

Public Information, Science Management and Administration

Project Number: 02100

Restoration Category: Public Information, Science Management and Administration

Proposer: Restoration Office

Lead Trustee Agency: All Trustee Agencies

Alaska SeaLife Center: No

Duration: Ongoing

Cost FY 96: \$3,439,600

Cost FY 97: \$2,940,500

Cost FY 98: \$2,796,300

Cost FY 99: \$2,495,700

Cost FY 00: \$2,033,900

Cost FY 01: \$1,500,000

Cost FY 02: \$1,500,000

Geographic Area: N/A

Injured Resource/Service: All

ABSTRACT

Project 02100 provides overall support for science management, public involvement and administration of the restoration program through the Restoration Office. This includes funding support for the Trustee Council staff working at the direction of the Executive Director, management of the scientific peer review process, public involvement efforts including the active participation of the 17-member Public Advisory Group (PAG), and support for Trustee agency participation in the restoration program.

Prepared: 8/2/01

INTRODUCTION

The Trustee Council, established under the terms of a court approved civil settlement in 1991, is comprised of six members: the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation; the Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game; the Attorney General of the State of Alaska; the Secretary of the Department of the Interior; the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture; and the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In order to manage the settlement funds as directed by the Trustee Council, the Public Information, Science Management and Administration project (02100) provides for overall implementation of the restoration program.

This project makes extensive use of existing Trustee Council agency structures to keep administrative costs to a minimum. The proposed Project 02100 budget continues to make reductions in various areas of administrative and management costs as the overall work plan is reduced as directed by the Trustee Council. Because the lease at 645 G Street expires on December 31, 2001 and could not be renewed, the Restoration Office had to acquire new lease space. Costs for space have escalated in recent years and the cost for new space is significantly higher than previous costs. As proposed for FY 02, the budget of \$1,500,000 reflects the same amount of funding as the FY 01 budget.

Components of the 02100 Public Information, Science Management and Administration project include:

Chief Scientist and Peer Review Process - The Trustee Council and principal investigators need access to the best possible scientific knowledge and understanding concerning injured resources and services. This information has been provided continuously by the Chief Scientist and expert peer reviewers since the injury assessment process started in 1989. The Chief Scientist draws upon a variety of qualified individuals with expertise in specific fields who provide individual reviews of project proposals as well as peer review of annual and final project reports. As proposed for FY 02, the budget of \$270,000 has been reduced \$23,700 from the FY 01 budget.

Restoration Office - The Restoration Office component includes funding for the Executive Director and staff. The Restoration Office provides for basic restoration program planning and implementation; intergovernmental and interagency coordination; public information; and overall program management functions of the Trustee Council. Restoration Office staff maintain the Trustee Council's financial records including preparation of the monthly investment reports, quarterly and annual financial reports; provide a quarterly report regarding the status of projects funded by the Trustee Council; and work closely with the Chief Scientist in facilitating the scientific review and evaluation process.

The budget also includes funding for public involvement and outreach. This includes

funding associated with public meetings and the annual workshop; Public Notice and advertising expenses; all work plan documents (i.e., annual Invitation, Draft Work Plan, Final Work Plan, Annual Report); the Restoration Update newsletters; other publications; and postage for mailings. Funding is also included for the annual external audit. In addition, this budget includes funding for lease and operating costs for the Anchorage office. At the end of FY 01, the Restoration Office will move to 441 West 5th Avenue.

Public Advisory Group - The Public Advisory Group (PAG) consists of 17 members and two *ex-officio* members from the Alaska State Legislature. The PAG includes representatives of major interest groups (e.g., tourism/recreation, commercial fishing, Native landowners, forest products, subsistence, local government, science and academia) and five members representing the public-at-large. The PAG helps provide meaningful public involvement including guidance and input to the Trustee Council on such items as the annual work plans, budgets, and overall implementation of the *Restoration Plan*.

Liaison Support - The FY 02 budget for Liaison Support includes funding for Trustee agency liaisons as well as travel costs for Trustees to attend Council meetings. Funding for agency liaisons is consistent with liaison support for FY 01 at two months and travel funding remains the same as FY 01.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The project provides the essential management and administration necessary to efficiently implement the restoration program.

A. Statement of the Problem

Implementation of the restoration program as directed by the Trustee Council and guided by the *Restoration Plan* requires overall scientific management, meaningful public involvement and program administration.

B. Rationale/Link to Restoration

Project 02100 provides essential support to implement the restoration program as directed by the Trustee Council and guided by the *Restoration Plan*.

C. Location

The Trustee Council maintains the Restoration Office in Anchorage (441 West 5th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska, 99501).

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Project 02100 supports various aspects of community involvement. This includes public information efforts to assist the general public and spill community residents to learn about and more effectively participate in the restoration program process. The FY 02 budget also reflects support for some costs (rent, phone-fax, copying) associated with the work of the Community Involvement Coordinator (see project /052), who works out of the Restoration Office.

