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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF ALASKA

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF ALASKA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

STATE OF ALASKA,

Defendant and
Counterclaimant.

Civil Action No.
A91-081 CV

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT AND CONSENT DECREE

This Memorandum of Agreement and Consent Decree (MOA) is made and entered into by the United States of America (United States)

and the State of Alaska (State) (collectively referred to as the Governments).

INTRODUCTION

WHEREAS, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1321, establishes liability to the United States and to States for injury, loss, or destruction of natural resources resulting from the discharge of oil or the release of hazardous substances or both and provides for the appointment of State and Federal Trustees;

WHEREAS, the United States and the State are trustees and/or co-trustees for natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the EXXON VALDEZ Oil Spill (Oil Spill);

WHEREAS, Section 107 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. § 9607, the National Contingency Plan, 40 C.F.R. § 300.615(a), and the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Regulations, 43 C.F.R. § 11.32(a)(1)(ii), provide a framework for and encourage the state and federal trustees to cooperate with each other in carrying out their responsibilities for natural resources;

WHEREAS, the Secretaries of the United States Departments of the Interior and Agriculture and the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a bureau of the United States Department of Commerce, have been designated trustees (the Federal Trustees) for purposes of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1321, and CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9607, and otherwise have statutory responsibilities related to the natural

resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been designated by the President of the United States to coordinate restoration activities on behalf of the United States;

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of the State Departments of Environmental Conservation and Fish and Game and the Attorney General of the State of Alaska have been designated trustees for purposes of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1321, and CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9607, and otherwise have statutory responsibilities relating to the natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill;

WHEREAS, the United States Coast Guard, an agency of the United States Department of Transportation, is the predesignated Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) to direct response efforts and to coordinate all other efforts at the scene of the Oil Spill, pursuant to the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C § 1321, and the National Contingency Plan, 40 C.F.R. § 300, and is coordinating its efforts with the Federal Trustees in accordance with the National Contingency Plan;

WHEREAS, the State Department of Environmental Conservation is the State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC) to direct containment and cleanup of discharged oil pursuant to AS 46.04.020;

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Justice (Justice) and the Department of Law for the State of Alaska (Law) have constitutional and statutory responsibility for litigation

management and specifically for prosecuting claims for damages for injury, loss or destruction to the natural resources affected by the Oil Spill;

WHEREAS, all of the above state and federal entities have determined that it is in furtherance of their statutory and trust responsibilities to ensure that all injuries, loss or destruction to state and federal natural resources are fully compensated and to ensure that such compensation is used in accordance with law;

WHEREAS, the United States has brought this action against the State, and the State has asserted counterclaims in this action against the United States, with respect to their respective shares in any recoveries for compensation for natural resource damages resulting from the Oil Spill;

WHEREAS, recognizing their mutual desire to maximize the funds available for restoration of natural resources, the United States and the State have determined that entering into this MOA is the most appropriate way to resolve their claims against one another in this action, and that the terms of this MOA are in the public interest and will best enable them to fulfill their duties as trustees to assess injuries and to restore, replace, rehabilitate, enhance, or acquire the equivalent of the natural resources injured, lost, or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of their mutual promises, the United States, acting through the United States Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Transportation, and Justice, NOAA, and

EPA, and the State of Alaska, acting through the State Departments of Fish and Game, Environmental Conservation, and Law (together "the Governments") have agreed to the following terms and conditions, which shall be binding on both Governments, it is hereby ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED as follows:

I.

JURISDICTION

The Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the claims set forth in the United States' Complaint and in the State's Counterclaim and over the parties to this MOA pursuant to, among other authorities, 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1333, and 1345, and section 311(f) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1321(f).

II.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this MOA, the following terms shall have the meanings specified in this paragraph:

A. "Base Allowed Expenses" means (1) reasonable, unreimbursed costs obligated or incurred by either the United States or the State on or before March 12, 1991, for the planning, conduct, evaluation, and coordination, and oversight of natural resource damage assessment and restoration pursued by the Governments with respect to the Oil Spill, and (2) reasonable, unreimbursed costs obligated or incurred by the State on or before March 12, 1991, for experts and counsel in connection with the preparation of the Oil Spill Litigation.

