The assembly voted 5-2 to introduce the ordinance and set public hearings, with O Brien and Grace Merkes voting against Jack Brown and Debra Horne were absent

In other business Tuesday the assembly

■ Approved purchase of land to expand the borough s maintenance and public works facility on Poppy

OVER

Lane

■ Authorized transfer of the rifle range in Cooper Landing to the Cooper Landing Community Club

■ Rejected a bill to allow hardship deferments of assessments for borough special assessment districts because of concerns about how the bill would affect the borough s ability to get good bond rates and how people would qualify for deferments

■ Upheld the borough planning commission s decision not to vacate a right of way to the beach near the mouth of the Anchor River

Buzz Kyllonen who appealed the planning commission decision, questioned the legality of a borough permit to allow construction of a road down the right of way A stream flows through it he said though Lisa Parker, borough planning director said inspectors found no stream in August Several citizens and state agencies have opposed vacating the right of way

Kyllonen said there's better public access to the beach and said the proposed road crosses sensitive habitat He said the borough sets no standards for construction of roads in public rights of way Parker said the assembly deleted such standards from an ordinance it passed 18 months ago

While the assembly declined the appeal, Scalzi said it may have been shortsighted to delete construction standards for roads on rights of way from the bill The assembly should revisit the issue, he said

Volcano center no cinch

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
FEBRUARY 3, 1998

Project at Stariski has critics fuming

By TOM KIZZIA
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

HOMER — The grassy knob on the Cook Inlet bluff has a sweeping view of Augustine, Iliamna, Redoubt and Spurr volcanoes Local promoters say there's no better place to build a volcano tourist attraction than on this bluff at Stariski, where such a facility would bring economic development to the sleepy coast north of Anchor Point

But a proposal to have local government invest $450,000 in the 84 acre parcel for a volcano learning center has started ominous rumblings in the Kenai Peninsula Borough, where mistrust of government spending has long been part of a conservative political tradition

A public hearing tonight in Ninilchik and Feb 17 in Soldotna will help the borough assembly decide whether to commit funds to the $12 5-million volcano project, which organizers see as a key addition to a chain of educational tourist sites along the Kenai Peninsula

"When you drive down the highway and look at those volcanoes, you want to share them with the world," said Simone Clutts, an Anchor Point hotel owner and former president of the North Pacific Volcano Learning Center board

Clutts said the project was first conceived as a way to bring jobs and spinoff development to the coast between Anchor Point and Ninilchik "For four years, all we got were pats on the back for our work — until we started talking about public money "

Some critics are now asking why the borough should buy land or spend money to develop tourism in the Anchor Point area They vented steam on a recent Kenai call-in show

"We were getting more attention than the crisis at the White House," said the learning center's development director, former state Sen Judy Salo, who sat through the series of hostile calls with KSRM talk show host Paul Fischer, another former senator

In addition, questions have been raised about whether the group agreed to pay too much for the Stariski land Critics also are asking about the potential conflict in having Emmitt Trimble, the real estate broker who represented the Stariski landowner, serve as the new president of the 11-person volcano center board

Trimble said he stood aside when the board agreed to meet the asking price of the landowner, who was not seeking to sell her land Asked to represent the board, he disclosed his dual agent role as required by law, he said He is not being compensated by the board, he said, but he declined to say what his commission would be from the seller

Trimble, who also owns a subdivision south of the proposed site, was named president of the volcano center board in January On Monday, he called the borough money a loan rather than a grant because the center plans to pay back the money eventually

Plans call for a 20,000 square foot visitor center complete with nature trails and a heli pad for volcano tours across Cook Inlet Traveling school groups would be targeted, with trips tied to the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward and the planned Challenger space center in Kenai

Since summer, the group has raised just $50 000 in cash plus in-kind donations said Salo, who is getting $1,500 a month as development director Promoters hope to raise most of the $12 5 million from Congress, the state the National Science Foundation and private grants, she said

The first step was finding a site No suitable borough land was available along the bluff between Homer and Kenai said Clutts Last summer, organizers put a $50,000 down payment on a former homestead on the bluff above the mouth of Stariski Creek

Money for the proposed purchase would not come from property tax revenues, according to the plan before the assembly Instead funds would be drawn from the borough's $2-million-plus land management fund, which collects revenues from sale and lease of borough land, said a sponsor, Kenai assemblyman Tim Navarre

The learning center would begin paying market price for the lease after five years with an option to purchase, according to the proposal

The borough never bought land for a non profit group like this but has turned over parcels of borough land to nonprofits and communities officials said

Port Graham to rebuild

HOMER NEWS
1-29-98

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

Port Graham villagers say they are determined to pick up the pieces and rebuild a cannery and hatchery destroyed in a mid night fire Jan 14

Port Graham and Nanwalek village officials, the board that operated the hatchery and representatives of the seafood company that leased the cannery agreed last week to roll up their sleeves and rebuild

And it appears state officials may be lining up to give the village some help, although it is premature to say just what form that help will take

I told them I would try to do my part Sen John Torgerson said

Whether that turns out to be an appropriation in the Supplemental Budget a loan say through the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority or some other financial mechanism entirely Torgerson could not say Too many details about costs insurance and the like have yet to be determined All he could say was that the will to help is there

Pat Springer an aide to Rep Gail Phillips said there are efforts underway to find a way to help Port Graham s recovery efforts She said Monday they have been in touch with Lamar Cotten deputy commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs

Cotten said that at this point there is little concrete to say except that the department has been in touch with village officials Just how the department might participate in a rebuilding effort is not clear but he did say that if Port Graham is unable to get the cannery back in operation in time for the summer season DCRA has a dislocated worker program that might be able to offer some financial relief

Our department is working with Phillips office to get a handle on the situation and find ways to help Obviously they are trying to get up and running before the season

He said Port Graham has demonstrated some good initiative in moving toward rebuilding In the long run he said there may be some loans some special legislation or something the state can do to help

Martin Richard director of the Division of Investments of the Department of Commerce said the division administers a loan program for the hatchery He said a division loan officer has been in contact with Port Graham officials He said the original loan to the hatchery which is only a year or so old contains a statutory clause that grants the hatchery 6 years free of payments or interest That means that at least the hatchery has no payments to worry about he said

Richard said he doesn t know if or whether the state can loan more money

At a village meeting last week that included representatives of the Hatchery Board the Port Graham Village Corporation and Village Council Port Graham Seafoods the Nanwalek Sockeye Project and Chugach Regional Resources Commission the villagers discussed funding options for recovery from the devastating economic and spiritual losses the fire caused

The village council and the hatchery board independently voted to support reconstruction and to continue operations said Village First Chief Elenore McMullen and corporation President Pat Norman in a press release

The village corporation agreed voting to proceed with rebuilding and have it ready by the 1998 season Additionally the three groups voted to continue the partnership that linked the cannery and hatchery operations

Corporate board member Walter Meganack Jr suggested it might be time to realize our dream of a value added processing/hatchery facility

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 1-28-98

Port Graham will rebuild fish plant

HOMER (AP) — Port Graham s villagers have decided to rebuild their cannery and salmon hatchery that were destroyed by fire earlier this month

The village corporation wants to have a fish processing operation running by June 15 council chief Elenore McMullen told the Anchorage Daily News

The hatchery owned by an arm of the village council plans to take eggs this summer to keep its program going then build a new permanent hatchery when it can raise the estimated $2 million that would be needed

The decision to rebuild emerged from two talking circles in the village attended by 30 to 40 people each where villagers talked about the loss and what to do McMullen said She said the way the village came together to fight the all night fire Jan 14 and save nearby buildings provided the inspiration to rebuild

JUNEAU EMPIRE 1-15-98

SeaLife Center plans grand opening event

By MARY LOU BARRY
THE JUNEAU EMPIRE

The Alaska SeaLife Center, scheduled to open soon in Seward, is seeking entertainers to participate in its upcoming grand opening events on April 25 and May 2

Entertainers being recruited include, but are not limited to, musicians, singers, dancers, clowns, jugglers and face painters Groups of all ages are encouraged to apply

Those wishing consideration should send a brief written proposal to Alaska SeaLife Center Grand Opening Committee, c/o RISE Alaska, 880 H Street, Suite 101, Anchorage, 99501 An accompanying videotape or audio cassette is recommended Deadline for submission is March 15, 1998 For more information call Maureen at (907) 276-8095

Letters to the Editor

PENINSULA CLARION
1/14/98

Lots of good reasons to locate new center on Funny River Road

Editor's Note The following letter was sent to the Kenai River Center Committee and submitted for publication

Regarding the recent government grant monies allocated to relocate the Kenai River Center, the Funny River Chamber of Commerce would like to recommend an environmentally friendly site This site is commonly known as the Hanson Ranch or River Ranch located approximately 12 miles down Funny River Road

The Hanson Ranch was recently purchased by the Alaska State Parks with money from the Exxon Valdez settlement The property is approximately 147 acres containing beautiful fields and woodlands including approximately 1/2 mile of Kenai River frontage We feel the potential for this site is unlimited Other positive aspects for your consideration to select this site include

- The state already owns the property allowing all money to be used for construction development of the property facility, informational resources and showcase bank restoration projects
- The river bank is large and diverse enough to accommodate different techniques of river bank restoration for demonstration and experimentation
- The lot has substantial depth to locate any size structure remote from the river bank
- There s adequate room for future expansion of the facility and education programs
- The natural habitat provides an excellent location for a river-habitat education facility
- It s an historical site which includes the old homestead and river crossing site for the original homesteaders
- It s located close to three major tributaries of the Kenai River the Kiley Moose River and Funny River
- Due to close proximity to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge there is an abundance of wildlife
- The property is large enough to accommodate the river center and possible recreational use
- From the river s mouth to Kenai Lake it is a river midway point
- Power and water already are in place
- The future holds much opportunity for the Funny River area with the upcoming bridge construction and road improvements

We greatly appreciate your consideration and support

Michael Lengenfelder
Vice president
Funny River Chamber of Commerce

PENINSULA CLARION 2/1/98

Port Dick Creek excavation helps restore salmon runs

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound spilling nearly 11 millions 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

More than 30 years after the 1964 earthquake destroyed some prime salmon spawning habitat, chums have returned to newly opened tributaries of Port Dick Creek

Port Dick, on the outer coast of the Kenai Peninsula, got hit hard by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and commercial fishing was closed for the summer To help restore the area, biologist Nick Dudiak, who recently retired from the Department of Fish and Game in Homer, promoted an idea he had been talking about for years — the revival of Port Dick Creek

The creek has two tributaries which were part of a system that contributed heavily to salmon runs in the '50s and '60s

Then the earthquake hit, raising the elevation of the stream, piling up rock, mud and woody debris, and wiping out the salmon runs

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Dudiak and biologist Mark Dickson felt that the two tributaries could again be good producers of pink and chum salmon, if the stream could be restored to its original state 'Build it and they will come" was Nick's motto

They were concerned, however, that if they went to the trouble and expense of scooping out the streams, Mother Nature might step in again with another earthquake or perhaps another huge flood

Sure enough, a 1995 storm resulted in a 100-year flood on some parts of the Kenai Peninsula While the flood took a heavy toll in some areas, Port Dick Creek remained unscathed, much to Dickson's relief "There was no additional deposition," he said "It gave us more confidence that the direction we were headed was the right direction "

The excavation took place in 1996 Engineers studied the grade and curves of the stream carefully, attempting to reproduce exactly the earlier path Technicians laid down rocks trees stumps and other natural features in places exactly determined to match the stream's flow Everything came from the creek itself, with the help of some heavy equipment

The idea was to create spawning habitat and they must have done it pretty well Even though more than 20 years passed, the next summer 450 pink salmon and 300 chums charged up both tributaries without any extra enticements — like they'd actually emerged from their egg sacs there

The following spring there were many more fry than either of the biologists ever expected A preliminary count showed more than 290,000 pink and chum fry in the tributaries — almost a 40 percent survival rate

Now the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is predicting a harvestable surplus of chums by the year 2000 They'll continue to monitor the stream for any changes

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

PENINSULA CLARION 1/11/98

Eight years later, crews return to clean some beaches

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling, nearly 11 millions 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

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Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Deja vu Haven't we been here before? The intertidal zone is necklaced with yellow and gray links of boom People in yellow bib overalls xtratufs, gloves and helmets are staggered along the beach Hoses link the barges anchored off the beach to the upper tide zone The drone of generators drowns out any sound of the surf

Eight years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill villagers from Chenega Bay returned to nearby beaches last June to clean oil stubbornly entrenched behind boulders and under sand Chenegans have been working to get the oil off their beaches for a long time For three summers cleanup crews flushed them with cold water and hot water treatments In 1994, two years after the cleanup officially ended, they returned to the beach to dig up 38 tons of oily sediment from under musselbeds and they did it all by hand

Last June, under the guidance of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, they applied a chemical agent to the weathered oil on beaches on LaTouche and Evans islands A chemical treatment was necessary, said the DEC's Diane Munson, because the oil had been there for eight years and wasn't changing

They picked PES-51, a citrus-based product Tests conducted at Sleepy Bay in 1993 did not show any evidence of PES-51 harmed the environment, according to Munson and project manager Steve Rog And it was very effective 'We saw 70-90 percent of reduction in the subsurface oil," Rog said

' It's main ingredient is a limonene, which is from the oil of oranges and lemons," said Munson "One thing PES-51 does that other oil cleaners don t do, is it binds to the oil and it floats So we were able to collect it (using oil-absorbant pads) and get it out of the environment

Since 1993 PES has been used for decontamination on oil spills in Puerto Rico, Florida and Hawaii

Due to concern about any possible toxic effects workers could use only one gallon of PES-51 for every 250 square feet of beach At Shelter Bay they injected a small amount of PES-51 into the ground under asphalt and boulders The chemical and the oil floated down to the water's edge where it was trapped by multiple layers of boom surrounding the shore There was a 'pad patrol" on the beach to collect the oil and chemical before they could hit the water

We collected most of it, mainly because they weren t using enough PES to liquify the oil said Rog "What we do get is a brown rainbow sheen and we can skim it up as the tide is dropping and get most of that off prior to the fucus and seaweed being exposed "

NOAA's Auke Bay Lab will monitor the sites for at least a year Preliminary reports look good said Chris Broderson of the Auke Bay Lab 'The cleanup crew did a remarkable job of not causing any damage to the intertidal zone, she said

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

Point of View

Homer News 1/29/98

Exxon, it's time to pay up for the '89 oil spill

by Rick Steiner

Back in the 1980s when I lived in Cordova I had a friend named Gene Rossilini He lived in a small smoky wood hut in Shelter Cove a mile or so north of town Gene was convinced that someday soon, the world as we knew and loved it would end To prepare for this eventuality he walked many miles every day loaded with over 100 pounds of rocks on his back climbing local mountains marching along roads He wore ragged clothes looked sooty and bedraggled and seldom bathed claiming that bathing is just a bourgeois affectation' He was contemplative kind generous and troubled To the few he let in he spoke of his dire concern for the world Many thought he was crazy

Then on March 24 1989 the recklessness of one of the largest corporations in the world caused one of the most damaging industrial disasters in human history — the Exxon Valdez oil spill — right here in Alaska The spill spread over 10 000 square miles of Alaska s coastal ocean oiled 1 500 miles of some of the most beautiful and productive coastline in the world including national wildlife refuges and parks killed more marine mammals and seabirds than any industrial disaster ever and sent coastal communities into a social and economic tailspin from which none have fully recovered

A recent publication by Time magazine ranks the Exxon spill as one of the most significant events of the 20th century alongside such others as the holocaust the airplane the Russian revolution Hiroshima and Nagasaki the invention of television and computers the moon landing the Titanic etc Time says the Exxon Valdez oil spill highlights Planet Earth s imperiled natural resources'

Just after the grounding of the Exxon Valdez the Exxon Corporation stood in front of the community in what ultimately became known as the mother-of-all corporate public relations disasters This was in front of a group of people who from the earliest days of the pipeline debate had expressed concern that someday despite the assurances of government and the oil industry an Exxon Valdez would occur and it would catastrophically disrupt their fishing economy and way of life At the 1989 town meeting Exxon told the people that they were lucky because it was Exxon who had ' besmirched their beautiful Prince William Sound" and that Exxon does business straight Exxon went on to promise that the people whose lives were affected by this spill would be made whole by Exxon

But now after eight and a half years of costly litigation and a $5 billion judgment against Exxon the corporation continues to fight paying the human victims of its recklessness what an unbiased Alaska jury has determined to be necessary to punish and correct Exxon's behavior Exxon continues to file motion after motion appeal after appeal in what has become a comedy of desperation arrogance and utter disdain for the people of Alaska whose lives they turned upside down All of our lives have been diminished by this and communities such as Kodiak Chenega Bay Homer Cordova Valdez Kenai Chignik Whittier Tatitlek Nanwalek Port Graham Old Harbor Ahkiok etc deserve better It is time for Exxon to end this legal chess game pay what they owe and let everyone get on with their lives

Just after the grounding of the Exxon Valdez, the Exxon Corporation stood in front of the community in what ultimately became known as "the mother-of-all corporate public relations disasters"

It is now incumbent on Exxon to step to the plate admit their recklessness pay the people they hurt and release Alaska and Alaskans from the prolonged and ongoing agony of this oil spill Without prejudging the appellate process there should be no realistic chance whatsoever that Exxon's appeals will be successful They were reckless they know it the world knows it and they now have to compensate the victims of their reckless disregard for the Alaska people and environment Attempts to delay all of this will only add to the bitterness and resentment of industry which is in no one's best interest not even Exxon's

As Exxon caused this disaster and it has been found reckless by a jury of Alaska citizens it is right that they should have to pay the largest environmental verdict in history and it is undoubtedly in society s interest to have this thing resolved now The longer this drags out the more damage will be caused Dr Steven Picou who has studied many an industrial disaster around the world has found that the social and psychological effects of these disasters will abate only when there is a just resolution of all the litigation For Exxon to continue profiting at the expense of the Alaska people economy and environment is evidence that the company is morally bankrupt indeed

It is a tragic commentary on Exxon s sense of social responsibility that hundreds of the people who were harmed by this company s negligence have since passed away with no reparation whatsoever Some such as the former mayor of Cordova chose to take their own lives rather than continue to exist in the emotional chaos from the Exxon spill The law few years of these lives were entirely dominated by the Exxon Valdez and too much of all of our lives has been swept into this maelstrom It is time for this madness to end It is time for Exxon to resolve this mess There are any number of legitimate ways the state and federal governments can encourage Exxon to take care of this and they should do so

I have discussed all of this with many people throughout the state and nation and most seem to agree that it is time for Exxon to stop holding Alaska hostage to its own antiquated corporate ideology and bring this to closure

As for my friend Gene Rossilini who was prepared for almost anything he was found dead one morning in his hut a year or so after the spill He had taken his own life and lay dead on the frozen dirt floor of what he thought was his refuge from the industrial world on the shore of Prince William Sound Crazy wasn t he?

