

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council



Invitation for Proposals Fiscal Years 17-21

Issued December 1, 2015

FY 18-21 Proposal Submission Dates Updated 1.31.18

Revised Science Workshop to occur in FY20

Glossary of Terms

Council – *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council or EVOSTC

EVOS – *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill or Spill

EVOSTC – *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council

Fiscal Year – The Council operates on a fiscal year (FY) that begins on February 1 and ends on January 31.

Focus Area – A specific area of interest for which the EVOSTC anticipates providing funding under a potential 20-year plan. This Invitation represents the second of four five-year funding cycles under that 20-year plan, as discussed in Section I.

Group Lead - An individual who represents a proposed Cross-Program Publication Group and is responsible for communicating with the Council.

Long-Term Herring Program - Herring Research and Monitoring Program

Long-Term Monitoring Program - Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources Program

Long-Term Programs - Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources, Herring Research and Monitoring Program, and Data Management Program

PAC – EVOSTC Public Advisory Committee

Preferred Proposer – If competing proposals are received in response to this Invitation, the Council will review proposals, identify a Preferred Proposer for each Focus Area and will direct Council staff to work with each Preferred Proposer to revise the subject proposals to satisfy any scientific, technical or programmatic concerns before re-submission for funding review.

Program – A comprehensive suite of projects managed by Program Lead(s) that seeks to address hypotheses related to a specific focus area; current EVOSTC Programs are long-term and propose activities over a multi-year period.

Program Lead – An individual who represents a proposed Program and is responsible for communicating with the Council.

Program Science or Technical Panel – A panel of scientific or technical experts to review potential projects and give guidance and oversight on the direction of the Program; is not required to be independent from the Program. This Panel is in addition to, and independent of the EVOSTC Science Panel.

Project – An individual task that is led by a primary investigator and is attempting to address a specific scientific hypothesis or Program objective.

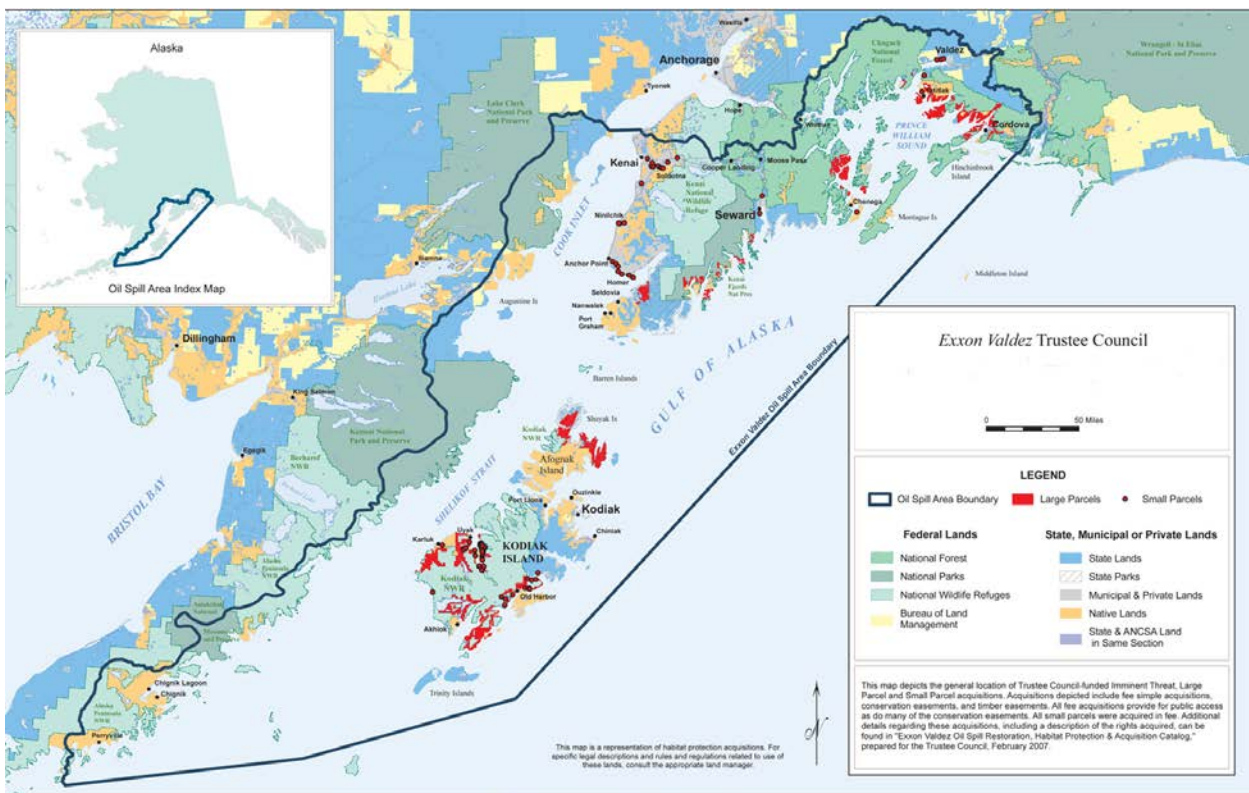
PWS – Prince William Sound

Spill– Exxon Valdez Oil Spill or EVOS

Spill Area – see map below (Figure 1)

Trustee Agency – One of the six state and federal agencies represented on the Council.

