



City of Seward

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**EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE Council**

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
441 West 5th Avenue, Suite 500
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Trust Council Members;

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the usage of the remaining EVOS funds. To start, I would reminisce on what I see as the very proper use of the huge settlement dollars put under your control due to the disaster.

The funds used for repair and science were well spent! In some cases it went to very good projects and other's not as good. The funds spent on the Science Centers were very good expenditures and continue to bring benefits to you and our public. Your start-up dollar's to begin building the Alaska Sealife Center has been returned many times over. It continues with the education of our children and all public visitors statewide, nationally, as well as global visitors. The fact it is the only cold water research Center in the North Pacific to enable this research should be a source of pride to you.

You should also be very pleased of the help and understanding from this tragedy these funds have produced; but, I think you lost your focus. We hear constantly from various groups about oiled beaches, poor returns of fish, and damaged beach dwellers and crustaceans which make up the intertidal community, so vital for so many species. I would like to remind you that we have been five years without an oceanographic vessel since the University decommissioned the Alpha Helix. I feel you missed a grand opportunity to use some funds to work the damaged coastline. We are in dire straits, because as to my knowledge, not one of our University's has the funds to do this work. In my mind the Trustees' could have put more funds to keep the ship here or paid for additional usage of the standby fleet's response teams, etc.

I believe you had before the council some years ago, a plan to establish a Science Trust, which the earnings could be used for science based programs. Apparently this was not accomplished because of legal issues? There are many Trusts of this type, so I don't think this is an answer.

As I read in your paper of the \$900 million dollars, there is about \$100 million left. What is left should go to funding science that will repair a portion of the oil spill damage or to programs that can help protect us in the future, which in my opinion, was the court's primary intent when the award was decreed.

I feel you have done enough habitat purchases. Very few of these purchases did anything scientifically to help the recovery or understanding of the ecologically damaged area of the spill. Buying lands to expand Parks, and giving out unusable corporation lands in the Lands Claim legislation may have felt good to set aside for some, but did nothing to repair the damage of the oil spill, or to understand it.

You have several outstanding examples of how funds were used, with the portion of funds used to build the Alaska SeaLife Center being one of them. I would like to reiterate my testimony to your group that it was funds from the City of Seward and many concerned individuals that also built it.

Again, I would like to emphasize the remaining \$100 million dollars should be used to properly fund science which can benefit our present and future populations who will use this land for their needs.

This is a success story for your council and for us here in Seward. I hope you will take this opportunity to spend the little left of a huge award on science for our state and the people who live here. Future generations are depending on it.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Willard E. Dunham". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Willard E. Dunham
Mayor of the City of Seward, Alaska