

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill
State/Federal Natural Resource Damage Assessment
Final Report

Development of the Alaska Heritage Stewardship Program for
Protection of Cultural Resources at Increased Risk Due
to the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill

Restoration Study Number 104A
Final Report

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Study History: Restoration Study R104A was funded for one year in 1992. Originally conceived as one part of a series of projects to restore and protect cultural resources, the project was the first to be funded. A draft report with the same title was produced in 1993. Comments were received from the Peer reviewer early in 1994 and included with the draft as the Final Report, submitted in 1994. Stewardship has received additional funding for implementation in 1996.

Abstract: Increased public knowledge of archaeological sites following the spill led to increased vandalism of sites. The most effective means of countering this damage are public education and increased monitoring. We developed a stewardship program, based on functioning models in Arizona and Texas, to train interested local groups and individuals to protect cultural resources. The program was adapted to Alaska's remoteness, sparse populations, and climate by giving Stewards greater flexibility to deal with local conditions. The State Office of History and Archaeology and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are attempting to implement Stewardship in areas expressing interest.

Key Words: Alaska, archaeology, stewardship, volunteer program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Exxon Valdez oil spill cleanup effort brought hundreds of people to the remote beaches of south central Alaska. Increased public knowledge of archaeological sites following the spill led to increased vandalism of sites. The most effective means of countering this damage are public education and increased monitoring. We developed a stewardship program, based on functioning models in Arizona and Texas, to train interested local groups and individuals to protect and manage cultural resources. The program was adapted to Alaska's remoteness, sparse populations, and climate by a looser administrative structure giving regions and stewards greater flexibility to deal with local conditions. The program is ready to implement on a limited scale in the summer of 1993.

Key Words: Alaska, archaeology, stewardship, volunteer program

INTRODUCTION

Native people of Prince William Sound, Kodiak, the Kenai Peninsula and the Alaska Peninsula, Alaska, oriented their subsistence to the abundant marine resources of Alaska's coastal waters. Historic use of the area by Natives and Russian and American settlers was also focused on the sea. As a result, hundreds of archaeological and historic sites occur along the coasts of south central Alaska affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Most of these areas had not been adequately surveyed for cultural resources before the spill brought in hundreds of people for cleanup and damage assessment. The influx of people increased knowledge of the locations of sites and looting and vandalism resulted (Mobley et al. 1990). Vandalism of archaeological sites is often caused by people interested in artifacts but unaware of the damage caused by uncontrolled collecting. Vandalism results in an irretrievable loss of information from sites. Damage to sites often invites further damage. Sites cannot be repaired.

The usual mitigation of such damage is to excavate a site before further loss of information occurs. Excavation is a time consuming and expensive response. The most effective counter to vandalism is prevention through public education and increased oversight of threatened sites.

Archaeological site stewardship is the recruitment, training, and coordination of local interested citizens groups. Stewardship programs in Arizona and Texas have successfully reduced site vandalism in areas patrolled by trained volunteers.

Here we report on our progress in developing the Alaska Heritage Stewardship Program. We describe the model programs in Arizona and Texas and briefly look at the Arkansas amateur certification program. The Draft Steward Handbook and Fieldbook are presented. The Handbook describes the administrative structure of the program and details steward responsibilities and training. The Fieldbook contains the forms used by stewards in regular patrols of threatened sites.

In summer 1993, pilot programs will be set up in three communities in Prince William Sound and Kodiak. A final report for the total program will be prepared in September.

OBJECTIVE

1. Prevent vandalism of cultural resources in south central Alaska, at increased risk due to the Exxon Valdez oil spill, by encouraging local amateur archeology groups to take an active role in the protection and management of sites.

METHODS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service took the lead on developing the stewardship program and preparing training materials for stewards. Debra Corbett, archeologist, and Karen McKibbin, education specialist, from the Anchorage Regional Office, worked together in the initial stages of the project. Douglas Reger of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Office of History and Archaeology, assisted in outlining the organizational structure.