Figure 1: Map of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Area boundary.



This map is also available at: <http://www.evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=facts.map>

Contents

I.	Background and Purpose of the FY17-21 Invitation for Proposals	1
II.	Schedule and Cycles of Review and Funding	4
III.	Proposal Invitation by Focus Area	6
IV.	Additional Evaluation of Proposals	23
V.	Instructions for Submitting a Proposal	24
VI.	References	25
VII.	Non-Discrimination Statement	26
VIII.	Appendices	26

I. Background and Purpose of the FY17-21 Invitation for Proposals

In 1992, the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council (Council) was formed consisting of six natural resource trustees, three State of Alaska trustees and three federal trustees, to take the actions necessary to restore the natural resources injured, lost, or destroyed as a result of the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill (EVOS or Spill). The Council was established to administer funds from the settlement of civil natural resource damages claims brought against Exxon Corporation and related companies by the State of Alaska and the United States. The Council initiated an extensive public process to begin the work of restoration using these joint trust funds and, in 1994, adopted a Restoration Plan (Plan) to guide restoration through research and monitoring, habitat protection, and general restoration.

As part of this effort, the Council also adopted an official list of natural resources and natural resource services injured by the Spill. When the 1994 Plan was drafted, the distinction between the effects of the Spill and those of other natural or human-caused stressors on injured resources or services was not fully understood. Through the hundreds of studies conducted over the last twenty-six years, the Council has come to recognize that ecosystem restoration is not easily addressed. The interactions between a changing environment and the injured resources and services are only beginning to be understood, and, as time passes, the ability to distinguish the effects of the oil from other factors affecting fish and wildlife populations becomes more difficult. These complexities and the difficulties in measuring the continuing impacts from the Spill result in some inherent uncertainty in defining the status of a resource or service for an updated list of injured species and services.

The 1994 Plan also outlined an ecosystem-based approach to restoration, a more integrated view that has become increasingly recognized as essential. Even before the Plan was final, the Council began efforts to better understand the coastal marine ecosystem. This approach has provided and continues to provide an abundance of information on fish, marine birds, and mammals.

Numerous restoration projects were funded by the Council, and by 2010, approximately ten percent of the civil settlement funds remained for future use. To more efficiently and effectively manage the remaining funds, the Council refined the scope of its restoration efforts to five defined restoration categories: (1) herring, (2) lingering oil, (3) long-term monitoring of marine conditions and injured resources, (4) harbor protection, marine restoration, and lessons learned/outreach, and (5) habitat acquisition and protection. The Council streamlined the implementation of its restoration activities by establishing a 20-year strategic plan implemented in four five-year increments. In addition, the Council reduced its administrative costs by adopting the management practice of using third-party leads (i.e., outside of Council staff) to coordinate the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources Programs. These adjustments were achieved through a lengthy process with numerous public and Council meetings in 2010-2011.

In spring 2011 the Council issued the first Invitation, for FY12-16, under the new 20-year Program requesting project proposals in the following Focus Areas: a long-term herring Program; a long-term Program for the monitoring of marine conditions and injured natural resources; projects in harbor protection; a marine debris Program; and projects in lingering oil. (The Council administers the habitat acquisition and protection program separately.)

Many excellent proposals were submitted in response to the FY12-16 Invitation. Some involved collaborations among local and other entities working together in several areas, including two aimed at establishing comprehensive long-term herring and monitoring of marine conditions and injured resources Programs. In fall 2011, the Council approved projects in these Focus Areas, including the two long-term Programs. Their approval marked the beginning of a new stage for the Council, defined by reduced administrative costs and an emphasis on supporting the Focus Areas.

In February 2012, funding commenced for the two long-term Programs: the Herring Research and Monitoring Program and the Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources Program, also known as Gulf Watch Alaska. The Programs are administered under five-year cooperative agreements, reviewed annually; each year the Council, EVOSTC Science Panel and Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meet to review the past-year's results and future year's requested funding. The Council contemplates the long-term Programs to be twenty-years in length, concluding in 2032. Although some continuity in the Programs is encouraged, each five-year Invitation is open for submission of proposals by any interested parties.

