

EVOSTC ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT

Recipients of funds from the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council must submit an annual project report in the following format by **Sept. 1** of each fiscal year for which project funding is received (with the exception of the final funding year in which a final report must be submitted). **Please help ensure that continued support for your project will not be delayed by submitting your report by Sept. 1.** Timely receipt of your report allows more time for court notice and transfer, report review and timely release of the following year's funds.

Satisfactory review of the annual report is necessary for continuation of multi-year projects. Failure to submit an annual report by **Sept. 1** of each year, or unsatisfactory review of an annual report, will result in withholding of additional project funds and may result in cancellation of the project or denial of funding for future projects. **PLEASE NOTE:** Significant changes in a project's objectives, methods, schedule, or budget require submittal of a new proposal that will be subject to the standard process of proposal submittal, technical review, and Trustee Council approval.

Project Number: 10100750 and 10100750-Amendment

Project Title: (1) Evaluation of Recovery and Restoration of Injured Nearshore Resources, and (2) Nearshore Synthesis - Knight Island Sampling Amendment

PI Name: Jim Bodkin and Tom Dean

Time period covered: Oct. 1, 2011 - Sept. 1, 2012

Date of Report: *Sept. 1, 2011*

Report prepared by: *James Bodkin, Thomas Dean, Brenda Ballachey*

Work Performed: Summarize work performed during the reporting period, including any results available to date and their relationship to the original project objectives. Explain deviations from the original project objectives, procedural or statistical methods, study area or schedule. Also describe any known problems or unusual developments, and whether and how they have been or can be overcome. Include any other significant information pertinent to the project.

Field work in western Prince William Sound (WPWS) was completed between April and July 2012. Tasks completed included:

Collection of sea otter carcasses for estimation of mortality rates - A total of 57 sea otter carcasses were recovered from WPWS in late April 2012. Teeth from these animals are being sent out for determination of age at death.

Sea otter foraging observations - Sea otter forage bouts were observed and recorded in WPWS, in April through July. We anticipate that bouts observed total close to 100; data are now being proofed and entered.

Black oystercatcher nest density and productivity - A total of 5 active black oystercatcher nest sites were observed along 5 transects (each 20 km long) in WPWS in June 2012. These sites were visited to estimate productivity and composition of prey provisioned to chicks.

Sampling of intertidal invertebrates and algae - Five sheltered rocky intertidal sites previously established in WPWS were sampled in June 2012. A list of algal species present, percent cover of sessile intertidal invertebrates and algae, estimation of limpet density and size distribution, and the density of selected larger invertebrates (*Nucella* snails and sea stars), were estimated at each

site. In addition, five temperature recording devices and 2 salinity recording devices installed in 2011 were recovered, with new instruments were deployed at each site.

Sampling of mussel beds - Five mussel bed study sites previously established in WPWS were sampled in June 2012. Dimensions of the bed and size distribution and density of mussels were estimated.

Sampling of infaunal bivalves- Soft sediment study sites previously established in WPWS were not sampled in June 2012, as these were done at the five sites in 2011 and are only scheduled for alternate year sampling.

Estimation of eelgrass abundance - The percent cover of eelgrass was estimated at five selected eelgrass beds in WPWS.

Results from these surveys are under analysis.

Aerial surveys of sea otter abundance were conducted in June 2012 with support from the Department of Interior Aviation Management Division. Completed surveys will allow estimation of the abundance of sea otters in WPWS and intensive study areas at northern Knight Island and Montague Island. Aerial survey data are currently under analysis.

Future Work: Summarize work to be performed during the upcoming year, if different from the original proposal. Describe any proposed changes in objectives, procedural or statistical methods, study area or schedule. *NOTE: Significant changes in a project's objectives, methods, schedule or budget require submittal of a new proposal subject to the standard process of proposal submittal, technical review and Trustee Council approval.*

Work in the upcoming year is to be carried out as described in our DPD.

Coordination/Collaboration: Describe efforts undertaken during the reporting period to achieve the coordination and collaboration provisions of the proposal, if applicable.

Coordination with other nearshore, long-term monitoring efforts in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) continue. The methods and protocols tested and developed under this and prior projects have been incorporated into a comprehensive long term monitoring project supported by the EVOS Trustee Council: GulfWatch Alaska: *Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources and Services* (K. Holdried, Chief Scientist). Monitoring similar to that conducted in PWS was completed at Katmai and Kenai Fjords National Parks in 2012 under support from the US National Park Service and the US Geological Survey, and in eastern PWS under support of the new EVOS LTM project. Results from all areas will be combined for analyses to provide a GOA-wide perspective. The US Fish and Wildlife Service conducted marine bird and mammal surveys in PWS in July 2012 (D. Irons, PI) and those data will be provided to this project. Coordination with Cook Inlet RCAC and NOAA (shorezone mapping and lingering oil projects) continues. Our project also coordinated with a USGS study investigating processes structuring nearshore marine communities from California to the Gulf of Alaska. Coordination and data sharing with this study provides additional sites and increased sample sizes of sea otter diet for both projects.

Community Involvement/TEK & Resource Management Applications: Describe efforts undertaken during the reporting period to achieve the community involvement/TEK and resource management application provisions of the proposal, if applicable.

Information Transfer: List (a) publications produced during the reporting period, (b) conference and workshop presentations and attendance during the reporting period, and (c) data and/or information products developed during the reporting period. *NOTE: Lack of compliance with the Trustee Council's*

data policy and/or the project's data management plan will result in withholding of additional project funds, cancellation of the project, or denial of funding for future projects.

No publications or presentations have resulted from the work to date.

Budget: Explain any differences and/or problems between actual and budgeted expenditures, including any substantial changes in the allocation of funds among line items on the budget form. Also provide any new information regarding matching funds or funds from non-EVOS sources for the project. *NOTE: Any request for an increased or supplemental budget must be submitted as a new proposal that will be subject to the standard process of proposal submittal, technical review, and Trustee Council approval.*

Due to an accident involving the US Fish and Wildlife Service aircraft scheduled for our use in June 2010, we were unable to complete the sea otter survey as planned that year. We reserved the funds provided to support the 2010 survey and applied them to completing the survey in 2011, and used funds provided for the 2011 survey to complete the 2012 survey.

We can accept your annual report as a digital file (Microsoft Word or WordPerfect), with all figures and tables embedded. Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF) files (version 4.x or later) are also acceptable; please do not lock PDF files or include digital signatures.

Please submit reports electronically in [ProjectView](#) or by email to catherine.boerner@alaska.gov. Also, please be sure to post your annual report on your own website, if you have one.



*We appreciate your prompt submission of your annual report
and thank you for your participation.*