To develop a program for Alaska, we investigated functioning stewardship and volunteer programs in Arizona, Texas, and Arkansas. The State Coordinators for the Arizona and Texas programs were contacted and interviewed on the telephone. Copies of their training handbooks and quarterly newsletters were reviewed by the development team. The Arkansas Archaeological Survey was also contacted for information on their avocational training program for archaeology.

After reviewing these materials, we felt a trip to observe one of the programs in action was necessary. The Texas program was older but Arizona's was larger and more elaborate. We made arrangements to spend four days in Arizona, in June 1992, with the State Coordinator, a land manager representative and several stewards. This group was able to discuss and demonstrate all aspects of the Arizona program.

Upon our return, we began to prepare a handbook to be used in training stewards. Elements from all the studied programs were combined and modified to suit conditions in Alaska. We met with Forest Service and National Park Service archaeologists and representatives from Chugach Alaska Corporation and the Kodiak Area Native Association, and the program was further modified to address their concerns.

RESULTS

Texas

The Texas Archeological Stewardship Network, was created in 1983 to help the Office of the State Archeologist with public education, outreach and preservation of the states cultural heritage (Hoyt 1992a). Cathryn Hoyt, Texas Archeological Stewardship Coordinator was contacted for information.

The Texas program is very loosely structured. Stewards report, casually, to the State Coordinator. When the number of stewards was less than 30, this system worked well, but recently the program has started to expand, making additional structure necessary. They are looking at the Arizona model for organizational ideas (Hoyt personal communication 1992).

Stewards are nominated for membership in the program by an advisory committee made up of professional and avocational archaeologists from state universities, state and federal agencies and amateur societies (Hoyt 1992b). All are members of amateur societies and have some training. Most land in Texas is private and monitoring patrols

are limited to sites on state and other public lands and those on the National Register of Historic Places (Hoyt 1992a).

The primary focus of Texas stewards is assisting private landowners in documenting and protecting sites on their lands. Part of the documentation effort includes recording numerous private collections. Stewards are a very important source of site survey information for most of the state and are encouraged to publish the results of their research. Texas Stewards are also very active in public education efforts Hoyt 1991a,b).

Arizona

The Arizona Site Stewardship program began in December 1985, under Governor Bruce Babbitt who directed the Arizona Archaeology Advisory Commission to create a program based on the Texas stewardship model. The Commission formally approved a Site Steward Program, to be administered by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in June of 1985 (Estes 1992a). SHPO contacted amateur archaeological societies for help and the program grew.

Land managing agencies participating in the program sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the SHPO. Current participants include the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, Arizona Lands Department, the Hopi Indian Tribe, and several county and municipal governments. These agencies nominate sites for protection by sending pertinent information to the State Coordinator. The Coordinator passes the information on to the appropriate Regional Coordinator. The program has recently begun to recruit and incorporate private landowners (Estes 1993).

Arizona is divided into regions based on the number of available stewards. Each region has a volunteer coordinator. Regional coordinators are the backbone of the structure. They are responsible for recruiting, training, and coordinating the other volunteers. They do all necessary administrative tasks including organizing additional training. After a site is nominated, the Regional Coordinator has an Acquisition team prepare a site kit with maps of the site and access information. Elaborate security procedures are designed to protect the site and the steward from possibly violent looters.

Arizona Stewards may select one of three monitoring options. The "regular patrol" is a loop route with several sites. A Steward with one or two assistants regularly drives the route and checks the sites. "Special routes" require special effort, for example hiking over unimproved trails. The third alternative, "Adopt-a-Site," is the most popular. A steward adopts one or two sites for periodic visits. Stewards make their own schedule for visits and often form a personal interest in 'their' site.

Stewards are also involved in a variety of other preservation activities. Some work at interpreting ruins for the public. Under proper supervision they fence and sign threatened sites and restore eroding sites or collapsed walls. Some have proven invaluable to land managers during emergency excavations and other research activities (Estes 1992b).

State Coordinator. Mary Estes, the Arizona State Coordinator, reviewed the history of the program and outlined state support and funding levels. She provided information

on the program structure and discussed recruitment and training. She also outlined some of the problems including liability for injury, firearms and steward involvement in law enforcement.