Similar to the FY12-16 Invitation, this FY17-21 Invitation continues to address the herring, long-term monitoring, and the lingering oil Focus Areas. The other Focus Areas included in the FY12-16 Invitation, such as marine debris, harbor protection, and marine restoration, are not included in this Invitation. They were addressed and completed under the FY12-16 Invitation and were designed to be allocated limited funding and to be short-term. Two new Focus Areas have been added to this Invitation to complement and enhance the work in the Long-Term Programs. One new Focus Area is data management, which was previously included within the Long-Term Monitoring Program but serves both the Long-Term Monitoring and Herring Programs. The second new Focus Area is the Cross-Program Publication Groups, which encourages additional collaboration within and between the Programs. Both of the new Focus Areas are consistent with the Council's intentions for the 20-year Program model, which called for developing science-based products regarding environmental changes and of the impacts of these changes on injured resources and services. Examples of these products are data management portals for enhancing the Council's ability to share data among interested parties and scientific publications that integrate and interpret data collected by the Programs.

This Invitation calls for proposals for FY17-21 in the five Focus Areas of 1) herring; 2) long-term monitoring of marine conditions and injured resources; 3) data management; 4) cross-Program publication groups; and 5) lingering oil.

For the Herring, Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources, and Data Management Focus Areas:

- Each proposal must describe a comprehensive, five-year, multi-project Program.
- Funding will be awarded to only one Program proposal per each of these three Focus Areas; therefore, each proposal for these three Focus Areas must include a comprehensive suite of projects that will address all of the Council's needs for that Focus Area for the five-year funding cycle.

- Because a Program proposal will likely involve several individual projects, each with potentially different teams of investigators, each Program proposal is required to identify a Program Lead who will be the primary coordinator of all of the proposal's activities and the primary spokesperson in communications with the Council.
- The Program Lead may be a representative from a single organization that will manage the proposed Program or from a consortium that will work together in a structured manner to manage the proposed Program.
- Section III describes the proposals for these Focus Areas in further detail.

For the Cross-Program Publication Groups and Lingering Oil Focus Areas:

- Proposals will be for individual, stand-alone projects, and may or may not require funding for the entire five-year funding period.
- Funding is not limited to only one proposal per Focus Area.
- Section III describes the proposals for these Focus Areas in further detail.

Proposing entities may submit proposals in more than one Focus Area, and organizations and individuals may participate in more than one competing proposal within a single Focus Area.

Upon selection, the intention of the Council is to implement the Program awards through NOAA Cooperative Agreements, with the exception of those portions of the Programs which will be conducted by Trust Agencies directly or through specific arrangements. Entities eligible to receive funding through Cooperative Agreement include institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, foreign governments, organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive such Federal assistance, and will instead receive funding through arrangements with the Department of Interior National Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Fund. Agencies of the State of Alaska will receive funding through an account established with the State of Alaska.

This Invitation uses a several-step process, as detailed below in *Schedule and Cycles of Review and Funding*, to assist in refining preferred proposals into final proposals submitted to and reviewed by the Council for funding to commence February 1, 2017. Although the FY17 proposals encompass a five-year span, the Council will approve funding on an annual basis, and funding approved for a certain fiscal year cannot be used outside of that fiscal year without additional Council approval, or in accordance with the Council's financial procedures policy (*See References*). Approved Programs and projects must re-submit annual proposals each year. This process allows the Council a formal opportunity to review the progress of the Programs and projects toward meeting their goals and objectives as well as those of the Council. Information on the Invitation, including Frequently Asked Questions, reference documents, and required forms can be found on the Council's website (*See References*).

II. Schedule and Cycles of Review and Funding

The Council operates on a fiscal year that begins on February 1 and ends on January 31. For information on the management of approved annual funds within a multi-year project, review the Council’s Financial Procedures document available on the Council’s website (*See References*). The following describes the schedule and cycles of proposal reviews and Council funding decisions for the five Focus Areas of this FY17-21 Invitation.

Proposal Deadline and Review for Herring, Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources, and Data Management Focus Areas

The Herring, Long-Term Monitoring, and Data Management Programs are administered as multi-year cooperative agreements renewable, if selected under subsequent invitations, every five years for an anticipated total of another fifteen years. Program proposers must submit a proposal detailing the activities and budgets for the five-year period of FY17-21. The Council will review the FY17-21 proposals and approve funding for FY17 at their fall 2016 meeting. Proposers approved for FY17 Program funding will continue to submit annual proposals for subsequent fiscal years (FY18, 19, 20 and 21) for Council review and approval. ([See below](#))

December 1, 2015Invitation for FY17-21 Proposals issued

February 1, 2016Deadline for Program proposers to submit contact information and Program of interest

April 1, 2016.....FY17-21 Proposals Due by 5:00 PM AKDT

April-May 2016Proposals reviewed by Council staff, Trust Agency staff, the EVOSTC Science Panel and PAC

June 2016Council will select preferred Program proposers if there are competing Program proposals in any Focus Area