Rick Steiner a biologist who lives in Anchorage is a former Cordova resident who fished commercially for 20 years He has been active in issues surrounding the Exxon Valdez oil spill

JUNEAU EMPIRE JANUARY 28, 1998

University may not get fisheries research funds

By LORI THOMSON
THE JUNEAU EMPIRE

University scientists may get left behind as a state-of-the-art fisheries research center takes off

In question is whether the University of Alaska will be able to get the $22 million needed for its part of the complex the National Marine Fisheries Service has planned for Lena Point, 17 miles north of downtown

"I'll be blunt I think there's a real good chance we aren't going to get on the bus at this stop," said Tony Gharrett, director of the fisheries division for the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences The program operates largely out of Juneau

The fisheries school planned to be a part of the research complex because it is in dire need of more space and up-to date facilities Without those, not just the fisheries program, but the entire University of Alaska Fairbanks could lose its accreditation, Gharrett said

'I'm really worried about our future," he said 'If we're the small tail on the dog wagging the tail of accreditation, the easiest way to deal with this is to dock the tail "

The fisheries complex was designed so the federal portion could move ahead even without the university program, which is planned to be in a separate building, said John Gorman of the National Marine Fisheries Service

However, a partnership with the university was expected to help the center gain a reputation as a focal point for marine research and draw scientists from around the world to meetings and conferences, Gorman said

' We still feel strongly that this facility is nothing but enhanced by having the university presence," he said ' If the university presence is not there, it's going to diminish the importance of the facility "

> "I'll be blunt I think there's a real good chance we aren't going to get on the bus at this stop
>
> **Tony Gharrett**

The university's board of regents already approved $1 million for planning and design of the facility, and more funds are in the budget request to the state Legislature, said John Keating, provost of the University of Alaska Fairbanks

With the state's capital budget as tight as it is, Keating said he's not optimistic the project will get funded this year However, he said funding could extend over three or four years

Besides the Legislature, the university is also looking into partial funding from the federal government, the provost said

Another possible source might be the trust fund from the Exxon Valdez oil spill because the money would be going toward marine research, suggested Rep Bill Hudson, a Juneau Republican

Hudson said it's too early to know if the Legislature will support funding the research facility, but he noted that the project affects not only Juneau, but also Fairbanks, where the fisheries program is based, and coastal communities that depend on fisheries

"This is not just for Juneau, even though it might be sited in Juneau," Hudson said

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 1/12/98

Shellfish hatchery opens

SEWARD (AP) — The city state and Qutekcak Native tribe have signed agreements to get a new shellfish hatchery up and running this year

We re trying to get it up as fast as we can because everyone wants us to have some production by spring Qutekcak hatchery manager Jon Agosti told the Seward Phoenix Log

The $3 2 million shellfish hatchery the first of its kind in Alaska has been empty since construction ended in April It s intended to raise shellfish such as oysters and clams, which would be sold to ocean farmers who would continue to grow the shellfish to a marketable size in undersea cages

Under the five year rent free contract, the city accepted responsibility for operating insuring maintaining and repairing the hatchery The city then contracted with the Seward-based Native group which has run a small pilot hatchery from a building at the Institute of Marine Science for several years

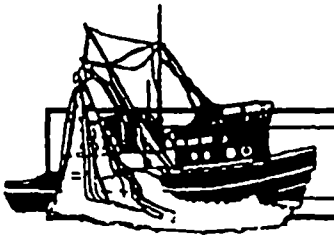
Agosti said he hopes to have young Pacific oysters and littleneck clams ready for sale by May Farmers ' all want to have it ready to plant in the first spring bloom in the ocean, which is April through June he said But Agosti conceded that target could be optimistic

The hatchery isn t quite ready to go The concrete floor has cracked already and needs to be repaired The state has a one year warranty for workmanship from the contractor, Janssen Contracting Co of Anchorage

The Legislature awarded an additional $250 000 last year for some of the water pipes and tanks That money has not yet been released Agosti said

Qutekcak also will have to spend about $100 000 of its own money to complete installation of the seawater treatment and distribution system Agosti said

Even with the facility fully functioning officials say problems during the first year would not be unexpected Two new hatcheries built in the Pacific Northwest in the past 15 years couldn t rear anything for the first year Agosti said The animals died Gradually the problem went away Hatchery managers think the problem may have been caused by latent toxicity in the new pipes



SEAWATCH

HOMER NEWS
1/15/98

LOCAL OYSTER FARMERS could finally get the high quality spat they ve longed for when the new shellfish hatchery in Seward goes into production The $3 2 million facility was built with state and federal funds but the Department of Fish and Game would not turn over the keys without assurances it would be managed well and it has been empty since construction finished last April according to the Seward Phoenix Log Last week Seward accepted responsibility for the hatchery turning over the operation to Qutekcak Native Tribe Though hatchery manager Jon Agosti told the paper he thought spat might be available for purchase by May he also said the building is far from operational The concrete floor needs repair and a seawater treatment and distribution system must be finished

Contracts signed to open Seward shellfish hatchery

PENINSULA CLARION
JANUARY 12, 1998

SEWARD (AP) — The city, state and Qutekcak Native tribe have signed agreements to get a new shellfish hatchery up and running this year

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See HATCHERY, back page

...Hatchery

Continued from page A 1

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Even with the facility fully functioning, officials say problems during the first year would not be unexpected Two new hatcheries built in the Pacific Northwest in the past 15 years couldn't rear anything for the first year, Agosti said The animals died Gradually, the problem went away Hatchery managers think the problem may have been caused by latent toxicity in the new pipes

Pacific oysters are the main shellfish being farmed in Alaska Farmers sold about $300,000 of the oysters in 1995, according to the state Department of Fish and Game

But Pacific oysters are not native to Alaska and don't spawn in the cold water here Farmers have had to buy seed from the Pacific Northwest and haven t always been happy with the quality or availability

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS JANUARY 22, 1998

Bird-habitat deal may run out of time

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — A hard fought and popular effort to protect migratory bird habitat along Homer Spit can't seem to get off the ground in Juneau, and backers say time may be running out

State lawmakers twice have dismissed attempts at speedy approval of the purchase which involves buying up 107 acres of wetlands with close to $1 million in Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement funds

Lawmakers, among them House Speaker Gail Phillips of Homer, said the proposal should follow the normal path toward a vote by the whole Legislature Proponents of the land deal say agreements made months ago with several private land owners might expire before that vote can be made The first expires Jan 31

The land in question is a patchwork quilt of private property knitted together by agreements made months ago with five land owners

Each spring, thousands of sea birds flock to the beach at Mud Bay and nearby Beluga Slough to stoke up on food for their continued migration north to nesting sites Their arrival signals spring and triggers the first wave of tourists in Homer A broad mix of environmentalists, politicians and businesses want the birds to keep coming An outpouring of letters, many from bird lovers in the Lower 48, convinced the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to buy the land

The only thing holding up the deal is approval by the state Legislature While Peninsula lawmakers, including Phillips, feel that approval is a good bet, it still may arrive a little too late, Rogers said

"If one drops out, it jeopardizes the whole package," said Chris Rogers, Alaska project manager for the Trust For Public Lands, a San Francisco-based

Please see Page B 3 SPIT

SPIT: Legislative delays could scuttle land purchase

Continued from Page B 1

group that spent more than a year pulling all the parties together "If we lose one, we could have development smack in the middle of a protected area, and it could offset the reason property was bought '

On Wednesday, the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee declined to discuss the land deal because it wasn't on the committee's already full agenda, said Sen Randy Phillips, R-Eagle River, who chairs the committee

The same committee voted against the deal in December when it met prior to the session At the time, lawmakers said they wanted all budget decisions to be made by the Legislature as a whole, not by a committee Some also agreed with U S Sen Frank Murkowski, who questioned whether the oil spill trustees were spending too much of the settlement on land and not research and economic development

Murkowski plans to address the Legislature today How the spill money should be spent is among the topics he is expected to cover

The land purchase could show up in the supplemental budget, which Gov Tony Knowles will deliver to the Legislature by Feb 10

If it isn't in there, Sen John Torgerson, R-Kasilof, chairman of the Finance Committee, said he would add it to the supplemental budget himself

Meanwhile, the administration is scrambling to find a way to get the deal approved before options to sell expire, said Annalee McConnell, director of the Office of Management and Budget

"We're still very supportive of the purchase," McConnell said "We're looking at various options "

In addition, Rogers has been trying to track down the five land owners to see if they would wait out the legislative process for a few more months

Torgerson and Homer Mayor Jack Cushing said Wednesday they believed some of the landowners had agreed to extend their offer Rogers couldn't be reached late Wednesday to confirm that

The city of Homer has agreed to spend $41,000 toward the purchase of the land and to take over ownership of the property

HOMER NEWS 1/15/98

Act soon on wetlands

Dear Editor

Homer residents were recently informed that the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council purchase of the Spit and Beluga Slough parcels failed to obtain approval by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee Sen John Torgerson states that this is routine practice and that when it goes to the Legislature we will have no reason for concern However what the Budget and Audit Committee neglected to consider was that there is a deadline of Jan 31 for this purchase If the Legislature does not act quickly we will lose our opportunity to preserve the most productive coastal wetlands in our community

It is crucial for the Spit land along Mud Bay These parcels represent all the remaining viable shorebird habitat on the Spit If these parcels are not protected we may see an end to the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival which brings in hundreds of visitors each year before the start of the tourist season

In addition coastal wetlands such as Beluga Slough provide the nutrient rich protected waters which serve as a nursery for a number of birds and fish If we wish to see Kachemak Bay remain productive we must do what we can to conserve its surrounding wetlands

Whether or not the Legislature will take action in time to approve this purchase will depend upon how strongly our delegates Rep Gail Phillips and Sen John Torgerson act to persuade their colleagues Otherwise we can expect to see this issue pushed toward the end of the session which will be too late Phillips and Torgerson need to know how much we are depending upon them to keep Homer an ecologically rich and abundant coastal community

Marla McPherson

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
1/15/98

New tourism officers

The Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council recently announced its 1998 board of directors Elected directors serving two-year terms are southern district representative Don Mack of Moose Hill Bed and Breakfast, eastern district representative Angie Colón of the Alaska SeaLife Center, and central peninsula representative Kelly Lee of Accommodations and Tours Alaskan Style and Raven's Nest B&B They join the following board members who are completing the final year of their term Maggie Kelly, Alaska Windsong Lodges, Phil Morris, Homer Ferry Terminal and Rick Swenson, who served as president during 1997 and who will maintain his seat as the Homer Chamber of Commerce representative by acting as past president

Marketing partners serving one-year terms are Renown Charters represented by Randy Becker Kenai Chrysler Center, represented by Bob Favrelto Kenai Fjords Tours, Ltd , represented by Jeff Johnson Kenai Visitors and Convention Bureau represented by Kathleen Tarr and Major Marine Tours, represented by Dee Dee Alletson

Elected as 1998 officers are Phil Morris president Kathleen Tarr vice president Dee Dee Alletson

PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 14, 1997

Seward's Lowell Point soon to be a state recreation site

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By JODY SEITZ

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

A friend and I visited Seward last June on one of those perfect summer days, clear and sunny with a slight wind off the bay Conditions were perfect for a walk along the beach where you can kick up the sand, comb the area for souvenirs and inspect the tide pools In Seward, if you're seeking a quiet beach, chances are you'll end up at Lowell Point

First we drove by the Caines Head trail, where it begins at the sewage lagoon Further down the dusty dirt road we crossed a one-lane bridge, and drove through a neighborhood of distinctly Alaska architecture — each home unique, handmade and in progress We parked on the roadside and looked up to the gently blowing beach grass on the dunes in front of us

Lowell Point beach is the coastal site that has won the heart of Anchorage area teachers Each year, busloads of Anchorage students take a field trip to Seward to put their classroom learning to practice Fifth- and sixth-graders wander along the beach and view a healthy intertidal ecosystem, complete with fucus, starfish, jellyfish and other marine life

When the 20-acre beachfront property came up for sale, Anchorage teachers and students joined with residents of Seward to protect the beach from further development

Most of Seward's coastline is occupied by industrial or commercial development, according to Mark Lutrell, of the Seward-based Eastern Kenai Peninsula Action Association Lowell Point beach is one of just two accessible beaches in Seward that are still wild The other one is at Fourth of July Creek

Lutrell said he was surprised that 20 small acres could create such a stir He quickly learned that the Lowell Point beach meant a great deal to people outside of Seward after he notified a local educator that the land was up for sale

Word spread quickly Hikers, commercial kayak guides and school groups from Seward to Eagle River wrote the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council in an effort to protect the beach

"It's a great place to hang out for a picnic or build a campfire, fish, launch your kayak, or just walk the beach Lutrell said "A lot of school groups come here to check out the intertidal zone It's really a popular place "

So popular in fact, that conflicts were developing between visitors and nearby landowners One of the residents told me that people were using her yard as a bathroom,' Lutrell said "One guy even said, hey you know, could I leave my trash here so I don't have to carry it back to Seward?" Another guy was building a campfire underneath one of the cabins because it was raining "

The Trustee Council purchased the land in February of 1997 for $531,000 The small beach at Lowell Point will soon become the Lowell Point State Recreation Site Conflicts between visitors and homeowners should ease when the state Division of Parks builds an interpretive kiosk a parking area and public bathrooms

There's another bonus Hikers can look forward to starting the Caines Head trail at Lowell Point instead of the sewage lagoon

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

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Eight years later, crews still cleaning beaches

Deja vu Haven t we been here before? The intertidal zone is necklaced with yellow and gray links of boom People in yellow bib overalls xtratufs gloves and helmets are staggered along the beach Hoses link the barges anchored off the beach to the upper tide zone The drone of generators drowns out any sound of the surf

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Since 1993 PES has been used for decontamination on oil spills in Puerto Rico, Florida, and Hawaii

Due to concern about any possible toxic effects, workers could use only one gallon of PES-51 for every 250 square feet of beach At Shelter Bay, they injected a small amount of PES-51 and water into the ground, under asphalt and boulders The chemical and the oil floated down to the water's edge where it was trapped by multiple layers of boom surrounding the shore There was a "pad patrol" on the beach to collect the oil and the chemical before they hit the water

"We collected most of it, mainly because they weren t using enough PES to liquify the oil said Rog What we do get is a brown rainbow sheen and we can skim it up as the tide is dropping and get most of that off prior to the fucus and seaweed being exposed

NOAA s Auke Bay Lab will monitor the sites for at least a year Preliminary reports look good, said Chris Broderson of the Auke Bay Lab The cleanup crew did a remarkable job of not causing any damage to the intertidal zone she said

VALDEZ VANGUARD JANUARY 14, 1998

Blood tests reveal ongoing problems in spill-area river otters

By Jody Seitz

Coastal currents

Despite the blood test results, the condition of river otters may be improving After the oil spill, river otters were less abundant in the spill area They were smaller than normal in weight and length However, their weights in the spill area appear to be increasing