Land Managers. Two U.S. Forest Service archaeologists, Peter Pilles and Jim Macdonald provided information on the role of the land manager in the Arizona program. Macdonald is also the Regional Coordinator for the Tucson area and gave additional information on that role. The stewardship program was originally designed to be independent of the agencies administering the lands. However the need for some active participation by the Land Managers is now obvious and the role of the agencies is being expanded. Both Pilles and Macdonald mentioned problems in sustaining their agency's commitment to the program.

On the positive side, both considered the stewards' contributions invaluable. They emphasized the program was run by the stewards, and that they were only advisors. However, to make the program work, good Regional Coordinators were also vital. As land manager representatives, they also needed to give something back to the stewards. What this meant was support for additional training opportunities and an investment of time for consulting.

Stewards. The Stewards we met were a highly dedicated group. They took a personal interest in their assigned sites and were active in the project in other capacities. Arizona has certified over 400 stewards, but the number active at any given time is much smaller. Activity depends on the season, and, most importantly, on the interest and commitment of the Regional Coordinator.

Most stewards were motivated by an interest in archaeology. The major reward expected for their hours of effort in patrolling sites, is the additional training they receive. Most popular are seminars on Arizona's prehistory, history, and Indian cultures. Specialized training in artifact identification, analysis and even tool replication are also popular.

Arkansas

Arkansas does not have a stewardship program, but the Arkansas Archeological Survey sponsors one of the best public archaeology programs in the country (Davis 1990). The goals are twofold: (1) to provide interested citizens with an opportunity to work in archeology, and (2) to train volunteers to assist the Archeological Survey in preserving the states cultural resources. The programs centerpiece is an annual field project which brings up to 140 people to a site selected by the Survey for research excavation (Scheibel 1992). Participants map the site, excavate, and analyze artifacts. The Certification Program expands on this training by offering additional seminars and opportunities for field and lab work. By recording their progress in a Logbook, participants may advance through four levels to Certified Field Archeologist. At this level, the trainee is qualified to plan, execute and publish original fieldwork (Davis 1990).

Development and Implementation of Stewardship in 1994

Our interviews and review of program literature indicated stewardship would work in Alaska. We made inquiries in towns and villages affected by the oil spill, and received positive responses from individuals and groups. Communities outside the oil spill area have also expressed an interest in participation in the program.

Preparation of training materials is nearly complete (See Appendixes A and B). The Alaska program will differ from Arizona's in generally being more loosely structured and in more directly involving Federal agencies training. We hope to get more private landowners directly involved in preservation and cultural heritage projects.

Contacts were made in Kodiak, Homer and Prince William Sound to discuss the proposal and plan for implementation in 1994. Meetings with organizations and individuals in these areas have fine tuned the proposal and allowed projections on the potential success of the program in each of the areas. In addition the State Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) were approached by persons from Chignik interested in protecting a vandalized site near the village. This community, also in the area affected by the oil spill has been incorporated into the 1994 Pilot Program.

HOMER

OHA has been in contact with people in Homer interested in establishing an amateur archaeology group. Doug Reger and Debra Corbett met with organizers Janet Klein and Peter Zollars to discuss the amateur group and mesh it with Stewardship. They felt the program would be very popular and provide an excellent outlet for the considerable local interest in archaeology. The Stewardship program will work as envisioned in the Homer area and training will start in early 1994. Seldovia, Port Graham and English Bay are also interested and can easily be incorporated, with Homer Stewards recruiting and training in these communities.

KODIAK

Several attempts have been made to meet with Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) archaeologist Rick Knecht to discuss introducing the program to Kodiak. In telephone conversations Mr. Knecht expressed interest, and approved of the idea, but was unsure the program would work as envisioned. All attempts to meet in person with Mr. Knecht have fallen through. Since no meetings were conducted we could not discuss alternatives to adapt the program to circumstances in Kodiak Island villages and on village lands.