June 1, 2016List of revisions/comments sent to Program Lead(s) if there are no competing Program proposals

July 1, 2016Notification and list of revisions/comments sent to selected preferred Program proposers if applicable

August 24, 2016.....FY17 Revised final proposals due by 5:00pm AKDT

Sept.-Oct. 2016Review by Council and Trust Agency staff, the EVOSTC Science Panel and PAC

Oct. – Nov. 2016.....FY17 Funding decision made by Council

February 1, 2017Funding released for FY17

August 23, 2017FY18 Revised final proposals due by 5:00pm

Sept.-Oct. 2017Review by EVOSTC Science Panel and PAC and the Council

Oct.-Nov. 2017FY18 Funding decision made by Council

February 1, 2018Funding released for FY18

FY19, 20, 21: Annual Herring, Long-Term Monitoring and Data Program Proposal Cycle of Review and Funding

A proposer approved for FY18 Program funding, as outlined above, will, as appropriate, submit annual proposals for subsequent fiscal years (FY19, 20 and 21) for Council review. The anticipated schedule for FY19-21 is as follows:

August 17, 2018..... Revised final FY19 proposals due by 5:00pm

August 16, 2019..... Revised final FY20 proposals due by 5:00pm

August 14, 2020..... Revised final FY21 proposals due by 5:00pm

Annual Program proposals for the upcoming fiscal year are due in August of the fiscal year previous to the proposed work. Dates are subject to change; check the EVOSTC website for any updates to this document.

September–October 2018, 2019, 2020: Proposal review by the EVOSTC Science Coordinator, Science Panel, PAC and Executive Director.

October–November 2018, 2019, 2020: The Council reviews and determines funding for the upcoming fiscal year, beginning on the following Feb. 1.

FY20: A Joint Science Workshop and a PAC Workshop with the Herring, Long-Term Monitoring, and Data Management Programs is held. Program Leads and individual researchers present their findings in the context of a summary of how Program projects are addressing management agency priorities and Program hypotheses. (See Joint Science Program Workshop, below)

Joint Science Program Workshop

As outlined above, in the fourth year of the Programs, the Council will host and fund travel for a three-day Joint Science Program and PAC Workshop. The Science Program Workshop will take place over approximately two days and the PAC Workshop will take place over one day.

The Science Workshop allows Council staff, Trustee Agency staff and the EVOSTC Science Panel to review the progress of the Herring, Long-Term Monitoring, and Data Management Programs’ five-year cooperative agreements. In advance of the Workshop, Program Leads are responsible for providing to the Council a written report of how each Program’s projects are addressing management agency priorities and Program hypotheses. The report should address fundamental drivers, trends, and status in a way that contributes to the Council’s and the public’s understanding of the effects of the Spill and to the identification and development of possible management or restoration efforts that may benefit

injured resources and services. These may include such topics as, but not limited to, a synthesis of retrospective data, climate drivers, lingering oil recovery, and the effects of human interventions.

The Science Workshop will be held in Anchorage over a period of approximately two days. The Workshop includes presentations by Program Leads and Program-selected PIs on projects within the Programs. The Workshop also includes information as to the availability of data to user groups and how funded information is being used to further Council goals with respect to Program objectives and its utility beyond the Program. The Workshop includes parallel, and, if possible, cross-Program presentations by both the Herring and the Long-Term Monitoring researchers to allow for a broad ecosystem-based consideration of the ongoing research.

A one-day PAC Workshop will be held for the PAC to learn more about the Programs through presentations provided by the Program Leads and Program-selected PIs, including a review of the Program's website and outreach products for use in their communities.

Program and individual Program project proposals should include a budget in their FY19 annual proposal for the preparation of materials for this meeting.

Cross-Program Publication Groups Focus Area

Proposals for a Cross-Program publication can be for a single-year or multi-year project, and activities can occur in any fiscal year in the five-year cycle. Proposals are due to the Council on September 1, 2016 - September 1, 2020 of the preceding fiscal year for consideration. The FY17 proposal review cycle, and any multi-year proposals, will be the same as the Herring, Long-Term Monitoring, and Data Management Programs as detailed in Section II. All multi-year projects or Programs require funding to be re-authorized annually by the Council.

Lingering Oil Focus Area

Lingering oil proposals under this Invitation may be submitted at any time in the five-year period and can be for a single-year project or multi-year project and may be reviewed outside of the Council's annual review cycle, as needed. All multi-year projects require funding to be re-authorized annually by the Council.

III. Proposal Invitation by Focus Area

Building on its past efforts and public input, the Council has identified five areas of focus to be administered under this Invitation: (1) herring; (2) long-term monitoring of marine conditions and injured resources; 3) data management; 4) cross-Program publication groups and 5) lingering oil. The following sections elaborate on the details of the proposed areas of focus that are the subject of this Invitation.