Scientists studying river otters in the oiled areas of Prince William Sound have found evidence of long-term chronic exposure to petroleum hydrocarbons But, even so, recovery appears well under way, they say

Dr Terry Bowyer, of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, is comparing river otters in unoiled and oiled areas of Prince William Sound When he analyzed the blood of otters from unoiled Jackpot Bay with otters in heavily-oiled Herring Bay, they found cytochrome P450, an enzyme that animals make when exposed to petroleum hydrocarbons They also found haptoglobins, a blood protein animals make when they are injured

According to Dr Bowyer, the presence of both suggests river otters are still being exposed to crude oil and that the exposure is causing problems Although background levels of cytochrome P450 and haptoglobins can be found in animals anywhere levels were notably higher in the more heavily-oiled Herring Bay

Animals also make P450 in response to exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls There is no explanation for why PCB's would be a bigger problem in the oiled areas In any case, something is affecting their health

"It has to have some effect on their health or we wouldn't see the haptoglobins, which indicate physiological damage to the animals," Bowyer said

There are two ways otters could still be exposed to oil, says Bowyer "One is that there's buried oil and it's being rereleased by tidal actions and storms and waves and that otters have that on their pelage (fur)," said Bowyer "They're probably grooming it off That's one possibility The other is that they're eating contaminated fish "

The river otter project is part of a larger project designed to assess the recovery of the nearshore ecosystem As part of the larger effort, researchers are assessing the level of contamination in nearshore fish and fish abundance in oiled and non-oiled areas, but results are not yet available from those studies

Despite the blood test results, the condition of river otters may be improving After the oil spill, river otters were less abundant in the spill area They were smaller than normal in weight and length However, their weights in the spill area appear to be increasing

Bowyer hopes to be able to see exactly what s happening next year But right now, he says, "my general feeling is we're looking at recovery "

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

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
Wednesday, January 7, 1998 pages A1 & A8

'Sea is in real trouble'

Scientists unite to sound ocean alarm

By SCOTT SONNER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than 1,600 scientists from around the world sounded a warning Tuesday that overfishing, pollution and coastal development are wreaking unprecedented damage on the oceans

"The sea is in real trouble, much more trouble than we previously thought," said Elliot Norse, a marine ecologist who founded the Marine Conservation Biology Institute in Redmond, Wash

"We have overfished the seas systematically everywhere we have gone," he said "We must act now, not 20 years from now if we are to prevent further degradation of the marine environment"

Norse, biologist M Patricia Morse of Northeastern University and Rep Curt Weldon, R-Pa, unveiled at a Capitol news conference the "call for action" endorsed by 1,600 marine scientists and conservation biologists from 65 nations

They want federal lawmakers to establish new coastal marine reserves and strengthen the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act They also want President Clinton to hold a White House conference this year on the rapid, unprecedented declines in fishing populations.

"It is appalling to me that we spend more money studying the oceans of Mars than we do on the oceans of the Earth, said Weldon a member of the House Science Committee

The scientists said overfishing has devastated commercial fish populations and caused the collapse of fisheries around the world, including New England Destructive fishing methods, such as bottom trawling, have crushed and buried bottom dwelling species by scouring vast areas of seabeds, they said.

"Bottom fishing with trawlers is much like clear-cutting" of forests, said Norse, who noted that 99 percent of the world's 30 million species live in the oceans, with less than 1 percent on land or in fresh water

The scientists said coastal development has consumed precious salt marshes, industrial pollution has left "dead zones" in the Gulf of Mexico, agricultural runoff is causing new diseases in fish, and global warming has contributed to steep declines of salmon in the North Pacific

"Two basic problems confront us," said Morse, a professor of biology at Northeastern University in Boston "Too much is taken from the sea and too much is put into it Scientific knowledge and plain common sense tell us that we can't continue destroying the habitats that support marine resources and expect these species to persist"

The scientists said their petition would kick off the United Nation's International Year of the Ocean

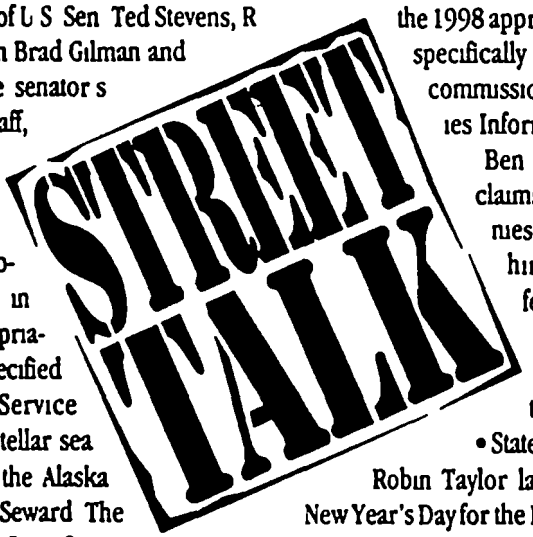
"Scientists by nature aren't alarmists," Norse said "For 1,600 scientists from 65 countries to stand up and say the sea is in trouble and we need to take action, this is an unprecedented, important day

ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
JANUARY 12, 1998

Street *Talk*

POLITICS

• A news article in Oct 29 issue of The Hill, a Capitol Hill publication in Washington, D C , focused on the information disclosed in a lobbying form submitted by the Anchorage law firm of Robertson, Monagle & Eastaugh Ben Stevens, son of U S Sen Ted Stevens, R Alaska, along with Brad Gilman and Steven Silver, the senator s former chief of staff, were listed on the form, the paper said



The law firm submitted the form in seeking an appropriation for an unspecified National Park Service project and for Stellar sea lion research at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward The newspaper said Sen Stevens obliged by inserting language calling for $1 million for sea lion funding in a 1998 appro priations bill and called into question the close associations of the law firm's lobbyists with Alaska s senior senator

The younger Stevens reportely admitted lob bying his father on legislation for the 1996 reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Act, which was written by Sen Stevens However,' he said his father refused to give him even one provision ' He stuffed it down my throat and said, No,' " Ben Stevens told The Hill

However, the newspaper said congressional ethics experts are troubled by the relationship between the senator and his son The younger Stevens reportedly added several new clients last year including the cities of Seward and Unalaska, The Aleutians East Borough and the Pacific State Marine Fisheries Commission

The article also cited examples of successful lobbying efforts by the law firm, such as $1 7 million that Sen Stevens included in the 1998 appropriations bill that was specifically sought by the fisheries commission for its Alaska Fisher ies Information Network.

Ben Stevens countered the claims, saying many companies have shied away from hiring him because of fears of publicity surrounding his connec tion to his powerful father

• State Senate Majority Leader Robin Taylor launched his campaign New Year's Day for the Republican gubernato rial nomination in Alaska with a pledge to push for major reforms in Alaska's budgeting process and legislative session schedule

People

Derenty Tabios has been elected chairman of Chugach Alaska Corp CAC shareholders also elected two new directors **Sheri Randazzo Buretta** and **Edgar Blatchford**, and returned **John Christensen** to its board of directors

Telecommunications

ASTF grant put SeaLife Center's projects on Web

By Nancy Pounds
Alaska Journal of Commerce

Visitors to the Alaska SeaLife Center soon won't have to drive to Seward in order to peer at coastal creatures at the research facility. The center is planning to design a site on the Internet's World Wide Web that will give Alaskans and the world a window into research projects at the center.

An educational web page for the SeaLife Center would include technical research data and projects geared toward schoolchildren, said Jim Pfeiffenberger, program coordinator in the center's education department.

"I think it gives people more immediate access so they can really be part of research of the Gulf of Alaska," he said.

The Alaska Science and Technology Foundation has awarded the SeaLife Center a $52,379 grant for installing Internet connections which would transmit the center's educational and research projects. SeaLife Center officials contributed matching funds totaling $52,699 for the work.

The grant is the first awarded by ASTF as part of a package developed by the organization last year to fund Internet connections for Alaska science centers, said Jamie Kenworthy, ASTF executive director.

Funding was approved by ASTF directors in December. The SeaLife Center was the first Alaska science center to submit a proposal and others are expected to follow, he said. Examples of other science centers in Alaska include the Imaginarium in Anchorage and the Challenger Center to be built on the Kenai Peninsula, Kenworthy added.

A goal of the grant program is to use telecommunications technology and the Internet to provide Alaska students and others access to knowledge from the state's museums and science centers.

Kenworthy hopes Alaska teachers can develop class projects via these Internet sites which would meet state educational curriculum standards.

He also believes Internet connections for Alaska museums and science centers can build interest and help the facilities become family tourism destinations.

SeaLife Center officials have hired Astrolabe Group Inc. of Anchorage to design and install Internet network connections, as well as train center staff on the new network.

It makes us that much more accessible, as with any business on the Net, Pfeiffenberger said.

He hopes to work with other Alaska museums and science centers to develop a common curriculum format which teachers could easily understand and implement in classrooms.

Part of the SeaLife Center's matching contributions will help fund workshops instructing teachers how to integrate science lessons with the research facility's cyberspace classroom.

ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
JANUARY 12, 1998

JANUARY 12, 1998 Anchorage Daily News

Shellfish hatchery to open in Seward by end of year

The Associated Press

SEWARD — The city state and Qutekcak Native tribe have signed agreements to get a new shellfish hatchery up and running this year

'We re trying to get it up as fast as we can, because everyone wants us to have some production by spring," Qutekcak hatchery manager Jon Agosti told the Seward Phoenix Log

The $3 2 million shellfish hatchery, the first of its kind in Alaska, has been empty since construction ended in April It's intended to raise shellfish, such as oysters and clams, which will be sold to ocean farmers, who will continue to grow the shellfish to a marketable size in undersea cages

Under the 5-year, rent-free contract, the city accepted responsibility for operating, insuring, maintaining and repairing the hatchery The city then contracted with the Seward based Native group, which has run a small pilot hatchery from a building at the Institute of Marine Science for several years

Agosti said he hopes to have young Pacific oysters and littleneck clams ready for sale by May Farmers "all want to have it ready to plant in the first spring bloom in the ocean, which is April through June," he said But Agosti conceded that target could be optimistic

'We're trying to get it up as fast as we can, because everyone wants us to have some production by spring'

— Qutekcak hatchery manager Jon Agosti

The hatchery isn t quite ready to go The concrete floor has cracked already and needs to be repaired The state has a 1-year warranty for workmanship from the contractor, Janssen Contracting Co of Anchorage

The Legislature awarded an additional $250,000 last year for some of the water pipes and tanks That money has not yet been released Agosti said

Qutekcak also will have to spend about $100 000 of its own money to complete installation of the seawater treatment and distribution system, Agosti said

Even with the facility fully functioning, officials say problems during the first year will not be unexpected Two new hatcheries built in the Pacific Northwest in the past 15 years couldn't rear anything for the first year, Agosti said The animals died Gradually, the problem went away Hatchery managers think the problem may have been caused by latent toxicity in the new pipes

Pacific oysters are the main shellfish being farmed in Alaska Farmers sold about $300 000 of the oysters in 1995, according to the state Department of Fish and Game

But Pacific oysters are not native to Alaska and don t spawn in the cold water here Farmers have had to buy seed from the Pacific Northwest and haven't always been happy with the quality or availability

Other species of shellfish are native to Alaska and some command good prices on the market, but the state won t allow their seed to be imported, and it's not economic for farmers to raise their own seed Agosti said

The hatchery "is going to be a great stimulus and boost to the industry in Alaska," Agosti said "It should change a lot in the next decade "

In addition to Pacific oysters, the hatchery intends to raise littleneck clams, purple hinge rock scallops, cockles and geoduck clams

Hatchery contracts signed

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
JANUARY 8, 1998

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

The city state and Qutekcak Native Tribe signed agreements last week that will get the new shellfish hatchery up and running this year

"We're trying to get it up as fast as we can because everyone wants us to have some production by spring,' said Qutekcak hatchery manager Jon Agostı ' It s full speed ahead '

The $3 2 million shellfish hatchery, the first of its kind in Alaska, has been empty since construction ended in April It s intended to raise shellfish such as oysters and clams to sell to ocean farmers, who continue to grow the shellfish to a marketable size in undersea cages

The 10 900-square-foot facility also includes a small mariculture research center The state probably will seek proposals for its operation by a nonprofit group state Department of Fish and Game officials have said

Under the five year rent-free contracts, the city accepted responsibili ty for operating, insuring maintaining and repairing the hatchery The city passed on the responsibility to the Seward-based Native group which has run a small pilot hatchery from a building at the Institute of Marine Science for several years

Agostı said he hopes to have young Pacific oysters and littleneck clams ready for sale by May Farmers all want to have it ready to plant in the first spring bloom in the ocean which is April through June ' But that could be optimistic he conceded

The hatchery still isn't ready to go The concrete floor has cracked already and needs to be repaired The state has a one-year warranty for workmanship from the contractor, Janssen Contracting Co of Anchorage

"That happens all the time in big slabs," said Francis Keenan, project manager for the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

The Legislature awarded a further $250 000 last year for some of the water pipes and tanks That money hasn t been released yet Agostı said Qutekcak also will have to spend $100 000 of its own

Qutekcak still has to finish installing the seawater treatment and distribution system, Agostı said

But even with the facility fully functioning the first year is likely to have problems Agostı said that the two new hatcheries built in the Pacific Northwest in the last 15 years could n t rear anything for the first year The animals were dying Gradually the problem went away Hatchery managers thought it was latent toxicity in the new pipes

The hatchery draws its seawater through a pipe 250 feet deep about a quarter of a mile into Resurrection Bay The water passes through sand filters and is then heated Qutekcak will add a finer filtration system and use ultraviolet light to disinfect the water

Once the infrastructure is set up, the hatchery will start growing the microscopic algae that shellfish eat Then the staff will transfer brood animals to tanks in the hatchery They'll manually fertilize the eggs with sperm Developing embryos will go in tanks, where the embryos will grow into larvae in one to three days

The larvae are washed and count ed every few days and put into a tank of fresh seawater They stay in the tanks for several weeks One tank might hold 30 million mature oyster larvae There are six such tanks Only 20 percent to 40 percent survive the larvae stage

Mature larvae go through metamorphosis in one to three weeks, yet they re still only the size of the period at the end of this sentence Anywhere from 5 percent to 50 percent survive metamorphosis

They re grown to about two millimeters in other tanks Then they re placed in tanks off a pond, where they feed off natural algae until they grow to about one centimeter The hatch ery may lose half the remaining seed in these stages

The young shellfish can be fur ther cultured in seawater nurseries where they can grow in a year to three centimeters

Agostı expects that more and more farmers will cooperate in having nurseries, where slow growing animals can be weeded out. Buying larger animals also saves farmers from the labor of using gear for the smallest of animals

Pacific oysters are by far the main shellfish being farmed in Alaska. Farmers sold about $300,000 of product in 1995, according to the state Department of Fish and Game

But Pacific oysters aren t native to Alaska and they don't spawn in the cold water here Farmers have had to buy seed from the Pacific Northwest and haven't always been happy with the quality or availability

Other species of shellfish are native to Alaska and some command good prices on the market, but the state won t allow their seed to be imported and it's not economic for farmers to raise their own seed Agostı said

The hatchery "is going to be a great stimulus and boost to the indus try in Alaska,' Agostı said 'It should change a lot in the next decade '

Besides Pacific oysters the hatch ery intends to rear littleneck clams purple hinge rock scallops cockles and geoduck clams

The hatchery will employ four Agostı, algae and larvae specialist Carmen Young hatchery technician Grace Thornton and maintenance and hatchery technician James Swartz.