A brief meeting with Gordon Pullar, former President of KANA, provided information helpful in planning for rural areas. He felt less "bureaucratic control" would make it more attractive to locals. Training should be conducted in individual villages rather than a centralized location like Kodiak. Mr. Pullar was concerned that agencies sponsoring Stewards would expect people to turn in relatives who might be collecting

illegally. He felt all efforts to recruit Stewards in villages on Kodiak should be coordinated through KANA and Rick Knecht.

In 1992 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contacted setnet permit holders on Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge (Kodiak NWR) lands in Uganik Bay. Many of the permittees were interested in participating in a program to protect the sites on or near their setnet sites. Setnetters present unique training challenges. Prior to the fishing season they are scattered in communities all over Alaska and the Lower 48. When at the fishing sites they are scattered along the shores and working. Efforts will be made in the winter of 1993/4 to contact setnet permittees and arrange enough training sessions, in Anchorage, Kodiak and Uganik Bay to get a corps of Stewards in place. This effort will be coordinated through the Kodiak NWR.

Establishing a Stewardship program in Kodiak is important to the success of the program as a whole. Though efforts to incorporate Native groups through KANA have stalled, other possibilities exist. The Fish and Wildlife Service will train a small corps of Stewards, recruited from setnet fishermen, to protect sites on the Kodiak NWR. The Stewardship concept on Kodiak will thus begin as an individual effort, rather than community based groups. The Stewards will focus on sites in which they have a personal interest, at their camps, rather than more general sites selected by the land owner. From this beginning the Kodiak program could expand in any number of ways, depending on agency commitment, incorporation of rural residents and contact with other interested individuals, such as hunting guides, commercial fishermen or pilots.

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

Prince William Sound (PWS) is another area where implementation of Stewardship is important to the successful development and expansion of the program. Unfortunately it is also the area where a workable volunteer program has been hardest to establish.

John Johnson of the Chugach Alaska Corporation, stated Chugach shareholders should be paid wages to monitor sites on Corporation and public lands. He also commented the Corporation does not want non-Chugach to monitor sites in PWS. This ties into a concern that advertising the locations of sites to "outsiders" will increase the likelihood of vandalism.

Direct contacts with villages have also been unproductive. Through an intermediary for Chenega Village Corporation (CVC), the proposal was rejected on the grounds that people in the villages wanted to run their own program and needed only training from the agencies. Informal contacts initiated with village officials may lead to a productive dialog in the early winter of 1993.

The U.S. Forest Service, the primary public land owner in the Sound, has also opposed the Stewardship program as currently envisioned. The major reason is a belief that it won't work without paying Stewards to patrol sites. The Forest Service has proposed recruiting and training teams of monitors who will be given a stipend of 15 dollars a day for patrol time. Discussions between the Forest Service and other agencies developing Stewardship will continue this fall and hopefully a compromise will be

reached. For now a pilot Stewardship program for Prince William Sound is in the negotiating stage.

CHIGNIK

The village of Chignik, on the central Alaska Peninsula, is on the edge of the area affected by the oil spill. It was not originally included in the plans for pilot programs as we were concentrating on the areas of greatest impact. However, residents of the village contacted both the Office of History and Archaeology and the Fish and Wildlife Service, concerned about damage to a local site from looting. A brief visit to the town in March revealed interest in protecting sites, but little knowledge of how to go about the task. The school was particularly interested in involving students in archaeology. During a second visit to the village in July, officials of the Village Corporation were contacted and expressed interest in Corporation involvement. Residents see archaeology and history as potential social and economic assets, enhancing childrens' pride in their heritage and attracting tourists. Stewardship is the best way to develop community interest and enhance the value of protected cultural resources to the community.

Conclusions

Three of the four areas approached for potential pilot programs implementing the Alaska Heritage Stewardship Program show a good deal of promise for success. Stewardship will take very different forms in each of these three areas and their success will validate the original effort to make the program as flexible and responsive to local needs as possible. In the fourth area, Prince William Sound, interest is high but concern over the structure and mechanics of implementation have delayed attempts to get the program running.

Several problems cropped up repeatedly: concern for confidentiality of information, concern over the amount of bureaucratic control, concern over "outsiders" on private lands, and a general lack of enthusiasm for volunteer service. In most cases the concern arises from our failure to make the goals and methods of the program clear.