PROJECT DESIGN

A. Objectives

The fundamental objective of the Public Information, Science Management and Administration project is to implement a comprehensive, balanced restoration program consistent with the *Restoration Plan* and Trustee Council actions.

Specific objectives for FY 02 include:

- Implement the authorized FY 02 Work Plan.
- Compile, manage, synthesize, and disseminate information about the restoration program, including: (1) production of the Restoration Update newsletter two times per year; (2) publication of the Annual Status Report, and (3) updating the Trustee Council's web page.
- Oversee and manage the science program, including the peer review and project evaluation process, under the direction of the Chief Scientist and the Science Coordinator.
- Develop and begin implementation of the Gulf Ecosystem Monitoring and Research Plan (GEM).
- Sponsor the annual Restoration Workshop, bringing together scientists, agency staff, Trustee Council staff, academia, and members of the general public.
- Continue habitat evaluations, appraisals and negotiations with willing sellers under both the Large Parcel and Small Parcel Habitat Protection Programs as applicable.

Develop recommendations on the future of these programs, as directed by the Trustee Council in their resolution on the Restoration Reserve.

- Conduct regular meetings of the Public Advisory Group (PAG) as a means of obtaining public input into the Trustee Council process and conduct a PAG field trip.
- Work with the Community Involvement Coordinator and Community Facilitators to inform and involve spill area residents about restoration program activities and findings.
- Develop the FY 03 Work Plan, including publication of the initial Invitation to Submit Restoration Proposals and preparation of a Draft Work Plan for public comment.
- Oversee and manage current and prior years' projects funded by the Trustee Council, including the production of quarterly and annual reports.
- Complete an eighth independent audit.
- Track equipment purchased with settlement funds.

B. Methods

All Trustee Council operations are governed by the state and federal laws and regulations that apply to the respective agencies that comprise the Trustee Council.

C. Cooperating Agencies, Contracts and Other Agency Assistance

Multiple agencies are involved in the implementation of Project 02100. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is the administering agency for most of the operations functions, although the Department of Interior, U.S. Geological Survey receives funding to pay for lease costs for the Anchorage office. In addition, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources administers the contract for the Chief Scientist/peer review process. The U.S. Department of the Interior receives funding for support in the Federal Budget Office as well as funding for participation of a federal officer associated with the Public Advisory Group. All Trustee agencies receive funding for liaison support.

A variety of contracts will be administered under Project 02100, including the Chief Scientist/peer review contract and the annual external audit. A number of small contracts will also be administered under Project 02100 for support services such as equipment maintenance and publication of documents.

SCHEDULE

The Trustee Council operates on the Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 - September 30).

A. Measurable Project Tasks for FY 01 (October 1, 2001 - September 30, 2002)

Measurable project tasks include holding the Annual Workshop and successful development of the FY 03 Work Plan. Other measurable tasks include meetings of the Trustee Council and the Public Advisory Group, preparation of quarterly financial reports and quarterly project status reports, preparation of habitat program status reports, completion of an eighth independent audit, and publication of the Restoration Update newsletter and the annual restoration program status report.

B. Milestones and Endpoints

Project Authorization Consistent with Trustee Council action:	October-September
Final Trustee Council action on the Final FY 02 Work Plan:	December
Publish FY 02 Final Work Plan:	December
Publish Newsletter:	December
Annual Restoration Workshop:	January
Complete FY 01 Audit:	January
Publish FY 03 Invitation:	February
Receive FY 03 Project Proposals:	April
Scientific/Technical/Policy/Legal Review of Proposals:	April-August
Publish FY 03 Draft Work Plan:	June
Publish Newsletter:	June
Trustee Council action on FY 03 Work Plan:	August
Executive Director authorizations to proceed:	August-September

C. Completion Date

Project /100 will continue throughout the life of the restoration program.

PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

See above (Measurable Project Tasks).

NORMAL AGENCY MANAGEMENT

Funding in the Project 02100 budget supports the science management, public involvement and administrative functions that are required to implement the *Restoration Plan*. The Restoration Office and the functions included within the Project 02100 budget are budgeted for the sole purpose of supporting restoration program activities and may not be used for other agency purposes.

COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION OF RESTORATION EFFORT

At the direction of the Trustee Council, the Executive Director implements Project 02100 to provide overall coordination and integration of the restoration program. As part of the adaptive management process, the Trustee Council sponsors the annual restoration workshop that brings together scientists, federal and state resource agency representatives, and members of the public to review the status of restoration. In addition, all project proposals are peer reviewed with regard to their coordination and integration aspects. Other coordination efforts include working with the agency liaisons and/or project managers to implement the restoration program.

EXPLANATION OF CHANGES IN CONTINUING PROJECTS

Total funding for FY 02 is consistent with total funding for FY 01.

PROPOSED PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, IF KNOWN

Not applicable to this project.