'ice of The Times

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
VOICE OF THE TIMES

Alaska fishermen battle tide of competition

By SEN FRANK MURKOWSKI

Alaska fishermen, who in too many parts of the state endured a miserable season, know that Alaska's seafood industry is sick But, like the patient who's chilled, aching and coughing, they may still be thinking they are coming down with the flu, rather than facing a more serious illness

Since the first step towards developing a cure is an accurate diagnosis of the ailment, all of the roughly 70,000 Alaskans who earn their living from the sea need to reflect on some facts

Salmon fishermen in 1997 saw their incomes drop by nearly $100 million, to just $270 million — three times less than salmon's value just a decade ago The problem, however, is that the drop is not all attributed to Alaska's reduced harvest of just 121 4 million fish — compared to 218 million just two years earlier It would be nice if Alaskans could blame this year solely on the cts of El Niño's ther disruption But the economic underpinnings of the industry's illness appear more dangerous

Murkowski

Alaskans traditionally have sold up to 70 percent of our harvests to Japan As recently as five years ago, Alaska provided Japan with 53 percent of the roughly 227,000 tons of salmon and trout that the island nation imports yearly In 1997, however, Alaska sockeye will provide only 21 percent of Japan's salmon and trout imports (only 35 percent of frozen imports) Over the years, Chile's share of the market, from its farmed-salmon coho industry, has risen sharply from less than 10 percent to 22 7 percent Its Atlantic salmon and trout sales also have followed suit

Thus, this year marks the first year where Chile has sold more salmon in Japan than did Alaska

There are several factors that have accounted for this The antitrust lawsuit filed against 60 Japanese buyers and [illegible]ood processors by some Alaska fish[illegible]en hasn't helped The Japanese certainly consider it a slap in the face, but given global economics, Japanese businessmen — pragmatists all — certainly would rise above it if Alaska s fish were more competitively priced Unfortunately under the circumstances they aren t

Hey Hillary guess what! Some more missing documents have mysteriously appeared"

and the suit has simply given Japanese importers an excuse to break long-standing relationships and buy fish from less expensive sources

The reasons for the sales reduction include

• The weakened yen An old factor is currency rates Since 1994, the yen has dropped in comparison to the American dollar by 20 percent — making Alaska seafood more expensive in Japan This is a trend unlikely to quickly reverse itself given Asia's financial turmoil

• Reduced promotion Alaska has had less money to spend on promotion The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute spent $1 7 million in Japan to promote seafood in 1994 Last year it spent $800,000 That, at a time when Norway raised its Japanese promotions to $3 million, plus another $1 5 million for the rest of Asia

• Alternative sources Historically Alaska was Japan's primary source to supplement its reduced domestic fish harvests That prompted the Japanese to both invest in Alaska's industry and then to buy fish from us But, for a host of reasons, the Japanese have diversified, improving their domestic chum hatchery program and investing in Rus sia s new hatchery efforts — in return for fishing access to Russian waters — and developing other sources as well

• Fish prices And, as is usually the case new technology and increased competition have resulted in reduced prices — much to Alaska's disadvantage The Japanese wholesale price for a 4- to 6 pound Bristol Bay frozen sockeye in early November was $2 82 a pound A similar Chilean coho at the same time sold for 38 cents a pound less And Chilean coho are being sold directly to users rather than through the traditional brokers, making the price difference even greater

• Power to the retailers And in still another structural shift, the law of unintended consequences has reared its ugly head Japanese liberalization of import quotas has reduced the power of traditional importers and freed retailers to bypass middlemen and buy the cheapest fish on the market.

As one traditional buyer told me during my recent trip to the Far East, "The importer has no power at all anymore It's the retailers who call the shots Why should they pay more for Alaska fish when cheaper alternatives are available?"

Thus, the long-term prognosis for Alaska s fishermen will remain uncertain, even after the current El Niño passes and harvests return to recent norms We in Congress have taken steps to treat the patient We have moved to improve fishery management and reduce by-catch and fish waste to protect the resource through changes last year in the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation Act

To help prices, we provided $12 million this year so government programs can again buy millions of pounds of salmon for government food/school lunch programs We provided $7 million for disaster assistance to Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Delta villages

But to return the patient to good health we'll need new treatments We'll have to fund more research to help develop new products to utilize Alaska fish, and new technology to help produce it cheaper

My attempt this fall to allow greater investment of the proceeds from the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement funds was designed to help produce up to an additional $30 million that could have gone to fund grants to fishing groups and industry to spur technological and product innovation We'll try again in 1998

We must all do all we can to find treatments that nurse the industry back to health before it gets any sicker

Sen Frank Murkowski represents Alaska in the U S Senate

Commercial fishers swim against tide of competition

PENINSULA CLARION
12/31/97

Alaska fishers who in too many parts of the state endured a miserable season know that Alaska s seafood industry is sick. But like the patient who s chilled aching and coughing they may still be thinking they are coming down with the flu rather than facing a more serious illness

Since the first step toward developing a cure is an accurate diagnosis of the ailment all of the roughly 70 000 Alaskans who earn their living from the sea need to reflect on some facts

SEN FRANK MURKOWSKI

Salmon fishers in 1997 saw their incomes drop by nearly $100 million to just $270 million — three times less than salmon s value just a decade ago The problem however is that the drop is not all attributed to Alaska s reduced harvest of just 121 4 million fish — compared to 218 million just two years earlier It would be nice if Alaskans could blame this year solely on the affects of El Nino s weather disruption But the economic underpinnings of the industry s illness appear more dangerous

Alaskans traditionally have sold up to 70 percent of our harvests to Japan As recently as five years ago Alaska provided Japan with 53 percent of the roughly 227 000 tons of salmon and trout that the island nation imports yearly In 1997 however Alaska sockeye will provide only 21 percent of Japan s salmon and trout imports (only 35 percent of frozen imports) Over the years Chile s share of the market from its farmed salmon coho industry has risen sharply from less than 10 percent to 22 7 percent Its Atlantic salmon and trout sales also have followed suit

Thus this year marks the first year where Chile has sold more salmon in Japan than Alaska has!

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■ **The weakened yen** An old factor is currency rates Since 1994 the yen has dropped in comparison to the American dollar by 20 per cent — making Alaska seafood more expensive in Japan This is a trend unlikely to quickly reverse itself given Asia s financial turmoil

■ **Reduced promotion** Alaska has had less money to spend on promotion The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute spent $1 7 million in Japan to promote seafood in 1994 Last year it spent $800 000 That at a time when Norway raised its Japanese promotions to $3 million plus another $1 5 million for the rest of Asia Chile which hasn t said what it spent last year spent $1 million in 1995

■ **Alternative sources** Historically Alaska was Japan s primary source to supplement its reduced domestic fish harvests That prompted the Japanese to both invest in Alaska s industry and then buy fish from us But for a host of reasons Japanese have diversified improving their domestic chum hatchery program and investing in Russia s new hatchery efforts — in return for fishing access to Russian waters — and developing other sources as well That plus the rise of Chile s and Norway s farmed salmon have increased competition

■ **Fish prices** And as is usually the case new technology and increased competition have resulted in reduced prices — much to Alaska s disadvantage The Japanese wholesale price for a 4 to 6 pound Bristol Bay frozen sockeye in early November was $2 82 a pound A similar Chilean coho at the same time sold for 38 cents a pound less And Chilean coho are being sold directly to users rather than through the traditional brokers making the price difference even greater

Also Chilean trout sales are depressing the market for Bristol Bay fish Frozen trout sales at just $2 18 a pound have risen by nearly 30 percent in a year For cost conscious buyers they have become a real alternative to Alaska fish

■ **Power to the retailers** And in still another structural shift the law of unintended consequences has reared its ugly head Japanese liberalization of import quotas has reduced the power of traditional importers and freed retailers to bypass middlemen and buy the cheapest fish on the market

As one traditional buyer told me during my recent trip to the Far East "The importer has no power at all anymore It s the retailers who call the shots Why should they pay more for Alaska fish when cheaper alternatives are available?

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To help prices we provided $12 million this year so government programs can again buy millions of pounds of salmon for government food school lunch programs We provided $7 million for disaster assistance to Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Delta villages

I ve pressed for new efforts at the United Nations to enforce the ban on high seas drift netting And we re all working to reach agreement on a renewed and fair Pacific Salmon Treaty with Canada

But to return the patient to good health we ll need new treatments We ll have to fund more research to help develop new products to utilize Alaska fish and new technology to help produce it cheaper

There are promising developments on this front especially from Kodiak s Fishery Industrial Technology Center but more is needed My attempt this fall to allow greater investment of the proceeds from the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement funds was designed to help produce up to an additional $30 million that could have gone to fund grants to fishing groups and industry to spur technological and product innovation. We ll try again in 1998

We may well need to take steps to help the seafood industry meet the challenge of competing against nations whose seafood industries are being greatly aided by foreign government subsidies Just last year I complained greatly about such Norwegian efforts but more pressure likely will be needed

Alaskans also will need to find more funds for marketing and promotion overseas While it s a difficult time to gain promotion funds given both federal and state government budget cutbacks this is an area that must be better funded The state s share of ASMI s overseas promotions budget has been dropping, with the result of making it hard for ASMI to take full advantage of federal programs that require a state match That trends needs to be reversed.

In addition domestic markets must be cultivated to offset foreign purchases ASMI was formed during a salmon marketing crisis, and at that time it received a significant amount of funding directly from the state which was supplemented by a self imposed contribution from industry

Today all domestic marketing money comes from the industry Perhaps it is time to revive the idea that salmon marketing is important enough to Alaska s economy to merit the state s financial — as well as moral — support

Alaskans this year have received chill news about the health of the state s leading employer industry We must all do more to find treatments that work to nurse the industry back to health before it gets any sicker

Sen Frank Murkowski R Alaska, was first elected to the U S Senate in 1980

Quiet year portends change in '98

ANA LOSHBAUGH 12/31/97
ula Clanon

In this land of volcanoes, earthquakes, fires and floods, residents can thank their lucky stars that 1997 proved fairly quiet on the Kenai Peninsula

Long-term issues and projects heading into the millennium dominated the year's news on the central peninsula more than disasters

Nimilchik nearly suffered a catastrophe in September, when a truck carrying sulfur from the Tesoro Alaska Petroleum Co refinery in Nikiski for shipment through Homer lost control, spilling close to 35,000 pounds of sulfur Nimilchik Village, the Nimilchik beach, Hylen's Camper Park and the Nimilchik school were evacuated briefly after the sulfur caught fire About a third of the sulfur landed in the Nimilchik River, but biologists found no signs of significant harm to fish or aquatic life

The most heart-breaking single tragedy came from a more subtle danger A Nikiski mother and her three children died in the first recorded carbon monoxide fatalities on the peninsula

The bodies of Gloria Lynn Harrison, 33, [illegible]in sons Jason and J W III, 7, and daughter Elizabeth, 6, were found Dec 2 in their motor home at Barbara Lake off Halibouty Road by J W Harrison Jr, 28, Gloria Harrison's husband and the children's father

Arriving home from work, he found a recently acquired gasoline-powered generator running under the blue plastic tarp that fully enclosed the motor home Efforts to resuscitate the four were unsuccessful

Big projects develop

Construction and planning during 1997 will change the region for years to come Building was up and extended late in the fall with mild weather

With a total budget of more than $15 million the combined Alaska Regional Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Training Center and Structural and Industrial Firetraining School is the largest capital project Kenai has ever undertaken

Gov Tony Knowles, Richard Campbell, president of B P Oil Alaska, and Federal Aviation Administration officials were on hand for the July 4 groundbreaking ceremony The facility is due to come on line in 1998 and draw airport oil field municipal and other firefighters from across the state to Kenai for training

Kenai Fire Chief David Burnett and Airport Manager Randy Ernst retired from the city and accepted positions with the Pacific Rim Institute of Safety and Management, as the two training centers are jointly referred to

Alaska Petroleum Contractors and parent company Natchiq Inc announced plans to build the largest oil field modules yet assembled in Alaska at APC's new assembly site in Nikiski

APC plans to build seven sea lift modules and assemble the majority of 50 truckable modules destined for Arco Alaska Inc 's Alpine field The plant, at Mile 22 5 on the Kenai Spur Highwav is expected to employ at least 150 people from March 1998 through May 1999, with peak employment of about 250 in November 1998 Bill Cheek, vice president and CEO of Natchiq, hopes the Nikiski site can market modules around the Pacific Rim

The news came in October along with Arco s announcement of $1 2 billion in Alaska oil field development over the next two years

In Seward the $50 million Alaska SeaLife Center moved from the planning stage to something literally more concrete this year The giant project is due to open officially in May 1998 as a world-class scientific research facility and tourism destination In 1997, administrators hired preliminary staff, opened the doors to "special construction hard hat tours" and welcomed the center's first residents — puffins and murres But at the end of October, the board asked John Hendricks, who directed the center through the vital year of construction to resign and picked Kimbal Sundberg as his temporary successor

Work on Kenai s new animal shelter is nearing completion at year's end, giving two-legged and four-legged citizens something to cheer about The old facilities have been in disrepair for years and Kenai's chief animal control officer Bill Godek, has pointed out the need for a better facility for many years The new building will provide warmer, safer more sanitary conditions for the animals and for employees and volunteers who staff

Burger King opened a 3,500-square-foot store at the Carrs-Kmart mall in Kenai Mall owner Allan Norville added another 6,000-square-foot building there which drew a new Blockbuster Video store and lured Subway from its former site by the Kenai Merit Inn Norville also installed the utilities and pad for a 15,600-square-foot retail development west of the mall He plans to finish it this summer, with space for 13 tenants Norville said he still has room to build two more 20,000-square-foot buildings on his commercial property

Meanwhile, the family of Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Mike Navarre and his father, former borough Mayor George Navarre, began construction of a new Arby's restaurant in Soldotna and rebuilt the Depot Building mall in Kenai, which burned last spring

On the other hand, the Dairy Queen and Gary King sporting goods closed their Kenai stores A New York developer abandoned plans to lease Kenai city land for construction of a Wal-Mart store

A citizen's group chosen by Gov Knowles, area mayors and the city of Soldotna began meeting this fall to choose a site and design for a new Kenai River Center, funded with a $1 75 million grant the borough received from the Legislature The old river center opened on the Kenai Spur Highway in Soldotna in 1996 as a one-stop center for permits and river information

Another Kenai capital project still in the planning stages, the Challenger Learning Center, got a big shot in the arm in the form of $2 5 million in federal grant money from NASA in 1997 Borough assembly member Bill Popp was hired as full-time project coordinator for the center, which will offer interactive, science and technology-based educational programs geared primarily toward Alaska school children

The new projects are expected to boost Kenai's service economy

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
12/29/97

What's new

The Coast Guard officially opened the first eight units of its Aviation Hill housing project Feb 4 The $32 million project is part of an ambitious plan to replace and expand existing Coast Guard housing by more than 100 units over the next four years

Hospital staff moved into the new $18 5 million addition to Kodiak Island Hospital Feb 12 The addition, actually an entirely new three story building adjacent to and attached to the old, more than doubles the size of the old facility

The borough assembly unanimously voted to lease the hospital to Providence Health Service Feb 21 The lease is for 10 years with payments of $2 million down and $60 000 per month

Dedication of the new breakwater in Dog Bay that protects the St Herman Harbor took place in August The $18 million project consists of 1 720 pounds of rock stacked as high as eight stories and tapering from a base of 600 feet to 8 feet at the top It encloses 60 acres The harbor has the capacity for many more berths than the current 300

Construction is underway on the $19 million Kodiak Fisheries Research Center on Near Island It is expected to open its doors Oct 1 1998 The Kodiak Island Borough is constructing the project with funds from the Shuyak Island land sale the University of Alaska and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

The 51 739 square-foot research center will house circulating salt water laboratories and office space for its tenants NOAA Alaska Dept of Fish and Game and the University of Alaska Fairbanks

A two story interpretive center will include a live circulating sea water tide pool and a saltwater aquarium

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
1/8/98

Entertainers needed

The Alaska SeaLife Center is looking for entertainers artists and photographers to participate in the grand opening celebration

Music and dance opportunities for the grand opening April 25 and May 2, 1998 will include but are not limited to musicians singers dancers, clowns jugglers and face painters Groups of all ages are encouraged to participate To be considered for participation submit a brief proposal and, if possible, a videotape or audio cassette of a the proposed performance to the Alaska SeaLife Center grand opening committee c/o RISE Alaska 880 H St , Suite 101, Anchorage, AK 99501

Artists and photographers may submit proposals for solo or group exhibitions of their work for the grand opening season, May 1-Oct 31, 1998 Emphasis of work should be Alaska's marine mammals, seabirds and coastal scenery

To be considered for an exhibit submit 10 slides of your work, labeled with your name, title of work, medium and dimensions Do not send original artwork Also include a resume or brief history of your experience, previous exhibits and current address and phone number Mail proposals to the address given above

All submissions must be received by Feb 15 For more information call Maureen at 276-8095

CORDOVA TIMES
1/1/98

Reidel named director of seal commission

Monica Riedel of Cordova was confirmed as the Executive Director of the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission at the regular business meeting and biannual elections held in Juneau on Oct 1 Other new officers are Chairman Harold Martin of the Southeast Region, Vice Chair Mitch Simeonoff of the Kodiak Region and Secretary/Treasurer Lillian Elvsaas of the Cook Inlet Region

Newly appointed board members include Norman Vlasoff of the Chugach Region and Mark Snigaroff of the Aleutian/Pribiloff Islands

The ANHSC was formed in May 1995 "to implement self-regulation of harbor seal use, provide education and information to the public, represent its meml coastal Alaska Native communit regarding resource development

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR 12/26/97

Researchers track cause of scoters' decline in Alaska

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Scoters come in three flavors here in Alaska surf, white-winged and black Surf scoters are the most often seen in Prince William Sound In winter you see flocks of 20 to several thousand along the coast

Like some other seabirds of the northern Gulf of Alaska their number have been steadily dropping, collectively, by about 30 percent since 1957

Three generations of subsistence users noticed the difference in Prince William Sound and lower Cook Inlet

Now a study by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is using satellite transmitters to discover the mysterious migratory patterns of this long-lived sea duck In turn, knowing where they nest and molt may give clues about their decline