B. "CERCLA" means the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C. § 9601 et seq. as amended.

C. "Clean Water Act" means the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1251-1376, as amended.

D. "Joint use" means use of natural resource damage recoveries by the Governments in such a manner as is agreed upon by the Governments in accordance with Article IV of this MOA.

E. "National Contingency Plan" means the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, 40 C.F.R. Part 300.

F. "Natural resources" means land, fish, wildlife, biota, air, water, ground water, drinking water supplies, and other such resources belonging to, managed by, held in trust by, appertaining to, or otherwise controlled by the United States (including the resources of the fishery conservation zone established by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976) and/or the State.

G. "Natural resource damage recovery" means any award, judgment, settlement or other payment to either Government which is received as a result of a claim or demand for Base Allowed Expenses or for damages for injury, destruction, or loss of natural resources arising from the Oil Spill and for costs incurred by the State for experts and counsel in connection with the Oil Spill Litigation. The term includes, without limitation, all recoveries upon claims for natural resource damages under the Clean Water Act, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act,

state and federal common law, state statutes, admiralty law, state and federal right-of-way lease covenants and any recoveries for natural resource damages obtained from or in connection with a civil proceeding or criminal restitution, unless the parties otherwise agree that criminal restitution recoveries can be separately managed by either government consistent with this MOA. The term also includes all interest accrued on any such recoveries. Natural resource damage recovery excludes any reimbursement or other recovery by either Government for response and cleanup costs, lost royalty, tax, license, or fee revenues, punitive damages, federal or state civil or criminal penalties, federal litigation costs and attorney fees.

H. "Oil Spill" means the grounding of the T/V EXXON VALDEZ on Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound, Alaska on the night of March 23-24, 1989, and the resulting oil spill.

I. "Oil Spill Litigation" means any past, present, or future civil judicial or administrative proceeding relating to or arising out of the Oil Spill.

J. "Response and cleanup costs" means actual, unreimbursed response and/or cleanup costs incurred by either Government in connection with the Oil Spill, as certified for payment by the Federal On-Scene Coordinator or the State On-Scene Coordinator.

K. "Restore" or "Restoration" means any action, in addition to response and cleanup activities required or authorized by state or federal law, which endeavors to restore to their pre-spill condition any natural resource injured, lost, or destroyed

as a result of the Oil Spill and the services provided by that resource or which replaces or substitutes for the injured, lost or destroyed resource and affected services. Restoration includes all phases of injury assessment, restoration, replacement, and enhancement of natural resources, and acquisition of equivalent resources and services.

L. "Trustees" means the officials now or hereafter designated by the President of the United States and the Governor of the State of Alaska to act as trustees, for purposes of CERCLA and the Clean Water Act, of natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill.

III.

EFFECT OF ENTRY OF MOA

Upon approval and entry of this MOA by the Court, this MOA shall constitute a final judgment between the United States and Alaska in accordance with its terms. The MOA is entered for the sole and exclusive benefit of the Governments and does not create any rights or privileges in any other parties.

IV.

CO-TRUSTEESHIP

A. The Governments shall act as co-trustees in the collection and joint use of all natural resource damage recoveries for the benefit of natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill.

B. Nothing in this MOA shall be deemed an admission of law or fact by either Government concerning ownership, right, title,

or interest in or management or control authority over natural resources or the right to recover for injury to such resources. Except in matters concerning or relating to enforcement of this MOA, the Oil Spill Litigation, or the settlement of claims relating to the Oil Spill, the Governments agree that this MOA may not be used by one Government against the other for any reason.

C. Nothing in this MOA shall be construed to affect or impair in any manner the rights and obligations, if any, of any entities or persons not parties to this MOA, including without limitation:

1. The rights and obligations, if any, of Alaska Native villages to act as trustees for the purposes of asserting and compromising claims for injury to, destruction of, or loss of natural resources affected by the Oil Spill and expending any proceeds derived therefrom;

2. The rights and obligations, if any, of legal entities or persons other than the United States and the State who are holders of any present right, title, or interest in land or other property interest affected by the Oil Spill;

3. The rights and obligations, if any, of the United States relating to such Alaska Native villages and the entities or persons referred to in subparagraph 2 above.