HERRING RESEARCH AND MONITORING PROGRAM

The Council has classified the Prince William Sound (PWS) population of Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*) as a resource that has not recovered from the effects of the Spill. The PWS herring population was increasing prior to 1989 with record harvests reported just before the Spill. The Spill occurred just prior to spawning and the 1989 year class was one of the smallest cohorts of spawning adults recorded. By 1993 the fishery had collapsed with only 25 percent of the expected adults returning to spawn. The PWS fishery was closed from 1993 to 1996, but reopened in 1997 and 1998, based on an increasing population. Numbers again declined in 1999, and it is possible that the opening of the fishery in 1997 and 1998 stressed an already weakened population and may have contributed to the 1999 decline. The herring fishery in PWS has been closed for 20 of the 26 years since the Spill. The 1993 collapse can be explained by several competing hypotheses, including disease and predation; however, data uncertainty makes it unlikely that the reasons will ever be fully understood. No trend suggesting consistent population recovery has occurred, and, in 2014, the Council declared Pacific herring as not recovering from the effects of the Spill.

The Council recognizes the uncertainty over the role of the Spill in the decrease and continued low abundance of the PWS herring population. However, herring are considered a keystone species in the marine ecosystem and play a vital role in the food chain of many injured species. Thus, an increase in the herring population biomass has the potential to support the restoration of other injured species. In November 2006, prompted by public comments about the continuing impacts to communities and commercial fishers from the lack of herring recovery, the Council convened scientists and researchers, commercial and subsistence fishermen, and natural resource managers for a herring workshop. One of the most important outcomes of the workshop was the consensus that a long-term strategic herring program was needed. From 2006 to 2009, Council representatives met with natural resource managers, commercial fishers, scientists, the PAC and Alaska Native residents of Spill Area communities to gain sufficient input to draft a cost-efficient, scientifically credible, and coordinated Program.

The result was the Integrated Herring Restoration Program (IHRP) document that included information on past and current projects, known limiting factors, and a list of potential restoration options. The goal of the IHRP was to determine what, if anything, can be done to successfully restore PWS herring; to determine what steps can be taken to examine the reasons for the continued decline of herring in PWS; to identify and evaluate potential recovery options; and to recommend a course of action for restoration.

In 2010, the Council adopted the final version of the IHRP and the IHRP-recommended restoration option of Enhanced Monitoring as the preferred approach based on the state of herring science at the time. Enhanced monitoring provides information to the Council that allows for a comprehensive review of the continued lack of recovery and provides information that can be used by herring management agencies. The FY12-16 Invitation for Proposals requested the submission of a comprehensive Program plan that would seek to enhance the current monitoring program of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and provide further insight into the continued lack of recovery.

A long-term herring Program proposal for this area was designed by the Prince William Sound Science Center to address this option and in 2012 the Council funded the first five-year term of the Herring Research and Monitoring Program. The currently-funded Program provides important information such as predictors of relative recruitment, trends in disease, investigations on how ocean conditions affect recruitment, and investigations into the relative productivity of various nursery bays. Research in this Program has also led to a better understanding of the role of disease, predictability of disease outbreaks, and potential disease management practices that could reduce disease impacts on herring biomass. Increased monitoring of herring populations and quantification and measurement of critical life-history attributes aid in the development of better predictive models of herring biomass. Improved forecasts of stock biomass allow for more effective fisheries management and long-term sustainability of the stock. Improved estimates of herring biomass will be useful if active intervention were to be implemented in the future.

The FY17-21 Invitation is an open, competitive invitation and seeks to continue an integrated monitoring Program which builds upon the efforts of the first five-year Program. The overall goal of the Herring Research and Monitoring Program is to provide information to herring management agencies to enhance their management activities and to continue investigating the factors limiting herring populations in the Spill Area and whether action could be taken to remedy such factors.

For the FY17-21 Invitation, the Council anticipates funding this long-term Program at up to \$5,525,000 (not including 9% GA) for the entire five-year term. Funding may be proposed as unevenly allocated among the five-year term, as appropriate to the proposed activities. Any multi-year funding must be approved annually by the Council. In addition, projections of future funding are dependent upon investment funds, which are affected by market fluctuations.

The Council has discussed specific components that are of particular interest for the Herring Research and Monitoring Program. The following are examples of the types of projects that could be part of a comprehensive monitoring Program. The list is based on projects that have been funded in the past and provided important information or work that may provide further insight into the current status of herring. This list is not comprehensive and the projects listed are not mandatory.

To be eligible for funding, proposals must be designed to restore, replace, enhance or acquire the equivalent of natural resources injured as a result of the Spill or the reduced or lost services provided by these resources. In addition, proposals must be consistent with the policies contained in the 1994 Restoration Plan. Please also refer to the 2014 Injured Resources and Services List Update for detailed information. (*See References*)

Overall Program Goal:

The continued development and testing of an updated age-structured assessment (ASA) model in collaboration with ADF&G. This would include simulations to evaluate which data sources, if collected under this Invitation, would be the most useful in assessing future herring biomass, trends, and recovery.