Some of the scoter's basic biology is a matter of scientific record They mature at two to three years of age In June, adult pairs migrate inland to bogs and lakes to nest While the female settles in for a good long 28-day incubation, the male takes off on a molt migration Some years they'll produce several young, other years none They can live up to 15 years As with other long-lived birds, the number of surviving females is the most important factor in keeping the population healthy

But exactly where they go to breed and molt is completely unknown And that makes it hard to find out if their problem is food or habitat or toxin-related

Biologist Dan Rosenberg hopes to sort it out by tracking the movements of 10 birds which have been implanted with satellite transmitters

"We hope to learn a lot more about their nesting and migrating habits, where they go to next, where they go to molt, and where they go to winter,' Rosenberg said

Mink, foxes, gulls, eagles, sea otters and humans all love scoters, but, at present, predation is not the top culprit in Rosenberg's book He's thinking habitat loss or pollution or, perhaps, climate change

In winter, surf scoters search for snails and mussels along the shore, the area hardest hit by the 1989 oil spill and the most susceptible to contamination There were die-offs of scoters in Southeast Alaska in August of 1990, 1991 and 1992, and the biologists found traces of contaminants in the carcasses they sampled

"There was a scoter die-off in the Cape Yakataga area recently, and no one s quite sure what caused that," Rosenberg said "There was some preliminary indication that it may be caused by trace metals or organochlorines or something of that nature "

To know for sure, scientists have to find out where the birds might have picked up the pollutants And that means they have to learn where they nest molt and spend most of the winter, according to Rosenberg

For help understanding the long-term picture researchers are turning to Native elders and their families "We hope to piece together a longer history — how people use them and how their populations may have changed over time,' said Rosenberg

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

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

PENINSULA CLAR
12/21/97

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For help understanding the long-term picture, researchers are turning to Native elders and their families "We hope to piece together a longer history — how people use them, and how their populations may have changed over time said Rosenberg

PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 18, 1997

Prince William Sound river otters appear on the mend

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Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Scientists studying river otters in the oiled areas of Prince William Sound have found evidence of long-term chronic exposure to petroleum hydrocarbons But even so recovery appears well under way, they say

Dr Terry Bowyer of the University of Alaska-Fairbanks is comparing river otters in unoiled and oiled areas of Prince William Sound When he and other researchers analyzed the blood of otters from unoiled Jackpot Bay with otters in heavily oiled Herring Bay, they found cytochrome P450, an enzyme that animals make when exposed to petroleum hydrocarbons They also found haptoglobins, a blood protein animals make when they are injured

According to Dr Bowyer, the presence of both suggests river otters are still being exposed to crude oil and that the exposure is causing problems Although background levels of cytochrome P450 and haptoglobins can be found in animals anywhere, levels were notably higher in the more heavily oiled Herring Bay

Animals also make P450 in response to exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) There is no explanation for why PCBs would be a bigger problem in the oiled areas In any case, something is affecting their health

"It has to have some effect on their health or we wouldn't see the haptoglobins which indicate physiological damage to the animals," Bowyer said

There are two ways otters could still be exposed to oil, says Bowyer

"One is that there's buried oil and it's being rereleased by tidal actions and storms and waves and that otters have that on their pelage (fur) said Bowyer "They're probably grooming it off That's one possibility The other is that they're eating contaminated fish

The river otter project is part of a larger project designed to assess the recovery of the nearshore ecosystem As part of the larger effort researchers are assessing the level of contamination in nearshore fishes and fish abundance in oiled and non-oiled areas but results are not yet available from those studies

Despite the blood test results, the condition of river otters may actually be improving After the oil spill, river otters were less abundant in the spill area They were smaller than normal in weight and length However their weights in the spill area appear to be increasing

Bowyer hopes to be able to see exactly what's happening next year But right now, he says 'my general feeling is we're looking at recovery

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

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Tests show river otters still have oil problems

Scientists studying river otters in the oiled areas of Prince William Sound have found evidence of long term chronic exposure to petroleum hydrocarbons But even so recovery appears well underway they say

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Alaska Coastal Currents

By Jody Seitz

Otters get a checkup

KNIGHT ISLAND — In 1989, bays on northern Knight Island were awash with oil from the T/V Exxon Valdez More than 30 dead otters were taken out of Herring Bay the year of the spill Most died of hypothermia after being coated with oil

Three years following the spill scientists took blood tests from otters in the spill area and found evidence of liver dysfunction and elevated white blood cells

Eight years later sea otters still have not repopulated the northern bays of Knight Island Jim Bodkin of the U S Geological Survey has been studying the otters in the sound since before the oil spill It's still easy to tell that the sea otters haven't come back here "The number of animals that we see here now is less than the number of animals that we took out of here as carcasses in 1989," said Bodkin

Bodkin and Brenda Ballachey, also of the U.S. Geological Survey, study the health and population size of the otters and their food supply then compare them to areas that were not hit by oil

The most difficult part of their study is finding enough otters, and then capturing them They need to catch and release 30 otters from unoiled areas on Montague Island and 30 more from the oiled bays of Knight Island To capture the otters, Bodkin and Ballachey use gillnets, which they check often, and an underwater method called the Wilson Trapping Technique

The method uses a large aluminum framed net basket, mounted on a scooter In scuba gear, and using rebreathers to eliminate telltale bubbles researchers swim underneath resting sea otters, and put the basket around them The otter dives down into the basket the diver pulls a purse string and the otter is trapped

This method allows them to pick and choose which animals are to be caught It s also more efficient 'If there s two of you and two otters," said Bodkin, "divers can get lined up simultaneously and catch two at the same time

Onboard the R/V Bering Explorer, Bodkin and Ballachey and a team of researchers, quietly and quickly give each otter a checkup While the otters are sedated, they weigh and measure them take blood and tissue samples, and determine the age of the animals

The whole procedure takes less than 15 minutes When it s over the otters are quickly put back in the water from a Boston Whaler, and, after the antidote for the anesthesia has had time to work, released near where they were captured

The otters they've caught this summer look normal, according to Bodkin And, from his aerial counts, Bodkin said he thought there were more otters in the southwestern passages and bays than he has seen since the spill

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

Scientists studying Bay of Isles sea otter population

By Jody Seitz

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Coastal currents

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Numbers of sea otters still down after Exxon Valdez spill

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CORDOVA TIMES JANUARY 1, 1998

Mussel beds signal food production in Prince William Sound

By Jody Seitz

Coastal currents

A chemical tracer made by a special type of animal plankton may signal a low return of salmon a year in advance The tracer is called pristane and it appears to reflect the abundance of an important food source for salmon — calenoid copepods

Pristane is a naturally-occurring hydrocarbon created by the copepods Salmon feeding on plankton emit pristane through their feces, which drops to the ocean floor It ultimately is taken up in filter feeders such as clams and mussels

Researchers have learned to measure the pristane levels by sampling mussels In this way, they can gauge the level of zooplankton production in the sound and determine the feeding success of salmon fry, which is key to their survival

Last summer, research chemist Jeff Short, of the National Marine Fisheries Service Auke Bay Laboratory, visited one of the Sound's hatcheries He sampled the levels of pristane in the mussels before and after the hatchery released 120 million pink salmon fry

"I was able to observe the juvenile pink salmon feeding on the zooplankton and defecating directly over the mussels that I'd been sampling," said Short "Consequently we saw a spectacular rise in the pristane concentrations that were in the mussels "

The pristane "signal" shows up along with the zooplankton bloom around the Sound It starts in the most protected, remote corners where there is less wind The water column stabilizes and generates an explosion of microscopic plants That attracts the zooplankton rising from the deepest parts of the Sound

"If there's less energy there and it's not available for as long, then you don't get as many zooplankton in the Sound," said Short The salmon eat less zooplankton, and they defecate less of it onto the mussels

"It s that defecation process we pick up in the mussel signal," said Short

In 1994 and 1995 there were large plankton blooms and healthy returns of pink salmon in subsequent years But in 1996, the bloom was 33 percent lower than the previous two years The result was a low return of pinks to Prince William Sound in 1997, helping substantiate pristane as an early indicator of run strength

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ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
"COMMENTARY"
JANUARY 5, 1997

Exxon Valdez legacy: What does future hold?

By Sen Frank Murkowski
Special to the Journal of Commerce

The federal government already owns 248 million acres of Alaska — more than the entire eastern seaboard from Maine to Florida, home to one third of the entire population of the United States

Through the use of the $900 million Exxon Valdez civil settlement, it will be acquiring even more of Alaska — possibly as much as 750,000 acres, according to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Land that in many cases may end up under the control of federal agencies That s three-fourths of the size of the entire state of Rhode Island Here's why that's important

The Trustee Council, three federal and three state agency representatives, already has spent a large part of the money received from Exxon on land acquisitions and on easements that limit the use of land it has not purchased outright To date, the council has completed the acquisition of some 424,000 acres, in a combination of large and small parcels, many purchased from Native corporations In many cases, these land acquisitions merely add to the land already controlled by the Trustees own agencies

Examples include 23,800 acres of inholdings added to Kachemak Bay State Park, 41,549 acres (including 1,000 acres previously logged) near Seal Bay and 26,665 acres on Shuyak Island In addition, the council has agreed to, but not yet completed, the purchase of another 55,357 acres, including more than 7,000 acres previously logged It is also negotiating for another 46,300 acres on Afognak Island, and 57,082 acres owned by Koniag Corp These lands presumably would be added to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge

Generally, all these lands will be added to the 20 protected state and federal lands in the spill affected area including Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, Katmai National Park and Preserve, and the Chugach National Forest and Copper River Delta Critical Habitat Area

Land acquisition is expected to account for more than 40 percent ($386 million) of the $900 million settlement Another $213 million has been used for direct payments to state and federal agencies for spill expenses, and to Exxon to reimburse it for cleanup activities after January 1992 The council s list of approved projects will take another $311 million, including a staggering $31 million for public relations and administration

Who would have expected public relations to soak up such a large part of a settlement intended to remedy the environmental impacts of the spill?

Essentially the only money not already spoken for is the 12 percent of Exxon payments the council is tucking away in a restoration reserve By 2002, this account (counting interest) may reach nearly $150 million — but it also will be the only money left After inflation-proofing, interest on the restoration reserve could provide about $2 1 million annually for long term research and economic reconstruction projects or it could vanish in more land acquisitions

Recently, the Trustee Council requested that Congress allow it to broaden its investment options The trustees say the public is being shortchanged because the settlement requires the council to place all the incoming money (Exxon is paying the $900 million over 10 years) in a court administered account with lower yields (5 percent) and higher administrative costs (10 percent) than the trustees could earn simply by investing in safe U S government securities

I agreed this should be changed, and prepared an amendment that would allow, but not require, the council to invest the money outside the court system The council would decide how much, if any, they would put in new investments

I also specified that, rather than putting all the new money into still more land acquisition, new earnings should be used for long term activities such as marine research and economic restoration projects for local communities and the fishing industry Without something like this, there is no guarantee that the remaining money would go to these purposes instead of to more land acquisition, or to payments for activities of the Trustees own agencies

My amendment also asks the Trustee Council to bring Congress its thoughts on forming an independent board to administer the funds (in place of the Trustees) after the last Exxon payment Personally, I d like to see them recommend an independent, scientifically oriented group to guide a long term research program — a board that would call for proposals, arrange for scientific peer review, publish findings, and so forth, without the appearance of conflict that exists when the Trustees are funding projects in which their agencies are involved

Unfortunately, the Trustee Council, led by the Department of the Interior, chose to oppose the amendment in a last minute lobbying campaign against their own request — perhaps because my version meant the trustees would have to relinquish some of the control they now enjoy

I don t intend to drop the issue In fact, I plan to pursue it

→

Quote Of The Week

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(See Page 6)

— Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska

Senator will pursue amendment to protect Exxon Valdez legacy

Continued

with separate legislation — legislation I have already introduced I still think Alaska could and should benefit from the additional dollars that better investments would earn, and I still think marine research and economic restoration should get more attention than the Trustees have given them so far

If it was your money, what would you do? And by the way, it *is* your money

Title and easements purchased as of Oct 24, 1997

- 76,211 acres and easements for 42,463 acres of land from Akhiok-Kaguyak, Inc , to be added to or managed as part of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
- 37,236 acres and easements on 16,268 acres from Chenega Corp , of which the purchased land is divided between the State and the U S Forest Service and the easement lands will be managed by the Forest Service
- 23,800 acres of inholdings now added to Kachemak Bay State Park
- 41,549 acres (including 1,000 acres previously logged) near Seal Bay
- 26,665 acres on Shuyak Island from the Kodiak Island Borough
- 59,689 acres and a limited term easement until 2001 on 57,082 acres from Koniag, Inc , for the Kodiak National Wild life Refuge
- 28,609 acres, an easement for 3,000 acres and a nondevelopment agreement on another 65,000 acres from the Old Harbor Native Corporation for addition to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
- Commercial timber rights on 2,052 acres of land near Cordova from the Eyak Corp

Purchases agreed to but not completed:

- 55,357 acres, conservation easements on 6,667 acres (including 1,500 acres previously logged), and timber easements on 13,401 acres from Eyak Corp
- 32,537 acres from English Bay Corp , with special access rights retained by English Bay Corp
- 31,490 acres (including 5,000 acres previously logged) and 37,398 acres of timber and conservation easements (some of which are for land already logged) from Tatitlek Corp Public access will be restricted on some of the land formerly held by Tatitlek Corp

Purchases still under negotiation

- 46,300 acres from Afognak Joint Venture
- 57,082 acres from Koniag Corp

Small Parcels.

In addition to its large-parcel acquisition program, the Trustee Council has purchased or agreed to purchase approximately 6,800 acres in small parcels ranging from 1 6 to 3,000 plus acres, and is negotiating on or considering purchase of another 2,600 acres from a variety of sources

Protected State and Federal Lands Previously designated in the spill affected area Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, Afognak State Park, Shuyak State Park, Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, Becharof National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Katmai National Park and Preserve, and Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

Also protected Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Kenai Fjords National Park, Kachemak Bay State Park, Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area, Canoe Passage State Park, McNeil River State Game Refuge and Sanctuary; Kalgin Island Critical Habitat Area, Redoubt Bay Critical Habitat Area, Clam Gulch Critical Habitat Area, Chugach National Forest, and the Copper River Delta Critical Habitat Area

Sen Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, is one of two U S senators for Alaska

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS ★ Friday, December 26,1997

Voice of The Times

Letters to The Times

Research shortchanged

Sen Frank Murkowski recently detailed his proposed legislation that would allow the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to invest settlement funds in U S government securities A portion of that legislation disallows the council from using any new money for land acquisition

As an ex officio member of the public advisory group for this council, I expressed my concern about new major land purchases at our May 28 meeting and notified Sen Murkowski of my support of his efforts in October

The council has shortchanged research to fund land acquisition Alaska will be poorer if the council continues to buy more land at the expense of meaningful research that could keep Alaska at the forefront of marine science

The council also continues to downplay its responsibility to deal with the spruce bark beetle problem it inherits with land purchases It cannot ignore the continuing epidemic of spruce bark beetle damage to Alaska's forests and the fire risk that damage promises On the one hand, it wants to acquire forested areas that were planned for timber harvest to protect the habitat of species dependent on the forest cover, but, on the other hand, it doesn't have a plan to protect that cover by reducing forest loss

Recent research by an Extension Service forestry specialist at the University of Alaska Fairbanks indicates that beetle resistant trees could be a possibility I encourage the council to consider funding this and other meaningful research

Sen Loren Leman
Anchorage

THE CORDOVA TIMES
DECEMBER 25, 1997

Snow, smiles blanket ski hill

By Jennifer L. Strange
The Cordova Times

Skiers remember last year's Mt Eyak season with gruff resignation — due to warm and wet weather, the hill was only open for a single day But this year, Cordova s ski hill, located on the western side of Mt. Eyak, has already been open ten times more often than that.

Local snowboarders and skiers couldn't be happier If the area's cold weather and frequent snow squalls continue, the hill could be open all through holiday break

"This snow is something of a butt-buster with all the hard, lumpy stuff under the powder, said snowboarder James Pahl ' But it's better than wet moss which is what we've had in the past. '

There are almost as many snowboarders this year as there are skiers, said the ski hill s general manager Dave Branshaw, who has been running the hill since 1984 Branshaw was hired by the board of directors of the Sheridan Alpine Association and oversees the snack shop, rental shack bunny hill, tow rope chairlift, a maintenance and operations staff of ten and nearly everything else that takes place at the hill

"All I ever wanted to do was drive the Snowcat, but I ended up with the whole show," said Branshaw

The ski hill which covers about 440 acres of terrain 30 percent of which is classified as advanced 50 percent as intermediate and 20 percent as beginner was built in 1974 It sits on state land to which the city and the Forest Service acquired the lease In turn the land is leased to the ski club (officially called the Sheridan Alpine Association) Branshaw said the City of Cordova owns the facility built with the help of a half million dollar grant from the now defunct Bureau of Outdoor Recreation

The single seat chairlift boasts a linear lift of 3,600 feet and can haul 330 people per hour It is one of four single chair lifts in the country and was installed in Cordova in the early 1970s after servicing the Sun Valley, Utah, ski runs from 1936-1969 The lift is the oldest operating chairlift on the continent, said Branshaw, and the only people who question this fact are the lift operators at Mad River Glen in Vermont.