V.

ORGANIZATION

A. General Provisions

1. All decisions relating to injury assessment, restoration activities, or other use of the natural resource damage recoveries obtained by the Governments, including all decisions regarding the planning, evaluation, and allocation of available funds, the planning, evaluation, and conduct of injury assessments, the planning, evaluation and conduct of restoration activities, and the coordination thereof, shall be made by the unanimous agreement of the Trustees. Such decisions, on the part of the Federal Trustees, shall be made in consultation with EPA.

2. The Governments shall cooperate in good faith to establish a joint trust fund for purposes of receiving, depositing, holding, disbursing and managing all natural resource damage recoveries obtained or received by the Governments. The joint trust fund shall be established in the Registry of the United States District Court for the District of Alaska or as otherwise determined by stipulation of the Governments and order of the court.

3. If the Trustees cannot reach unanimous agreement on a decision pursuant to paragraph A.1. of this Article, and either Government so certifies, either Government may resort to litigation in the United States District Court for the District of Alaska with respect to any such matter or dispute. At any time, the Governments may, by mutual agreement, submit any such

matter or dispute to non-binding mediation or other means of conflict resolution.

4. Within 90 days after their receipt of any natural resource damage recovery, the Trustees shall agree to an organizational structure for decision making under this MOA and shall establish procedures providing for meaningful public participation in the injury assessment and restoration process, which shall include establishment of a public advisory group to advise the Trustees with respect to the matters described in paragraph V.A.1.

B. Injury Assessment and Restoration Process

1. Nothing in this MOA limits or affects the right of each Government unilaterally to perform any natural resource injury assessment or restoration activity, in addition to the cooperative injury assessment and restoration process contemplated in this MOA, from funds other than natural resource damage recoveries as defined in paragraph G of Article II.

2. Nothing in this MOA constitutes an election on the part of either Government to adhere to or be bound by the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Regulations codified at 43 C.F.R. Part 11.

3. Nothing in this MOA shall prevent the President of the United States or the Governor of the State of Alaska from transferring, pursuant to applicable law, trustee status from one official to another official of their respective Governments; provided that, in no event shall either Government designate more

than three Trustees for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this MOA. The designation of such substitute or successor Trustees by either Government shall not affect the enforceability of this MOA.

C. Role of the Environmental Protection Agency

The Governments acknowledge that the President has assigned to EPA the role of advising the Federal Trustees and coordinating, on behalf of the Federal Government, the long-term restoration of natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill.

VI.

DISTRIBUTION OF MONIES

A. Joint Use of Natural Resource Damage Recoveries

The Governments shall jointly use all natural resource damage recoveries for purposes of restoring, replacing, enhancing, rehabilitating or acquiring the equivalent of natural resources injured as a result of the Oil Spill and the reduced or lost services provided by such resources, except as provided in paragraph B of this Article. The Governments shall establish standards and procedures governing the joint use and administration of all such natural resource damage recoveries. Except as provided in paragraph B of this Article, all natural resource damage recoveries shall be placed in the joint trust fund for use in accordance with the terms and conditions of this MOA. Nothing in this MOA creates a right in or entitlement of

any person not a party to the MOA to share in any of the natural resource damage recoveries.

B. Reimbursement of Certain Expenses

1. The Governments agree that the following costs shall be advanced or reimbursed to each Government, at its election, out of any natural resource damage recoveries related to the Oil Spill and shall not be placed in the joint trust fund referred to in paragraph A: (1) Base Allowed Expenses; (2) reasonable unreimbursed costs jointly agreed upon by the Governments and incurred by either or both of them after March 12, 1991 for the planning, conduct, coordination, or oversight of natural resource damage assessment and restoration planning with respect to the Oil Spill or for restoration activities conducted under this MOA; and (3) other reasonable unreimbursed costs incurred by the State after March 12, 1991 for experts and counsel in connection with the Oil Spill Litigation provided that the total amount, in aggregate, deducted for such purposes shall not exceed \$1,000,000 per month and a total of \$40,000,000, and provided further that no such costs shall be deducted from any natural resource damages recovered as restitution in a criminal proceeding.