Areas of interest include (in no specific order):

1. An evaluation of the effects of changes since the Spill in piscivorous fish and/or seabird populations in PWS and the potential impact on herring recovery.
2. A plan for a post-doc fellow position or equivalent within the Program to introduce young scientists, current research techniques and ideas to the Program. The project led by the post-doc position must seek to address the Herring Program's goals and objectives. This position should be budgeted at \$10,000 in FY17 for recruitment costs and a maximum of \$85,000 annually for up to three years. The post-doctoral fellow or equivalent must be in Alaska, preferably in Cordova, AK, for 70% of the EVOSTC fiscal year and be supervised in their Program-related work by the Herring Program Lead.
3. A comparative retrospective analysis of data from PWS and other herring populations (e.g. Pacific herring populations off of Alaska, British Columbia, West Coast) to assist in determining the continued lack of recovery of PWS herring populations. This analysis may include topics such as herring abundance, recruitment, growth, disease resistance/susceptibility, as well as the impact of oceanographic and food web drivers on herring populations.
4. A project for a comprehensive spawn assessment to be conducted at a minimum interval of every two years.
5. A study of adult herring movement to provide information on herring movement between PWS and the Continental Shelf. Examples include microchemistry, acoustic tagging, and genetics studies.
6. The continuation of the work to study the role of disease in herring recovery and the potential for developing tools to aid management agencies in the detection and management of disease outbreaks.
7. A retrospective analysis of the relationship between physical and biological oceanographic factors, including spatial and temporal patterns, which could be affecting PWS herring.
8. The continued examination of the role of humpback whale population growth, changes in foraging behavior and consequent predation on herring and whether it is a potential limitation of herring recovery.
9. A study to estimate and corroborate herring age at maturity with ASA model estimates.
10. An evaluation of the possible effects of climate change and ocean acidification on various biological attributes of herring populations such as growth and susceptibility to disease.
11. An assessment of the potential impacts on PWS herring of anthropogenic changes related to commercial fisheries, by either extractive fishing or fish aquaculture. Such an examination could include an examination of potential serial depletion of herring sub-stocks during the fishery history.

Considerations Applicable to Proposers

The following are mandatory requirements for potential Program proposers. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process. Interested Program proposers must email their contact information and Program of interest to dfg.evos.invitation@alaska.gov by February 1, 2016 to be added to a list of interested proposers on the EVOSTC website to facilitate coordination among potential proposers.

Program proposers must demonstrate that they have:

1. A proposal that is focused within the Spill Area.
2. A proposal that responds to the call for a Herring Program, as described in this Invitation.
3. A proposal that contains clearly stated Program hypotheses, describes how these hypotheses contribute to the management objectives of natural resource managers and their services in the Spill Area, and explains how the hypotheses support the monitoring and restoration of PWS herring.
4. A proposal for a Program that complies with the Council's founding documents and relevant policies and procedures. (*See References.*)
5. An existing administrative structure to manage funds and projects; the proposer may be an existing organization or collaboration among existing entities and individuals.
6. A structure to communicate with the Council through the Program Lead regardless of the structure of the individual proposers; they must produce a single, comprehensive proposal.
7. A Program Lead who will work with and be responsive to the Council's objectives and requirements.
8. A Program Lead who will facilitate the most cost-effective and scientifically-supportive stream of funding among the parties and projects involved in a manner that minimizes administrative costs.
9. A Program Lead who is capable of integrating data from all of the individual projects in their program to inform the program's annual proposals and individual project protocols and design.
10. A Program Science Panel to review potential and existing projects and give guidance and oversight on the Program's design and implementation to the Program Lead(s). The panel cannot include members who are participating in projects funded through the program in FY17-21.
11. The ability and commitment to make all data, documents, and annual and final reports available electronically to the public according to explicitly stated timelines and reporting guidelines.
12. A process to provide scientific peer review for approval of final reports, as appropriate.
13. A plan for ensuring individual project compliance with reporting, data submission, and quality policies. (*See References.*)

14. Established realistic and detailed timelines and milestones specific to the individual projects and the overall Program. Must demonstrate a credible, feasible, and detailed administrative structure and scientific implementation of the Program, including project team qualifications (education, experience, related work efforts, proposed time commitment, past performance), and availability of facilities and other requirements necessary for Program success. This would include a power or sensitivity analysis of the proposed sampling design and objectives for each individual project.
15. A public outreach plan focused on providing information to the Trustee Agencies for use in their respective outreach and education materials. This information may include a summary of Program highlights or summary of key points for the agencies to incorporate in their ongoing outreach efforts. A list of Trust Agency outreach contacts will be provided to the Program proposer selected by the Council for funding. Outreach efforts by the Program should focus on developing and maintaining accurate and timely content for the Program's website as a primary source of information on the Program. Any additional outreach materials that include information not contained in publically-available proposals or annual reports must be approved by the Council office prior to public circulation. Materials should be brief and direct the target audience to the Program's website. The cost of outreach efforts for this Program should not exceed \$15,000 per year.