"They like to claim theirs is the oldest, it's the same make, but it was installed in 1944," Branshaw said ' Occasionally I call them up and remind them of this "

About 70 percent of the way up to the top of the ski hill's 1,000 foot vertical rise sits Midway Lodge, a wooden lift shack and ski patrol building A lift operator, communication equipment and a dog are always stationed in the shack and a rescue toboggan is kept outside

'A ski patroller is always here in case of emergency," said ski patrol member Kathy Hough The 20 or so patrollers are trained to national standards and all are members of a national ski patrol association

Branshaw said 90 percent of all ski hill users get off the lift at Midway, due to the high winds and steep incline of the top run

' Hardly anyone goes to the top, just the extremists We have to call up there to make sure the guys are awake ' Branshaw said just before watching three unfamiliar skiers pass the Midway stop

'They ll figure it out soon enough ' said Branshaw with a slight ly sly grin

The ski hill s main run is called Towers to the south lies Mambo and to the north, winding in and out of spruce-lined curves, is the Hidden Valley run Cordova and the harbor Prince William Sound its islands and the Chugach Mountains can be seen in all their glory from the lift, but the view is obstructed from the ground

' If you could ski this view this would be the most spectacular run in the world ' said skier and local artist David Rosenthal

This sight will be available for all to see come next summer, said Branshaw, when the ski hill will be open to foot passengers interested in a scenic chairlift ride

'It will be for cruise ship passengers and locals," said Branshaw "And the trails are pretty much finished The locals who worked on them did a great job "

The improved Mt Eyak trail system was funded by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, said Branshaw, and connects the ski base area to the top of the hill at Tripod and also connects Tripod to the Crater Lake Trail

VALDEZ VANGUARD
DECEMBER 25, 1997

Proposed marine park keeps growing

Vanguard staff

The proposed Mineral Creek Marine Park, which started out as 100 acres of land currently for sale by homesteader Wayne Blondeau, then expanded with 50 acres of city-owned land, grew another 16 acres Thursday when Dan Lawn and Mary Jo Evans put their wilderness property up for sale

The potential buyer is the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council As expected, the council voted Thursday to appraise the Blondeau parcel, the first and largest step in its small parcels purchase program

Before voting to appraise, the council declared the land an as an area "meriting special attention " By classifying the parcel as such, it moved ahead of 325 other parcels currently being considered for purchase

Molly McCammon, executive director of the Trustees, said the Blondeau land became "special" after the city offered to throw in its adjoining 50 acres of wetlands for $10 on the condition the Trustees agree to buy Blondeau's land at fair market value She said the council was also moved by the amount of local campaigning, spearheaded by the State Parks Advisory Board

"It's a good victory for the advisory board," said board chairman Bill Bixby "But there have been a lot of folks pushing it A lot of different groups came together and said let's do it "

Bixby said about 300 residents signed a petition urging the Trustees to appraise the land He said fifth- and sixth-grade students at Hermon Hutches Elementary School wrote letters to the Trustees

The state has already committed to building and maintaining a marine park and picnic area on the ocean shore, located along the mouth of Mineral Creek

The Trustees have not yet decided whether to appraise the 16 adjoining acres east of the creek Lawn and Evans are, like Blondeau seeking fair-market value

Lawn said the his land, located on the shore side of Blueberry Hill Subdivision, would provide easy access to the proposed park

The city land will not be appraised because the asking price is only $10

The Valdez City Council agreed to practically give away the wetlands — off limits to development — as an investment in tourism

The Blondeau land appraisal slated to begin early next year after which the council will vote whether to make an offer to Blondeau, who has agreed to sell at fair market value

The council considers parcels based on several criteria, mainly whether the land is home to species affected by the 11 million gallon oil spill in 1989

An initial Trustees study rated the Blondeau parcel as low-moderate in that regard

But local National Audobon Society leader Nancy Lethcoe testified before the Trustees Council Thursday that several affected species use the area, including Harlequin ducks and murrelets

THE SEWARD PHOENIX LOG
DECEMBER 25, 1997

Council prefers private dock

By Eric Fry
LOG Staff

If a proposed floating dock is anchored at the Alaska SeaLife Center it should be a private facility so the city wouldn t have any liability said the four City Council members present at a work session Dec 8 But they were concerned that a private dock would give the owner an in-fact monopoly at the center

As far away as we can get from this facility, the better off the city is, said then Harbormaster Foster Singleton who retired Dec 19 The seas are rough at the proposed location, and the city s fees wouldn t be worth the risk, he said

Kenai Fjords Tours has proposed to anchor a floating dock near the sheetrock wall just east of the center It would accommodate two tour boats at least 60 feet long

The original proposal assumed that the company would build the dock and have preferential and free use of one berth but the city would manage the dock and share user fees from the other berth with Kenai Fjords Tours and the SeaLife Center

If the dock is private the city's only involvement would be to lease tidelands to Kenai Fjords Tours

But some people are concerned that competing tour companies would be at a disadvantage Kenai Fjords Tours would be free to use its private dock exclusively or set any user fees it wished

Councilman Stu Clark told the council, "We're almost in the position of promoting a monopoly operation here '

There's space for other docks there Clark said in an interview, but small companies couldn't afford to build one, and there's only so much revenue to be gained by tour boats at the SeaLife Center

Tom Tougas, president of Kenai Fjords Tours, said in an interview that it would be OK to have other users at a private dock But he would want users to pay proportionally for the construction and maintenance costs Every year the dock has to be painted, inspected and dry-docked during the winter

Competitors also are concerned that the SeaLife Center would sell tickets to Kenai Fjords Tours boats, thus competing with the small-boat harbor as a place to engage tours

When Kenai Fjords Tours originally went public with its proposal, Tougas spoke of taking cruise ship passengers to Fox Island or Kenai Fjords National Park and then dropping them off at the SeaLife Center, or the other way around That's still the plan

The question now is whether Kenai Fjords Tours would be able to take on new passengers at the SeaLife Center and sell tickets there

To some council members, it seemed to be a question of aesthetics They didn't want a jumble of ticket kiosks along the waterfront But to competing tour companies, it raises another question

Mark Holland, president of Major Marine Tours, said in an interview that every tour company should have equal access to selling tickets at the SeaLife Center, which is on city land

Holland said he's investing in improvements at his harbor boardwalk site – "I would want the chance, as I'm sure my competitors would as well, to sell tickets at another attraction on city land," he said

How the uplands should be handled is also a question Kenai Fjords Tours would need to build at least a covered waiting area for its customers and a booth for an employee But under the city's lease to the SeaLife Center, the grounds can't be subleased

Darryl Schaefermeyer, project administrator for the SeaLife Center, told the council they would need to amend the lease, or the SeaLife Center could possibly do a use agreement with Kenai Fjords Tours rather than a sublease A couple of council members considered the latter an end-run around the lease

The city is considering a tidelands lease to Kenai Fjords Tours for about 34,500 square feet The initial term is 20 years with two five-year extensions The annual lease rate would be $1,380 through June 30, 2000, when the city would appraise the site and set a five-year rate to be re-evaluated every five years

The Alaska Journal of Commerce • December 29, 1997

STREET TALK

• Speaking of Seward, plans are under way at the **Alaska Sealife Center** for a floating dock to support day tour boat traffic, initially shuttling passengers to **Kenai Fjords** tours

Street Talk is a regular column of news, speculation and plain ole gossip reported by the Journal of Commerce staff and compiled by Rose Ragsdale

SeaLife Center plans grand opening

LOG Staff

Festivities to open the Alaska SeaLife Center are scheduled to begin April 25 with an all-day celebration for Seward, organizers said

There will be food and entertainment all day, and people will be able to tour the center for free, said Maureen Sims of Leif Selkregg and Associates

"We want to do that especially for Seward to thank them for their support and contributions," she said

The center also will unveil the Circle of Honor — the engraved bricks that locals are buying About 170 of the 492 available bricks have been sold so far

Then on May 1, the center will hold a formal dinner and dance for about 350 major contributors They will receive commemorative gifts

The formal ribbon-cutting ceremony takes place on May 2, followed by reduced-price tours of the center for about 5,000 invitees Street entertainment will continue through the evening The opening to the general public is set for May 3

The center has budgeted $150,000 for the series of openings, but organizers hope to pare the cost through in-kind donations and corporate sponsors for the formal dinner, Sims said.

The center is accepting proposals from entertainers Port City Players has submitted a proposal to do a mystery game on April 25, Sims said. The Moose Pass School wants to do a play The Air Force Band is scheduled for May 1-2

ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
DECEMBER 22, 1997

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

• The **Alaska Science and Technology Foundation** board of directors has approved grant funding for four projects $445,240 for **Alaska Village Initiatives** and **Kipnuk** and **Kwigillingok** villages to improve sanitation, $204,385 to **Sealaska Corp** for a long term study of naturally regenerated clear cut timber harvest areas in **Southeast**, $52,379 to the **Alaska SeaLife Center** for installation of Internet access linking scientists, the public, students and educators, and $200,000 to fund the Forest Products Initiative, which will study ways for Alaska lumber mills to plan growth For more information, call (907) 272-4333 or check www astf org

• **Gov Tony Knowles** thanked the federal government Dec 10 for heeding his request for aid for Southeast Alaska communities through the **Community Adjustment Program** under the **North American Free Trade Agreement** No specifics of the assistance, which is designed to mitigate the economic impact of NAFTA, were available The communities of **Sitka, Wrangell, Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove, Metlakatla, Hoonah** and Naukati may be eligible

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PENINSULA CLARION
DECEMBER 18, 1997

SeaLife Center wins Internet grant

The Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward has received a $52,379 grant from the Alaska Science & Technology Foundation to install and use a dedicated Internet connection to reach students, scientists, teachers and the public The SeaLife Center also aims to foster communication between the SeaLife Center and Alaska's educational science centers and museums It must contribute $52,699 in matching money

HOMER NEWS
Homer, Alaska, Vol 24, No 52 Thursday, December 25, 1997

1997: Life ebbs and flows

A year of community effort, government skirmishes and environmental debates

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

In many ways, 1997 was a year hard to label Life in and around Homer just sort of plowed on Even pivotal issues often seemed somehow removed from daily routines

That is not to say consequential events had no impact, or that time and circumstance didn't touch many of us, even change some lives, but the year's biggest stories mostly centered on such unsexy issues of city zoning-law permits, controversial increases to utility fees, protest over state resource exploitation and sliding mud from a major road project that widened the highway into Homer

Juneau touches Homer

The Republican revolution Alaska style continued in January as party faithful and their Democratic Party coalitionist cohorts lined up behind promises of another round of spending cuts this time some $60 million worth The $2 4 billion state operating budget finally adopted in May met that figure though cuts didn t happen without some pain Municipalities found state aid reduced forcing them to tighten local budgets as well and welfare reform measures driven in part by federal legislation began ratcheting down the state-aid faucet

GOP leaders have promised another $50 million cut in spending for next year the third year of a five-year balanced-budget plan, as they geared up for the new legislative session that opens Jan 12

State lawmakers began the year under the terms of a new campaign finance law that cut in half the amount an individual supporter could donate put an end to direct donations by corporations and unions, restricted donations by groups limited donations by lobbyists and more

Meanwhile state residents miffed by some legislative moves have been busy collecting signatures in hopes of putting the question of repealing some laws to a public vote including one that loosened restrictions on highway signs Other referendums would make English the only official language and ease laws against the use of marijuana If petition drives begun this year are successful those issues may appear on the 1998 ballot

In other state news, Anchor Point's major tourist attraction, the state park at the Anchor River, nearly was shut down under a Division of Parks budget-cutting plan Public outcry and $300 000 from the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement fund not only kept it open but paved the way for improvements in the park

In other news

Lewis McLin the longtime and much-loved principal at Paul Banks Elementary School retired in order to take his son to a special needs school in Arizona

Also retiring this year was Department of Fish and Game biologist Nick Dudiak, who was honored as Homer s Citizen of the Year for his work in salmon-enhancement projects around Homer and lower Cook Inlet

Nanwalek civic leader and popular rock guitarist Bobby Kvasnikoff died from complications of the AIDS virus after spending several years speaking out about HIV and AIDS

PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 23, 1997

Letters to the Editor

Trustee council's land acquisition program benefits all Alaskans

Sen Frank Murkowski recently expressed some views on the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council's restoration program, and in doing so, the senator too easily dismissed a great deal of the valuable work that has been done for fish and wildlife resources in the spill zone

The trustees' habitat acquisition program has provided some extraordinary benefits for people who hunt, fish and recreate throughout this important region Some of the senator's opinions are puzzling when you examine the key resources that have been conserved and the substantial economic benefit that people in the region will realize through their participation in the trustee council program

Some of the finest wildlife habitat in the world has been protected through these cooperative efforts Commercial fishermen have secured considerable benefit, with premium rivers, streams and watersheds conserved in a natural state Hunters and anglers often get new access to areas that were previously off limits These newly secured areas continue to offer appealing destinations to boaters and hikers

For landowners, the trustee council's habitat program has created many new options Key fish and wildlife habitat — and the traditional uses these areas support — can now be safeguarded At the same time, land managers realize a substantial profit for their shareholders, increasing dividends while pursing new business or investment opportunities

Habitat options in the trustee council process include fee simple (outright sale) or conservation easements that maintain Native land ownership Many Native corporations have negotiated some combination of both

At the Alaska Rainforest Campaign, we are not alone in continuing to support the trustees' habitat protection initiatives We have been pleased to join Alaska Native corporations, local communities, hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts in supporting a number of habitat deals This remarkably broad range of support has made the trustees' habitat program a win-win opportunity for Alaskans

Matthew Zencey
Campaign manager
Alaska Rainforest Campaign
Anchorage

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
DECEMBER 23, 1997

Council's work beneficial

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— Matthew Zencey, campaign manager
Alaska Rainforest Campaign

Proposed science center could be boon to Bay

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

A joint venture between a Homer area Native corporation and a nonprofit educational organization is about to transform land around Peterson Bay

Though it won't involve logging undoubtedly some trees will have to come down to make way for a new educational and research center with dock facilities dorms and a science laboratory building

Seldovia Native Association Inc and the nonprofit Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies have been quietly planning the project for months Officials of the two groups see it as a marriage of the corporation's money making responsibility to its shareholders and the ecological research desires of the center

Up to this point planning has been kept scrupulously under wraps while negotiations between the two organizations proceeded Tonight Native and center officials will be pitching their plans to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council in an effort to secure a $4 5 million grant that would help launch the venture

That money would be split between the two groups The corporation would get the bulk $4 million to build the major structures The center would get $500 000 to finance laboratory equipment help develop science and educational programs and fund an effort to restore the old Native village near Seldovia as part of an effort to preserve Native culture

Under the plan SNA would turn over 500 acres of Peterson Bay land on a 50 year lease in exchange for the $4 million it would receive from the spill trustees The land is estimated to be worth about $30 000 an acre or about $15 million

The Native corporation would operate the dormitory style lodge as a for profit business enterprise consistent with the corporation's desire to break into other business such as ecotourism and reduce its reliance on resource extraction ventures such as logging

The corporation would lease the science building to the center for $1 000 a year on a 50 year lease The center would operate the scien ding and all educational and scienti grams

We are really excited said Mike Beal the corporation's chief executive officer who was hired earlier this year with a specific charge to expand the corporation's profit-making ability

'The major thrust of SNA in the future will be to get into ecotourism he said 'This is a great step toward that end

Beal said he thinks the trustee council will be receptive to the proposal and that he already has been talking with Molly McCammon director of the trustee council

'This is not just a purchase deal to buy up Native property Beal said 'This is an economic development proposal and a lot more than just a conservatorship to protect land

There has been some concern in the last few weeks about the spill trustees land acquisition efforts voiced most notably by Sen Frank Murkowski who said he thinks enough land has been bought up with spill money

> *"The major thrust of SNA in the future will be to get into ecotourism This is a great step toward that end"*
>
> – Mike Beal

Beal said the Peterson Bay joint venture will provide better public access to Peterson Bay and give visitors, students and scientists a place to stay as they learn or conduct research he said It should satisfy Murkowski's concerns because it would benefit the Kachemak Bay economy the Native community and promote tourism and education

'This is a win-win situation he said

If the money is made available construction efforts could begin immediately Beal said

We'd hire design engineers work on a site plan We could start construction this spring he said

The Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies was established in 1982 and has seen over 2 200 visitors and students each year according to center statistics Its educational programs have been recognized nationally and Peterson Bay Lagoon site of the center's field station is a living laboratory of intertidal ecology

Land bequeathed to the center by Carl E Wynn in 1989 became home to the 126-acre Wynn Nature Center on Skyline Drive near Homer which the center operates

