

Matkin Fisheries/Research

Craig O. Matkin, proprietor
2030 Mary Allen Ave
Homer, Alaska 99603

Laurel Jennings
EVOS Trustee Council
441 W. 5th Ave. Suite 500
Anchorage, AK 99501-2340

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Dear Ms. Jennings,

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the process of determining direction for use of remaining resources by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill Trustee Council. Having been involved with the Trustee Council since its inception, I have either observed or participated in some of the projects that have been completed in the past 21 years.

In general the priorities you set forward in your press release seem reasonable, but should be prioritized and clarified. Certainly the two most significant and lasting contributions made by the EVOSTC have been the funding of truly long-term research programs for species and resources not focused on by management agencies and the purchase/conservation of important tidewater lands in the spill zone. These are truly legacies to be proud of. Prior to the spill there was very little baseline data on species not the focus of management agencies. There is now a substantial longitudinal database on many important species thanks to the consistent attention of the Council. This type of work should be continued in the event of another perturbation, and in some cases to judge the very long term effects of the spill.

Monitoring of the degradation of remaining oil should also be a priority. Herring research should be an integral part of the work of the Trustee Council, but in a balanced manner, not to the exclusion of other aspects of the EVOS program. Although there is a great clamor from the commercial fleet to do something about the herring (and I own a PWS herring permit myself), I feel ADF & G should have substantial responsibility here as well. On another note, it is not clear to me what responsibility the EVOSTC should have for harbor protection, and I would suggest lower priority. Marine restoration is an all encompassing term and certainly restoration should be supported and examined on a case by case basis. It seems the time for major habitat acquisition and protection is past, although if the EVOSTC can leverage or facilitate protection of important habitat in the spill zone, this should be an open possibility.

The EVOSTC has developed a truly impressive legacy with its habitat acquisition and support of long-term marine research and monitoring of spill sensitive/affected species. This continued monitoring effort has been a priority and should remain so. The Council should make every effort to extend its fine work as long as possible.

Sincerely,

Craig Matkin