Confidentiality: Since sites selected for patrols are already known to vandals and are chosen on the basis of existing ongoing vandalism, there should be no increase in amount of damage. Stewards are also required by the Code of Ethics to keep site locations confidential. The only side effect of patrols should be a decrease in destruction.

Bureaucratic Control: Our plan has been to make the program self-sufficient and run by stewards. The only bureaucrat involved would be the State coordinator. Federal agencies participating in the program would be involved in training and guidance of Stewards working on Public Lands. Except for requested technical assistance, Federal agencies would not be involved with Stewards working on private lands at all.

Outsiders: Two locations were concerned that outsiders, perceived as more likely to vandalize sites, would be given Stewardship roles on sites. Private landowners, including Native Corporations, certainly have the right to restrict access to their lands,

and to select Stewards they are comfortable with. However Federal and State agency lands are public and with few exceptions open to anyone.

Volunteerism: At least two areas approached felt the Stewardship program required rural Alaskans to perform a service and felt people should be compensated. The goal of the program is to give individuals and groups interested in archaeology and history an outlet for that interest. We are looking for people who are willing to give some time, in the course of their normal activities, to check threatened sites. Three areas are willing to try the program as proposed, with modifications to meet local needs. Without exploring all alternatives we are reluctant to start paying Stewards for patrols. We believe the program will be stronger and more likely to succeed if Stewards are motivated by interest and concern for the resource.

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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Dear Karen,

This letter is the response to the peer review of the Draft Final Report on Restoration Study Number R104A, Development of the Alaska Heritage Stewardship Program. This project was funded for one year in 1992. Since the project has not received additional funding, I will not rewrite of the entire report for the Trustees. Instead the peer reviewers comments will be addressed in this letter.

The reviewers comments were useful and welcome. They will be fully incorporated into our planned restructuring of the Heritage Steward program. I am happy to report Stewardship is alive, though proceeding at a slower pace than I would like. Interest in the idea of Stewardship is growing and I have had inquiries from all over the State.

The heaviest criticism in the review was directed at the Handbook which was based heavily on the Arizona model. A year, or more, of practical efforts to implement the program has more than pointed out the inadequacies of the Handbook and I had already planned a major rewrite. The New Handbook will emphasize the importance of the stewards. The introductory and background chapters will be upbeat and positive. The majority of the chapters will actually be Modules containing information useful to the Steward in the field.

Basic modules will include a glossary of technical terms, information on mapping and recording sites, photographic hints, and advice on recording and reporting changes or damage to sites. Additional Modules, developed to address Steward identified needs, may include oral history projects, recording artifact collections, and creating exhibits of heritage projects. The possibilities are limited only by the Stewards themselves. By using a modular approach the book can be tailored to the needs of each region.

It is more difficult to address particular criticisms of the implementation effort as the response to the program has varied widely in different areas. Unfortunately for the program there is a persistent view that the government is requesting people in rural Alaska to perform a service for the government with no

compensation. Failing to correct this view is one of the biggest weaknesses of the Steward Handbook.

Stewardship was and is an attempt to locate individuals, and groups, interested in cultural resources and to cultivate and encourage that interest. It was designed to be run, organized, coordinated, directed, planned and implemented at the local level by the Stewards themselves. Government involvement, except on Public Lands for which the agencies have specific management responsibilities, was always conceived to be a technical advisory role. Admittedly, we had hoped to attract Stewards to public lands and to use their interest, but the goal is to make the program mutually beneficial to all parties.

That this is an achievable goal, even in rural Alaska, has been amply demonstrated by the experiences of the last year. Since August 1993 I have made seven contacts which have or could lead to Stewardship efforts. Five of these involve villages or Regional Corporations, and, in four the Native group contacted the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) seeking assistance.

The most concrete effort has seen a Stewardship group actually established in the Kenai/Soldotna area. The State Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) and the FWS cooperated to train 10-12 stewards and set up monitoring teams on four sites. All of the sites so far are on State Park lands but the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge is interested in participating. Three of the four sites targeted had suffered vandalism, on two the damage was only a few days old. Stewards and the State Parks Department are wildly enthusiastic and the program is sure to grow rapidly.