Visitor numbers have grown and the added responsibility of running programs on both sides of Kachemak Bay have largely driven the center's board to look for ways to expand services and generate revenues said Jon Peterson president of the center's board of directors

In an interview this week Peterson said the effort to negotiate a joint agreement promote the proposal and sell the idea to funding agencies such as the trustee council has grown out of efforts by the center to develop a long range financial plan

Joni Whitmore was hired in March of this year to help in that effort

By July Peterson Whitmore and other center officials met with Beal SNA Vice President John Crawford and other SNA officials in an effort to find ways to work together Also at the meeting was Doug North representing Alaska Pacific University which is interested in the marine sciences educational opportunity a new facility would provide Whitmore said

Peterson said he is certain the project will go forward given the mutually beneficial nature of the venture and a reservoir of good will being built between the center and the Native corporation

Seldovia Native Association Inc was created in 1971 and has 315 shareholders It owns 105 000 acres on Kachemak Bay and Cook Inlet and expects to get an additional 70 000 acres Some 23 500 acres were transferred to Kachemak Bay State Park several years ago in a deal that saved the land from the threat of clearcut logging

The ol sperous fishing community of Seldovia has seen the canneries that supported the economy close down — some following the 1964 earthquake the last after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill stopped commercial fishing that year

Beal said the corporation is rich in land but cash poor and that is the reason the board now is exploring other options besides resource extraction Operating companies would provide income and jobs to shareholders The corporation also is exploring the possibility of building lodges on other Native land in the hopes of attracting tourists

Beal said the corporation expects the attraction of a world class science facility will draw the necessary numbers to keep the lodge a profit making concern The joint effort also should open other doors for the center as its expanded programs offer increase opportunities for good science in a unique — and protected — intertidal zone

Eric Myers director of operations for the spill trustees did not return phone messages by early yesterday afternoon

Doug North president of Alaska Pacific University said that school has a strong program in environmental science at the graduate and undergraduate levels and also programs in natural resource management The proposed science center would provide opportunities to expand he said

One element we would like to strengthen is in marine biology North said "That is harder to do up here on this end of Cook Inlet where the waters are a bit less inviting

As a result he said APU has taken courses down to the Homer area

"One possibility would be to link with the center and use their staff as adjunct faculty to conduct college level courses open to our students and anyone else and bring them under the credit umbrella of APU he said

Another possibility would have the center marketing its own educational programs upon which APU could confer credit status if those courses met certain criteria He said there is no reason not to join forces if possible with SNA and the center

'It seems like a good economy of resources he said

Torgerson says Spit land deal safe

by Hal Spence
Staff Writer

Sen John Torgerson said this week that the plan to purchase land on the Homer Spit and Beluga Slough with Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement funds is not dead only delayed

A voting alternate of the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee Torgerson was on the losing side when the committee voted Friday not to OK spending nearly $1 million from the spill fund on the 107 acre deal He said the issue will be taken up by the full Legislature in the next session and probably would become an item in the supplemental appropriations bill

The new session begins Jan 12, but it likely wouldn't be until sometime beyond mid March that the supplemental spending bill would come up for a vote Until then it's a matter of having patience, Torgerson said

I got your critical habitat through, I think I can get this through," Torgerson said referring to the successful effort back in 1996 to approve creation of the Homer Airport Critical Habitat Area at the northeast end of Beluga Lake

Four members of the budget committee, including Torgerson, voted in favor of the land deal, but five voted to wait The committee which reviewed more than a dozen appropriation proposals last week including the Homer land purchase, also rejected several others proposals saying they should be taken up by the full Legislature

They weren t discussing the merits of the project at all ' said Homer Mayor Jack Cushing He was called at the last minute by Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council aides who suggested he come and testify before the committee about the land purchase

They liked that it (the land) would be controlled at the local level and not at the federal or state level Cushing said of the committee

' But they felt it needed to be looked at in January by the full Legislature I think it was more on principle than anything else,' he said "I got the impression it was not this project, but that they had been asked to look at too much stuff off session '

Cushing said the committee seemed prepared to put off decisions unless doing so would ' absolutely stop state government '

There may be problems in waiting until January to approve the land purchase however The deal includes agreements made with land owners that require purchase by a certain time Some of the negotiated options

"We tried to tell them it was a real estate deal and that you don t do real estate deals all at one time of year ' he said "They have to happen when they happen "

The land to be purchased would be set aside as permanent wildlife habitat and as such won t require much in the way of maintenance Both areas are stopping-off points for migrating shorebirds that draw thousands of visitors to Homer each spring for the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival The existence of open unspoiled spaces are important for Homer's burgeoning tourist industry the oil spill council has said

The deal to protect the land has enjoyed the backing of almost everyone Organizations such as the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, the nonprofit, California based Trust for Public Land and others worked on the project for more than a year energizing public support and negotiating purchase options City commissions have supported efforts to secure the land

But there were a few negative voices When the Homer City Council voted 4-2 in November to chip in $41,000 as Homer's share of the land deal, newly elected Councilmen Luke Welles and Ray Kranich voiced concern about the price tag and the idea of adding still more park land to the city's maintenance schedule Welles said the price was far above the assessed value

The land deal, however, already had the blessing of the spill trustee council — a six-member panel of state and federal officials — who agreed buying the land met all the necessary criteria for use of spill funds The price was based on an appraisal commissioned by the trustee council

Cushing said at least one of the budget committee members Sen Drue Pearce of Anchorage raised some of the same concerns last week about the cost But he said she may be laboring under a misconception Any representations that the price is double what it should be 'are flat out misleading,' Cushing said The price he said is based on sound appraisals

Torgerson said he doesn t remember the price of the land coming up specifically but does remember Pearce asking if the land was threatened by other development if it isn t purchased Torgerson said he told Pearce he didn t think it likely

"I think my exact words were 'The don t make enough paper to allow a permi on that land,'" he said

While Torgerson expressed optimism that the land deal will succeed, he also said he was disappointed that spokesperson from the trustee council weren't bette prepared to discuss the details with th committee, such as how land agreement were negotiated or for that matter, why California organization was working o Alaska land purchases

'They couldn't tell us who negotiate them or when they ran out They weren prepared to answer questions," he said

Torgerson said he doesn't blam Cushing who he said was prepared

Other issues may have affected the vote Torgerson said In recent days, Alaska Sen Frank Murkowski has said he has concerns regarding the further use of spill money for land acquisition

Committee chairman Sen Randy Phillips R-Eagle River has said he agrees with Murkowski

Torgerson said the committee was largely predisposed to delay action on the request and hand it over to the full Legislature He doubts the issue will reappear on the budget committee s agenda in January he said

Barb Seaman, executive director of the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust expressed some disappointment with the committee's decision but added this isn't the end of things and it is not a time to panic

As for the deadlines for the options to buy Seaman said she didn't know if there were other development plans hanging over the Spit land She said the history of projects on the Spit, however, has been that the U S Army Corps of Engineers has almost never said no to a project that has come before it On that level, Spit land is under chronic threat

The Beluga Slough land may be some what more in danger from alternative development ideas being pursued by landowners The longevity of the options to buy that land is a real concern she said

Torgerson said he supports the purchase and will work to make it pass

' I have no problem with the purchase I hope my colleagues don t but I haven t really talked to anyone," he said ' I don t anticipate there being a problem

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS DECEMBER 15, 1997

Panel won't OK Homer beach buy

By JON LITTLE
Daily News Peninsula Bureau

SOLDOTNA — A group of Alaska legislators on Friday blocked a popular effort to spend Exxon settlement money on sensitive Homer wetlands

Conservation groups, the city of Homer, its Chamber of Commerce and the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly had backed a plan to buy five pieces of private property along the Homer Spit and nearby Beluga Slough for $996,100 The land totaled close to 107 acres

Phillips

The goal was to protect a sandy beach and a slough that draw thousands of migratory shorebirds each spring The birds boost tourism and add to Homer's quality of life, backers said

People who own the land had agreed to sell it and the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council was prepared to buy it But all state spending decisions must have legislative approval, which is handled by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee when lawmakers aren't in session

During a meeting of the committee Friday, nine senators and representatives on the committee rejected the purchase by a vote of 4-5

"Today's action came as something as a shock," said Eric Myers, director of operations for the spill trustees "This was essentially the first negative thing that's been said about this effort, which has enjoyed an incredible outpouring of support at the local level and state level In fact, we've received letters from outside the state because of the importance this place has for migratory shorebirds and the Homer shorebird festival "

Lawmakers on the committee weren t voting against the land purchase, so much as telling the oil spill trustees to wait a month for the next legislative session to begin, said Jerry Burnett, a staffer working for Sen Randy Phillips, R-Eagle River, who chairs the committee

"This committee has been very concerned with taking action on behalf of the whole Legislature if there's an alternative," Burnett said

But earlier this week, Phillips, the committee chairman, said he agreed with U S Sen Frank Murkowski's recent complaints that too much settlement money from the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill has been spent on land

"Frankly, I think they ought to be spending it for fish, fowl animals and people who were hurt by this oil spill," Phillips said

Sen John Torgerson, R-Kasilof, the only committee member from the Kenai Peninsula, was one of the four who supported the purchase Torgerson was in Homer Friday afternoon attending a basketball game and could not be reached for comment

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust and its partner, San Francisco-based Trust for Public Lands, spent the last year negotiating with the private property owners, who signed a year-long agreement to sell their land Whether those agreements survive another month or so was an open question Friday

"I'm not sure if that will hold together or not," Myers said "We hope so "

More than 20 migratory bird species flock to Homer Spit each spring, making it a popular draw for tourists who attend events like the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival

The Spit also supports a major part of Homer's economy, with an increasing number of tourist stores, a resort, a boat harbor, a seafood processing plant and two huge storage yards for raw lumber and wood chips waiting for shipment outside the state

It's the rise in development there in recent years that has groups like Kachemak Heritage Land Trust concerned, its director Barbara Seaman has said She fears development along the Spit is squeezing the wildlife that makes the place such an asset

If the spill trustees are to take the proposal to the next legislative session, it could take the form of a supplemental bill, or the Legislature could agree to let the same Legislative Budget and Audit committee act on its behalf, Burnett said The next session begins Jan 12

PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 14, 1997

Homer awaits fate of local wetlands

SOLDOTNA (AP) — Conservationists and others hoping to protect Homer wetlands from development must wait awhile longer after a legislative panel declined to approve the land purchase

Plans called for acquiring roughly 107 acres including five privately held tracts along the Homer Spit and nearby Beluga Slough

The Exxon Valez oil spill trustees was prepared to purchase the tracts for $996,100 The buy was endorsed by conservation groups, the city of Homer, its chamber of commerce and the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

The purchase is aimed at protecting sandy beach and slough that draw thousands of migratory shorebirds each spring

Spending was reviewed Friday by the state Legislative Budget and Audit Committee, which has authority when the full Legislature is not in session

The committee rejected the wetlands purchase on a 4-5 vote, saying a decison could wait until the next legislative session convenes Jan 12

Some members also expressed second-thoughts about using oil spill settlement money to acquire land

Eric Myers, operations director for the spill trustees, said Friday's vote was a shock

'This was essentially the first negative thing that's been said about this effort, which has enjoyed an incredible outpouring of support at the local level and state level,' Myers said

PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 15, 1997

Science and Technology

Foundation funds projects

ANCHORAGE (AP) — The Alaska Science and Technology Foundation awarded grants for several projects and has begun looking for ways to control paralytic shellfish poisoning

The state agency was set up by the Legislature in 1988 to invest money in projects to improve Alaska's economy and increase the state's science and engineering capability

Projects funded by the board Thursday include

■ $445,000 for long-range planning for village sanitation at Kipnuk and Kwigillingok in the Yukon Kuskokwim delta Funding will go to Alaska Village Initiatives

■ $204,000 for a longterm study of naturally regenerated clearcut timber harvest areas in Southeast The grant will go to Sealaska Native regional corporation

■ $52,000 to the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward for a dedicated Internet connection to reach students, researchers and others

■ $200,000 for a second year of funding to help Alaska lumber mills become more efficient Funding is for the Forest Products Initiative

The board also voted to issue requests for proposals for applied research projects to control paralytic shellfish poisoning in Alaska Proposals will focus on improved beach or sea monitoring programs, better toxicity testing and the development of antitoxins

The board at its meeting Dec 8 also approved spending $474,000 to wire more Alaska schools to the Internet

PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 8, 1997

Senator questions land buys

Murkowski wants purchase of Native lands with Exxon settlement funds looked into

FAIRBANKS (AP) — U S Sen Frank Murkowski said Saturday he plans to look into the U S Interior Department's support for the purchase of Native lands with Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement money

The Interior Department has an obligation to protect the heritage of Native Americans and their land is crucial to that heritage, Murkowski said The department should not be involved in buying up Native land, he said

"Once it's gone they've lost their heritage They may have the money, but how long is the money gonna last?" Murkowski said "It's very similar to what happened in Manhattan where (Indians) traded Manhattan Island for beads "

The Interior Department is represented on the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, which determines how the $900 million Exxon Valdez settlement is spent

"Virtually none of the funding is directed toward trying to find economic development for the people of the region," Murkowski said

Murkowski, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said his committee is planning an oversight hearing into actions of the department under Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt

Molly McCammon, executive director of the oil spill fund trustee council, took exception to Murkowski's remarks

"The purpose of the money is for restoration not economic development," she said "The number one restoration tool the public wanted was habitat protection '

Public hearings are scheduled to begin next spring to determine how the remaining spill settlement funds will be spent, McCammon said

Murkowski said he s also concerned that $31 million of the fund has been spent on administration and public relations He called for a General Accounting Office audit of the oil spill money

McCammon said that $31 million has been spent over the course of ten years and has involved extensive scientific peer review and a public outreach program that helps people in the villages understand the technical research concerning the spill

Murkowski said the hearing will also look into allegations that Babbitt rejected a tribe's application for a casino license because rival tribes, interested in limiting gambling competition, made campaign contributions to the Democratic Party

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR DECEMBER 11, 1997

Senator plans Interior Department hearings

WASHINGTON (AP) — U S Sen Frank Murkowski R Alaska, said Wednesday he will convene oversight hearings into claims that Interior Department decisions were improperly influenced by politics

Murkowski chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, questioned the leadership of Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt

I intend to look into this in order to determine whether or not Secretary Babbitt's Department of Interior is for sale Murkowski said in a prepared statement

Murkowski said recent events' call into question Babbitt s credibility including the Bureau of Land Management s handling of a Lake Havasu Arizona lease and the Interior Department s refusal to transfer land to California for radioactive waste disposal

Murkowski also has attacked the department s approval of Exxon Valdez oil spill trustee land purchases which have included tracts owned by Alaska Natives

No date was immediately set for oversight hearings Murkowski s office said

JUNEAU EMPIRE DECEMBER 8, 1997

Murkowski to probe Native land buy-outs

■ *Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement money usage questioned*

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FAIRBANKS – U S Sen Frank Murkowski plans to hold hearings to look into the U S Interior Department's support for the purchase of Native lands with Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement money

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PENINSULA CLARION DECEMBER 7, 1997

Subsistence a vital component of oil spill restoration effort

Editor's note It has been eight years since the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 millions 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 JOE HUNT

Alaska Coastal Currents

Restoration and recovery following the Exxon Valdez oil spill

Restoration of subsistence since the Exxon Valdez oil spill has taken on many forms

Subsistence hunting fishing and gathering were severely reduced in villages hard hit by the spill It took years for subsistence users to regain confidence in the safety of the food source they depend upon Eight years after the spill, subsistence users in Prince William Sound have yet to return to many once-popular beaches which continue to hold substantial quantities of buried or trapped oil

During the last two years, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has provided funds for 29 subsistence-related projects, in addition to the research involving specific subsistence resources such as herring, salmon and harbor seals

Many of those projects provide direct relief to communities to help supplement subsistence resources For example, hatchery-produced king salmon are starting to return to Chenega Bay and similar enhancements will bring coho to Tatitlek and Perryville, sockeye to Solf Lake in Prince William Sound and pink salmon to Port Graham

To assist scientists in their efforts to learn why the harbor seal is continuing its decline, the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission is training subsistence hunters in the proper procedures for taking and storing tissue sample This provides a wealth of information about harbor seal locations, diet and overall health

Last year, a video was produced which chronicled the importance of harbor seals to the subsistence lifestyle within community of Tatitlek 'Alutiiq Pride A Story of Subsistence" took the viewer on a harbor seal hunt taught how to prepare seal for food and other uses and joined the village for a potlatch to celebrate the harvest

Alaska Natives and scientists also are encouraged to work together in understanding the intricate relationships within the marine ecosystem

The trustees council is promoting indigenous science, also known as traditional ecological knowledge, as a vital tool in viewing the marine ecosystem The knowledge gained from thousands of years of subsistence living can help today's researchers better understand the movements and habits of individual species and how each interacts within the ecosystem