The following are mandatory requirements for individual project proposers within a Program proposal. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process. These include:

1. Project proposals that seek to continue to contribute new data to the data sets collected in the first five-year Program using the same protocols and project design must provide a description and justification that the past project design is still appropriate, based on the objectives and proposed uses for the data collection activities. If changes are needed based on current information or if a new project design is proposed, a justification for the changes must be provided, including rationale based on statistical analyses such as power or sensitivity analysis of the proposed sampling design.
2. Project proposals that seek to begin work that was not undertaken in the first five-year program must provide a justification of how the project will provide data useful to addressing management objectives and Program hypotheses.

The following are preferred requirements for potential proposers. Proposers that meet these requirements will be rated more highly during the review process. The Council prefers a herring Program that:

1. Continues to reassess the Program's progress and relevancy and considers newly-available technologies;
2. Demonstrates an understanding and synthesis of existing scientific literature, research results, and scientific knowledge that includes outcomes of prior Council work;

3. Demonstrates an effective and balanced use of funds, including establishing appropriate collaborations with other organizations and experts, achieving the most efficient use of funds, and taking advantage of existing infrastructure;
4. Provides a detailed plan for local and Alaska Native community involvement in the Program. The degree to which the activities of the proposed program allow involvement with local communities and incorporation of local knowledge will vary, but interaction with communities is required. Reviewers will give additional consideration to proposals that demonstrate meaningful community involvement and/or make use of local and traditional ecological knowledge.

The following are mandatory requirements for each fiscal year of the Program. The submitted proposal and budget for each year shall include the staffing and funds necessary to meet these requirements. *(See the Council's Reporting Procedures and Budget Forms for details.)*

1. An annual report must be presented to the Council on March 1 of each fiscal year (except FY17) and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Program Summary Status Form and Budget Form (*Attachments D and F of Reporting Procedures*) and
 - b. A completed Project Reporting Form and Budget Form for each project in the program (*Attachments C and E of Reporting Procedures*).
2. A proposal request must be presented to the Council on September 1 of each fiscal year and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Long-Term Program Proposal Form and Budget Form (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>); and
 - b. A completed Long-Term Project Proposal Form and Budget Form for each project in the Program (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>).

LONG-TERM MONITORING OF MARINE CONDITIONS AND INJURED RESOURCES PROGRAM

In the 26 years since the Spill, it has become apparent that the ecosystem can undergo profound changes and that such changes may hinder a return to pre-Spill conditions. The 1994 Restoration Plan recognized that recovery from the Spill would likely take decades. The Plan set aside a Restoration Reserve from the natural resource damages settlement funds to provide for long-term observation of injured resources and services and for appropriate restoration actions into the future. To further this effort, in 1999 the Council also supported the development of a long-term research and monitoring Program.

The Council's goals for post-Spill long-term monitoring have two components: monitoring the recovery of resources from the initial injury and monitoring how factors other than oil may inhibit full recovery or adversely impact recovering resources. This second type of monitoring involves collecting data on physical and biological environmental factors that drive ecosystem-level changes. The information that

is produced from such monitoring may be used to manage individual injured species and resources. However, such data are increasingly valuable in illuminating the larger ecosystem shifts that impact and influence a broad variety of species and resources injured by the Spill.

Monitoring these changes provides useful data to natural resource management agencies and interested parties that allows for adjustment to their activities and management strategies to adapt to current conditions and further support the recovery of injured resources. The Council has a history of supporting oceanographic monitoring by helping to establish and fund long-term data collection projects. In this initiative, the Council envisions developing partnerships with scientific entities or consortia able to sustain those data collections, to maximize Council funding, to develop science-based products that will inform the public of changes in the environment and the impacts of these changes on injured resources and services.

An integrated monitoring Program requires information on environmental drivers and pelagic and benthic components of the marine ecosystem. Additionally, while extensive monitoring data has been collected thus far through Council-funded projects, as well as from other sources, and made publicly available, much of that information needs to be assessed holistically to understand the range of factors affecting individual species and the ecosystem as a whole.

In 2012, during the previous cycle of this invitational process, the Council selected a multi-disciplinary team headed by the Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS), Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC), and NOAA to begin work on a five-year integrated long-term monitoring Program, the Long-Term Monitoring Program, also known as Gulf Watch Alaska. The FY17-21 Invitation is an open, competitive invitation and seeks to continue an integrated monitoring Program which maintains continuity and builds upon the efforts of the first five-year cooperative agreement.