Last winter the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge sent information on Stewardship to all setnet and guide permit holders. Field visits indicated a lot of interest in archaeology, particularly among the setnetters. Response so far has been limited but I suspect people are waiting to see what the project entails. After a few Stewards are trained and involved we should get more volunteers.

In November I visited False Pass during a trip to inspect several vandalized prehistoric sites on Unimak Island. The people in False Pass expressed concerns about the pothunting and wanted it stopped. We discussed options and they requested an excavation. I was able to arrange a team of University students to excavate this summer, 1994. The village offered to help with transportation and, if fishing allows, will visit the excavation. Research excavations will continue on Izembek National Wildlife Refuge for the next few years and will attempt to encourage participation by area residents. Though not a Stewardship effort as yet, agency and University archaeologists are hoping to interest people and eventually to recruit fishermen to report sites as well as any damage they notice.

In May I revisited Chignik Bay with two other anthropologists who had worked in the area. We gave talks on the work we had done and

presented some ideas for community heritage efforts. The village council is interested in pursuing some heritage projects including interpretive displays of local history and culture for tourists. Working with the council would create a stewardship program geared less toward archaeology and more toward historical and interpretive efforts. At Chignik Lake we found several local people with a passionate interest in archaeology. This trip was the initial contact for sounding out interest but three projects were proposed in the short time we spent in the village. Formalizing a Stewardship effort in Chignik Lake will require some follow-up work but local interest has already built a foundation.

More recently both Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) and Bristol Bay Native Corporation have approached the Togiak and Alaska Peninsula/Becharof National Wildlife Refuges about cooperative efforts to protect archaeological sites. There is widespread interest among Native groups and Federal and State Land managers in the area. A coordinator to pull all interested parties together is needed to get regional programs organized. The National Park Service is planning a series of workshops for the area to discuss site protection on private lands. Stewardship will be an important element of the workshop.

Finally, I have spoken casually with the Chugach Alaska Corporation (CAC) Archaeologist about site protection in the Kachemak Bay area. The villages of Port Graham and Nanwalek are concerned about illegal collecting from sites eroding in their vicinities. This is a particularly hopeful contact as CAC is a key player in founding a successful program in Prince William Sound. A small cooperative beginning in Kachemak Bay may lead to a larger effort in the Sound.

Clearly concern for cultural heritage, including archaeological resources, is strong in the Native community. Many communities would like to make cultural heritage a priority but lack clear ideas of how to get started. Stewardship, with technical support from agencies, can give a real boost to community efforts.

The benefits of Stewardship range far beyond the simple protection of archaeological sites. Stimulating pride in local cultural heritage has potential social and educational benefits for rural villages. Elders may be encouraged to pass on their knowledge and experiences to new generations. Greater knowledge and appreciation of Alaskas Native cultures and history will benefit all residents and is of increasing value to the tourism industry. Probably more important is the fostering of cooperation between Federal and State land mangers and rural residents. Cooperation in managing one resource may lead to increased involvement in management of others.

As of now the major limitation to encouraging programs is a lack of personnel to make the necessary contacts and to follow up. Establishing programs will require building personal relationships with interested people in the villages. This will require heavy time commitments from participating Agency sponsors. Even after a Steward group is functioning independently there must be a

commitment of time to interact with and encourage the Stewards. This factor was repeatedly emphasized by sponsors of the existing programs in Arizona and Texas. The interest is there, the success of Stewardship will depend on the willingness of Agencies to sell the program and make the opportunity available.

I hope this satisfactorily addresses the issues and concerns raised by the reviewer. The Office of History and Archaeology and the Fish and Wildlife Service believe this program is possible to implement and of enormous potential benefit to cultural resource management. Our experience suggests the program will be popular and will reflect positively on everyone involved. Our plans are to continue to develop the program and to expand it to as many communities as possible.

If there are any comments or questions please call me at (907) 786-3399.

Delbra Corbett, archaeologist