The Chugach School District is now in its third year conducting the Youth Area Watch program That program places students into the field and laboratories to work side by side with scientists conducting oil spill research The students also learn first-hand from village elders about food gathering and preparation

Joe Hunt is the communications coordinator for the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council

VALDEZ VANGUARD DECEMBER 10, 1997

Spill funds open land, build facilities for recreational users

Alaska Coastal Currents

By Joe Hunt

Kayakers, boaters, hunters, sport fishing enthusiasts, hikers, campers, wildlife viewers and just about anyone who enjoys the outdoors will find new recreational opportunities in the region once smothered by Exxon Valdez oil

Criminal and civil settlements with Exxon have provided the funds to open previously private land for public use and to build new facilities at many of the more popular parks and recreation areas in the oil spill region

• Through its programs to protect habitat vital for restoration of injured species the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council has acquired about 1 000 miles of shoreline and a half million acres of land, including hundreds of miles of salmon streams

Public ownership means better public access Outfitters and guides report the kayakers and boaters are discovering the beauty of Eshamy Bay and other bays in western Prince William Sound Afognak Island State Park was established and Shuyak Island State Park recently tripled in size, increasing recreational opportunities

An Alaska Marine Park system is emerging in Prince William Sound, offering new facilities for boaters The Department of Natural Resources is using funds from the state's criminal settlement to build hiking trails, public use cabins, docks, camp sites, informational signs, and boat launches at several locations throughout Prince William Sound, the Kenai Peninsula and the Kodiak Archipelago

The Kenai River is the economic engine for both the sport fishing and commercial fishing industries on the Kenai Peninsula, and protecting habitat along the river is strongly supported by both industries Altogether the Council has either protected or reached agreements to acquire more than 2,500 acres on the river, including several miles of riverbank vital for the successful rearing of sockeye and king salmon

Private inholdings within Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge are often found at key access points, often areas where birds bears and fish congregate The Council has purchased several parcels along estuaries, bays and salmon streams, providing key access for fishing and hunting as well as good anchorages for boating

Sometimes, small parcels are acquired primarily for recreational purposes Near Homer, a rare 220-acre parcel along the bluff, known as the Tulin homestead, has been acquired as a possible recreation area Alaska State Parks is managing the land and, although its final uses haven't been determined, hikers this summer made use of its scenic access to the beach along Kachemak Bay

The last remaining beach on Lowell Point near Seward has been saved from possible development and will continue to serve as a fishing beach, launch site for kayaks and intertidal classroom The site has long been used by teachers, particularly from the Anchorage schools, to provide lessons in marine biology to fifth and sixth graders The state parks office has plans to develop the site to provide parking toilets and access to the Caines Head coastal trail

Joe Hunt reported on the Exxon Valdez oil spill for the Anchorage Times He currently serves as communications coordinator for the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, which sponsors this series

More birds

Eight common murres from Sea World of Florida and six tufted puffins from New York City's Central Park Zoo arrived at the Alaska SeaLife Center a month ago

SEWARD PHOENIX LOG DECEMBER 4, 1997

News briefs

They join seven young tufted puffins as the SeaLife Center's first birds They will be displayed in an outdoor artificial habitat early next year once they have passed through quarantine at the Institute of Marine Science's Seward facility

"The birds all arrived in excellent condition and have adapted beautifully to the cooler weather and new surroundings " said Dr Pam Tuomi, the SeaLife Center's veterinarian in a press release

Murres and puffins are members of the alcid family The SeaLife Center described them as ' natural roommates '

"In the wild they share their steep cliff homes with many other species but each species uses a different niche on the cliffs to make their nests," the press release said 'The murres nest on the horizontal cracks of the cliffs, laying their uniquely shaped eggs on bare rock while the tufted puffins dig burrows in the soil at the top of the cliffs for the eggs '

PENINSULA CLARION
DECEMBER 11, 1997

Business Briefs

Seward posts record tourism season

A record 30,000 visitors stopped from April through September at the Seward Chamber of Commerce visitor center this year, up 36 percent from the total of 22,052 last year, and 215 percent from the 1994 count of 13,948

Visitor center counts have cycled The last big peak, nearly 19,000 per summer season, occurred in 1991 and 1992 The number of Alaska Railroad passengers passing through Seward has risen steadily, though, from 13,708 in 1990 to 24,351 in 1997

Kathy Cline, executive director of the Seward Chamber of Commerce, attributed booming tourism to advertising by businesses such as Kenai Fjords Tours and Major Marine Tours

Package tours linking the Alaska Railroad and Gray Line of Alaska with day cruises on Resurrection Bay and Kenai Fjords National Park — a big draw in itself — have also helped, she said Those tours make visiting Seward easy for Alaskans hosting relatives from Outside

"We have the SeaLife Center," she added "People know Seward now"

The number of cruise ship passengers passing through Seward this year, about 225,000, was similar to the number last year, she said Most step from ships to Anchorage-bound buses and see little of Seward Next year, Cline expects a small increase in cruise ship passengers and more port-of-call stops, in which Seward is a destination and not just a transfer point

Next summer, the state opens monthly ferry service between Juneau, Valdez and Seward with its new ship Kennicott

KODIAK DAILY MIRROR
DECEMBER 9, 1997

Veterinarian joins Seward marine center

SEWARD (AP) — The Alaska SeaLife Center has hired a staff veterinarian

Dr Pam Tuomi had been working part time at a veterinary clinic in Anchorage and part time at the SeaLife Center, which is under construction in Seward

She has also served as a part time consultant for the U S Fish and Wildlife Service, state Department of Fish and Game and the International Wildlife Research Association

She will start full time at the center in February, designing and equipping the veterinary clinic and setting up rehabilitation programs She will also supervise the use of animals in research projects

The SeaLife Center is the first cold-water marine research center in the western hemisphere It will combine research, rehabilitation and visitor education

Peninsula students visit Texas aquarium

By Jerry Dixon

At 3 a m the dim light from the house-size Texas State Aquarium saltwater tank casts a blue glow on the sleeping figures of 12 students from the Kenai Peninsula A 10-foot-long shark swims by separated from a student by only seven inches of Plexiglas The Seward student sleeps soundly wrapped in a blanket on the floor as the entire room seems to be suspended on the ocean floor surrounded by denizens of the deep like sharks turtles and marlin

We are 15 including chaperones on a Quest to Texas as part of the Christa McAuliffe Fellowship SeaNet Project Here in Texas one goal is to see how the Texas State Aquarium serves public schools so we can write a World Wide Web page that will connect Alaska s schools to the new Alaska SeaLife Center

For an hour until 04 30 I sit in front of the seawater aquarium window that is eight feet high and 30 feet long It is like scuba diving without getting wet One seems actually to be inside the ocean viewing exotic fish swim by Some students have selected to sleep nside a tiny alcove that has a curved ceiling so that one is surrounded on three sides by fins and flippers One student awoke early and found himself, ' looking directly into the eyes of a 300 pound jewfish "

It was almost 24 hours of travel from Seward to Corpus Christi on the Texas Gulf Coast via bus jet, commuter plane and van to the door of the aquarium It felt like we were being welcomed inside a five-star hotel Except for the night watchman we had the entire aquarium to ourselves!

"Why Texas?" many have asked That s an easy answer ' Leslie Peart Ms Peart is the discovery education director at the Alaska SeaLife Center and former director of education at the Texas State Aquarium She made all the arrangements and was the expediter for the trip Judging by the excellent learning experience we had in Texas, students from throughout Alaska can look forward to a real marine discovery process here in Seward The Alaska SeaLife Center will also book school groups to sleep over in our new aquarium Book early April and May 1998 are almost filled

Photo courtesy Jerry Dixon

Students from the Kenai Peninsula feel the skins of sharks and manta rays at the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi on a Quest field trip From left Hope teacher Merry Zogas, Burke Anderson, an unidentified aquarium guide, Joe Tougas, Tara Ganser, Cooper Landing teacher Sophie Smith, Kenny Faust and Brooke Landenburger

The students were glued to the Plexiglas window like most students are to a TV. It was chow time, and a feeding frenzy was going on inside the tank.

The students were glued to the Plexiglas window like most students are to a TV It was chow time, and a feeding frenzy was going on inside the tank A diver who had previously met with the students donned his scuba gear and plunged in with the fish As soon as he opened up his food bag scores of fish swarmed around him Feeding the fish meant that sharks could be kept in the same tank as their prey because they would not attack when well-fed It also meant the diver could be in there with species that might prey on man because again, they were all fed

It was a carousel of light as brightly colored fish swarmed around the diver A staff person interpreted what the diver was doing and communicated with him using sign language The students could also sign to the diver and many tried From a tube the diver squirted out plankton for the fish and he was sometimes almost blocked by the schooling fish

Then it was time to feed the moray eel This particular eel was about seven feet long and as thick as a man's thigh It is an amazing sight to see the eel pour itself out of a fissure in the rock and come after food in the diver's hand Students were enthralled to witness this drama taking place before their eyes

The touch pool was a major attraction There students could feel the skin of a manta ray or a small shark! Since the shark s skin is composed of placoid scales that are the just reduced versions of their famous teeth, touching shark skin feels like dragging your hand over sandpaper Students had no qualms about reaching in the tank and touching rays and sharks to see how they felt They just asked that students not put their hands in the shark's mouth!

Jerry Dixon is the Quest teacher for the Eastern Peninsula

FLYER

The National Wildlife Refuge Association
Winter 1998 Washington D C Volume 24 Number 1

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EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

Exxon Valdez Land Acquisition Continues, But Future Uncertain

Building on historic agreements to protect the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has acquired additional lands for the Refuge System within the last few years through the use of Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement funds This funding for land negotiations with Alaskan Native corporations and other private landowners to protect important wildlife habitat could be jeopardized, however, if Congress passes legislation which would limit the funding availability for land acquisition in Alaska

In 1997, the three federal trustees for the Exxon Valdez oil spill — the Departments of the Interior Agriculture and Commerce — approved $950,000 from the federal government's $50 million restitution settlement to continue the successful acquisition of small parcels of land located at critical locations throughout the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge The parcels small size and corresponding low cost make them vulnerable to increased cabin and lodge development, one of the major threats to the Refuge's brown bear population Also in 1997, Congress appropriated the Clinton Administration s $600 000 budget request for Kodiak Refuge land acquisition

Complementing these investments the federal–state Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council provided funds to buy several small parcels as part of the Council s small parcel program for the oil spill area which extends from Valdez to the Alaska Peninsula In addition, private groups led by the Conservation Fund, Wildlife Forever Orvis Safari Club International the National Rifle Association the Kodiak Brown Bear Trust and other groups and local partners have worked with the USFWS to protect small parcels through donations of land and funds With sustained effort the USFWS is within striking distance of acquiring all remaining small parcels from willing sellers

Supporters of Kodiak NWR hope that USFWS Director Clark and Secretary Babbitt will continue to fund small parcel acquisitions through the $700 million Land and Water Conservation Fund s FY 1998 budget and through the Service s 1999 budget

Meanwhile negotiations to buy lands from Koniag Inc and Afognak Joint Venture two Alaskan Native corporations are continuing Koniag owns approximately 57 000 acres of land within the Refuge including lands in the Karluk River watershed Many consider the Karluk to be the biological heart of the Refuge Negotiators for the FWS, Interior Department and State of Alaska met with Koniag in the fall, but have not yet reached an agreement

Just north of Kodiak Island, on Afognak Island, Afognak Joint Venture (AJV) owns vast tracts of old growth timber, immediately adjacent to the Red Peaks unit of the Kodiak NWR and the recently established Afognak Island State Park To provide dividends to its Alaskan Native shareholders, AJV has been aggressively harvesting large blocks of old growth timber for export to the Far East Negotiators for the Trustee Council hope to reach an agreement with AJV to acquire $70 million worth of timbered land to be protected in perpetuity AJV s lands have extraordinary

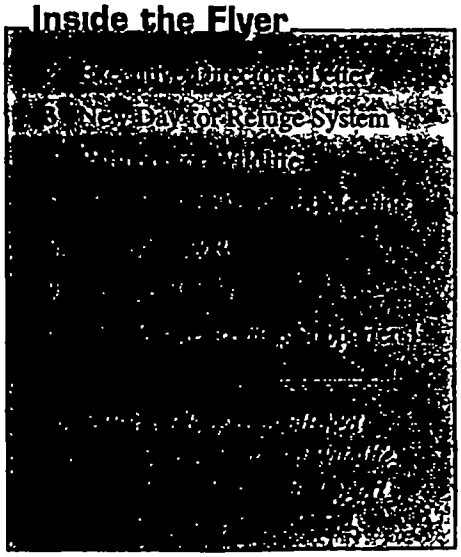
Continued on page 8

Species Spotlight

Courtesy of Scott Stouder

Kodiak brown bears, like the one pictured above, will benefit from continued land acquisition

Inside the Flyer



Secretary Director's Letter
3 New Day for Refuge System

FLYER

Exxon Valdez

Continued from page 1

resource values for sea otters, marbled murrelets and other marine species

Located on the Kenai Peninsula, the Kenai NWR is the most visited refuge in Alaska The tremendous popularity of the Kenai NWR and the Kenai River, however, threatens the important fish and wildlife habitat With the support of Governor Tony Knowles, the FWS has been able to acquire several riparian tracts from Native corporations to incorporate into the Refuge and to protect the popular Kenai River and its world class salmon runs

During the planning process on the use of the $900 million settlement for the ecosystem restoration effort, many local residents supported habitat protection, research and monitoring, as well as a set-aside of funds for a "restoration reserve" The goal of the restoration reserve is to fund future restoration activities beyond the final payment from Exxon Valdez after 2001 Accordingly, the Trustee Council is scheduled to approve $108 million in settlement funds by 2001, and with interest earnings, the total funds available for restoration projects is estimated to exceed $140 million

To determine how best to use the $140 million reserve to meet future goals, the Trustee Council is sponsoring a public outreach effort beginning in 1998 Supporters of research and monitoring in the scientific community, are seeking to use the entire restoration reserve for scientific studies and research Members of the conservation community, on the other hand, hope that a large percentage of the restoration reserve will be used for future habitat protection

Senator Frank Murkowski (R-AK) is working to limit the use of the reserve's substantial interest earnings During debate over last year's appropriations bill for the Commerce, Justice and State Departments, Senator Murkowski tried unsuccessfully to attach a legislative rider that would prohibit the use of the interest from the reserve for land acquisition and limit the use of the interest to economic restoration projects and marine research for the commercial fishing industry

Following this effort, Senator Murkowski introduced the rider as stand-alone legislation (S 15230) which was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee In December 1997, Sen Murkowski criticized the federal and state land acquisitions, called on the U S General Accounting Office to investigate the administration for the settlement fund, and announced that the Senate Energy Committee would hold hearings on the federal acquisitions in early 1998

Get involved For more information on the upcoming restoration reserve planning process, Refuge Association members may wish to contact the Trustee Council in Anchorage at 907-278-8012 or their web site at www oilspill state ak us Also, contact Senator John Chafee, Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, and Senator Patrick Leahy, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on the Judiciary, to voice your opposition to S 1523

New Day

Continued from page 3

A Hierarchy of Uses

The new law specifies that wildlife observation, fishing, hunting, and environmental education are the priority public uses on refuges Priorities are now clear 1) wildlife conservation is the mission of the refuges, 2) compatible wildlife-related recreation is the next priority, and 3) non-wildlife related activities are to be discouraged

This provision binds the interests of birders and fishermen, nature photographers and hunters against those who wish to use the refuges for non-wildlife uses that can degrade habitats or divert scarce refuge resources

Changes on the Ground

The new "organic act" contains important improvements in process, planning, and basic mandates but what changes should we expect on the land? For starters, saying "no" to certain non-wildlife uses should become more common

While evaluating the proposed 17 mile highway through the McFaddin Refuge, for example, the question is no longer just whether such a road would prevent the Refuge from meeting its migratory bird conservation purpose The Service must now determine whether the road would degrade the Refuge's biological integrity, diversity, or environmental health Because road construction at McFaddin would involve filling hundreds of acres of wetlands, this decision should be straightforward

The legislation should promote efforts to restore biological diversity and environmental health The Klamath Basin refuges, for example, concerned with the declining health of its amphibian populations and the exceedingly high pH and phosphorous levels of its waters, now has a legal responsibility to monitor and address these problems, in addition to staging 80% of the Pacific flyways' waterfowl Whether or not a duck occasionally eats a potato grown on the refuges, we must now ask how the refuge's endangered fish and imperiled amphibians are doing in those potato fields

The new law does not address all of the challenges, resolve all of the problems, or answer all of the questions facing the Refuge System But it should improve planning, strengthen the science upon which refuge management decisions are based and give refuge managers and conservationists new authorities to fend off damaging activities and secure adequate clean water supplies and other needs Above all else, the law should help the Refuge System to stand shoulder to shoulder with other federal agencies and programs

Jim Waltman is Director of Refuge and Wildlife at The Wilderness Society He can be reached at jim_waltman@tws org or 900 17th St NW Washington DC 20006