2. Solely for the purposes of the allocation of monies received by either or both of the Governments pursuant to any settlement(s) of the Governments' claims arising out of the Oil Spill, \$67 million shall be reimbursed to the United States for Base Allowed Expenses and for response and cleanup costs incurred by it before January 1, 1991, and \$75 million shall be reimbursed

to the State for Base Allowed Expenses and for response and cleanup costs incurred by it before January 1, 1991; provided that this subparagraph shall not affect or impair in any way the rights of either Government to recover any costs, damages, fees, or expenses through litigation.

3. The Governments further agree that any monies received by either or both of them pursuant to a settlement of claims arising from the Oil Spill that remain after the costs referred to in subparagraphs 1 & 2 have been reimbursed shall be allocated as follows: (1) first, to reimburse the Governments for their respective response and cleanup costs incurred after December 31, 1990, and for their respective costs of natural resource damages assessment (including restoration planning) obligated or incurred after March 12, 1991 and; (2) second, to the joint trust fund for natural resource damage recoveries referred to in paragraph A of this Article.

C. Except as otherwise provided in this MOA, the Governments agree that all natural resource damage recoveries will be expended on restoration of natural resources in Alaska unless the Trustees determine, in accordance with Article V, paragraph A.1. hereof, that spending funds outside of the State of Alaska is necessary for the effective restoration, replacement or acquisition of equivalent natural resources injured in Alaska and services provided by such resources.

D. Nothing in this MOA shall be construed as obligating the

Governments to expend any monies except to the extent funds are appropriated or are otherwise lawfully available.

VII.

**LITIGATION AND SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS
RELATING TO THE OIL SPILL**

A. Agreement to Consult and Cooperate. The Governments, through the Departments of Law and Justice, agree to act in good faith to consult and cooperate with each other to develop a common approach to the Oil Spill Litigation, to the settlement of civil claims and restitution claims in connection with criminal proceedings: provided, however, that this MOA shall not in any way limit or otherwise affect the prosecutorial discretion of the State of Alaska or the United States.

B. Legal Work Product and Privileged Information. The Governments, through the Departments of Law and Justice, agree that, except as may otherwise be provided by separate agreement of the parties, they may in their discretion share with each other or with private and/or other public plaintiff litigants scientific data and analyses relating to the injury to natural resources resulting from the Oil Spill, the products of economic studies, legal work product, and other confidential or privileged information, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Each Government will take all reasonable steps necessary to maintain work product and other applicable privileges and exemptions available under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 et seq., the Rules of Civil Procedure, and AS 09.25.110 et seq.

2. No Government may voluntarily share with another party information jointly prepared or prepared by the other Government without the prior express written consent of the other Government's legal counsel.

VIII.

SCIENCE STUDIES

The Governments shall continue to work cooperatively to conduct all appropriate scientific studies relating to the Oil Spill.

IX.

COVENANTS NOT TO SUE

A. Each Government covenants not to sue or to take other legal action against the other Government with respect to the following matters:

1. The authority of either Government to enter into and comply with the terms of this MOA.

2. The respective rights of either Government to engage in cleanup, damage assessment or restoration activities with respect to the Oil Spill in accordance with this MOA.

3. Any and all civil claims (including, but not limited to, cross-claims, counter-claims, and third party-claims) it may have against the other Government arising from any activities, actions, or omissions by that other Government relating to or in response to the Oil Spill

which occurred prior to the execution of this MOA, other than claims to enforce this MOA.

B. Solely for purposes of the Oil Spill Litigation and any other proceedings relating to the ascertainment, recovery, or use of natural resource damages resulting from the Oil Spill, each Government shall be entitled to assert in any such proceeding, without contradiction by the other Government, that it is a co-Trustee with the other Government over any or all of the natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill; and each Government covenants not to sue the other with respect to, or to take any other legal action to determine, the scope or proportionate share of either Government's ownership, rights, title or interest in or management, control, or trusteeship authority over any of the natural resources injured, lost or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill.

C. Notwithstanding anything in this Article, each Government reserves the right to intervene or otherwise to participate in any legal proceeding concerning the claims of a third party with respect to the scope of either Government's Trusteeship and waives any objection to such intervention or participation by the other Government; provided that, in any such proceeding, neither Government may dispute that it is a co-Trustee with the other over the natural resources injured, lost, or destroyed as a result of the Oil Spill.

D. If the Governments become adverse to each other in the

course of the Oil Spill Litigation, this MOA shall nevertheless remain in effect.

E. Notwithstanding the covenants contained in this Article, if both Governments are sued by a Third Party on a claim relating to or arising out of the Oil Spill, the Governments agree to cooperate fully in the defense of such action, and to not assert cross-claims against each other or take positions adverse to each other. Each shall pay its percentage of liability, if any, as determined in a final judgment.

F. Notwithstanding the covenants contained in this Article, if one of the Governments is sued by a Third Party on a claim relating to or arising out of the Oil Spill, the Governments agree that the non-sued Government shall cooperate fully in the defense of the sued Government, including intervening as a party defendant or consenting to its being impleaded, if necessary. If the non-sued Government thereby becomes a party to the action, the Governments agree not to assert cross-claims against each other, to cooperate fully in the defense of such action, and not to take positions adverse to each other. Each shall pay its percentage of liability, if any, as determined in a final judgment.

G. Notwithstanding Paragraphs E and F above, the Governments may assert any claim or defense against each other necessary as a matter of law to obtain an allocation of liability between the Governments. Any such actions shall be solely for the purpose of allocation of liability, if any, and neither Government shall

enforce any judgment obtained against the other Government pursuant to this paragraph.

X.

RETENTION OF JURISDICTION

This MOA shall be enforceable by the United States District Court for the District of Alaska, which Court shall retain jurisdiction of this matter for the purpose of entering such further orders, directions, or relief as may be appropriate for the construction, implementation, or enforcement of this MOA.

XI.

MULTIPLE COPIES AND EFFECTIVE DATE

This MOA may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall be an original, but all of which shall constitute one and the same instrument. This MOA shall be effective as of the date it is signed by all the parties hereto.

XII.

INTEGRATION AND MERGER

A. This MOA constitutes the entire agreement between the United States and the State as to the matters addressed herein, and there exists no other agreement of any kind which is inconsistent with this MOA with respect to the subjects addressed in this MOA; provided, that the agreement reached among the Trustees as to disbursements of the original \$15 million paid by Exxon in April, 1989 shall remain in full force and effect.

XIII.

TERMINATION

This MOA shall terminate when the Governments certify to the Court, or when the Court determines on application by either Government, that all activities contemplated under the MOA have been completed.

XIV.

JUDICIAL REVIEW

This MOA creates no rights on the part of any persons not signatory to this MOA and shall not, except as provided in Article X, be subject to judicial review.

XV.

MISCELLANEOUS

A. This MOA can be modified only with the express written consent of the Parties to the MOA and the approval of the Court, except that the Parties may correct any clerical or typographic errors in writing without court approval.

B. Each undersigned representative of a Party to this MOA certifies that he or she is fully authorized to enter into this MOA and to execute and legally bind such Party to this MOA.

THE FOREGOING Memorandum of Agreement and Consent Decree among the United States of America and the State of Alaska is hereby APPROVED AND ENTERED THIS 28 DAY OF August, 1991.



Honorable H. Russel Holland
United States District Judge
District of Alaska

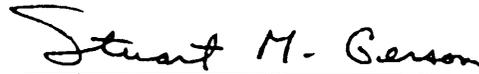
cc: J. Bottini (AUSA)
B. Herman (AAG-K)

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Date: Aug. 27, 1991



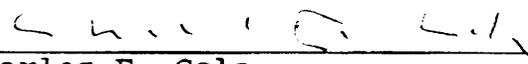
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FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA

Date: Aug 27, 1991



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