For the FY17-21 Invitation, the Council anticipates funding this long-term Program at up to \$11,050,000 (not including 9% GA) for the entire five-year term. Funding may be proposed as unevenly allocated among the five-year term, as appropriate to the proposed activities. Any multi-year funding must be approved annually by the Council. In addition, projections of future funding are dependent upon investment funds, which are affected by market fluctuations.

The Council has discussed specific ecosystem components that are of particular interest and include environmental drivers, pelagic monitoring, and benthic monitoring. The following are examples of the types of projects in each area that could potentially be part of a comprehensive monitoring Program. The list is based on projects that have been funded in the past and provided important information or work that may provide further insight into the current status of the Spill Area. This list is not comprehensive and the projects listed are not mandatory.

To be eligible for funding, proposals must be designed to restore, replace, enhance or acquire the equivalent of natural resources injured as a result of the Spill or the reduced or lost services provided by these resources. In addition, proposals must be consistent with the policies contained in the 1994 Restoration Plan. Please also refer to the 2014 Injured Resources and Services List Update for detailed information. *(See References)*

Areas of interest (in no particular order):**Environmental Drivers**

1. The monitoring of oceanographic conditions, including water temperature, salinity, and turbidity, with a sampling design that yields insight into either the broad region of the Spill Area or meaningful sub-regions of the Spill Area, particularly in support of biological studies conducted by the Programs.
2. An assessment of the transport of nutrients between the Gulf of Alaska and PWS and the effects on biological production over time.

Pelagic Monitoring

1. Monitoring projects conducted as part of the first five-year program for killer whale, humpback whale, seabirds, and forage fish have proven useful in addressing management objectives and program hypotheses. Continuity of existing data sets is encouraged but any proposals should include a justification of the proposed monitoring methodology. The humpback whale project may be submitted under the herring Focus Area detailed above.
2. An evaluation of the possible effects of climate change on the pelagic ecosystem.

Nearshore Monitoring

1. Monitoring programs conducted as part of the first five-year Program in the nearshore have proven to be useful in addressing agency management objectives and Program hypotheses. Continuity of existing data sets is encouraged but any proposals should include a justification of the proposed monitoring methodology.
2. An evaluation of the possible effects of climate change on the nearshore ecosystem.

Conceptual Modeling

In contrast to the prior five-year Invitation, the Council will not provide funding in FY17-21 to projects focused on conceptual modeling.

Considerations Applicable to Proposers

The following are mandatory requirements for potential proposers. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process. Interested Program proposers must email their contact information and Program of interest to dfg.evos.invitation@alaska.gov by February 1, 2016 to be added to a list of interested proposers on the EVOSTC website to facilitate coordination among potential proposers.

Program proposers must demonstrate that they have:

1. A proposal that is focused within the Spill Area.
2. A proposal that responds to the call for a Long-Term Monitoring of Marine Conditions and Injured Resources Program, as described in this Invitation.

3. A proposal that provides a clear description of Program objectives, explains how these objectives support the management objectives of natural resource managers and their services in the Spill Area, and how such objectives further the Council's mission of recovering injured natural resources and their services.
4. A proposal for a Program that complies with the Council's founding documents and relevant policies and procedures. *(See References.)*
5. An existing administrative structure to manage funds and projects; the proposer may be an existing organization or collaboration among existing entities and individuals.
6. A structure to communicate with the Council through the Program Lead regardless of the structure of the individual proposers; they must produce a single, comprehensive proposal.
7. A Program Lead who will work with and be responsive to the Council's objectives and requirements.
8. A Program Lead who will facilitate the most cost-effective and scientifically-supportive stream of funding among the parties and projects involved in a manner that minimizes administrative costs.
9. A Program Lead who is capable of integrating data from all of the individual projects in their program to inform the program's annual proposals and individual project protocols and design.
10. A Program Science Panel to review potential and existing projects and give guidance and oversight on the Program's design and implementation to the Program Lead(s). The panel cannot contain members who are participating in projects funded through the program in FY17-21.
11. The ability and commitment to make all data, documents, and annual and final reports available electronically to the public according to explicitly stated timelines and reporting requirements.
12. A process to provide scientific peer review for approval of final reports, as appropriate.
13. A plan for ensuring individual project compliance with reporting and data submission and quality policies. *(See References.)*
14. Established realistic and detailed timelines and milestones specific to the individual projects and the overall Program. Must demonstrate a credible, feasible, and detailed administrative structure and scientific implementation of the Program, including project team qualifications (education, experience, related work efforts, proposed time commitment, past performance), and availability of facilities and other requirements necessary for Program success. This would include a power or sensitivity analysis of the proposed sampling design and objectives for each individual project.
15. A public outreach plan focused on providing information to the Trustee Agencies for use in their respective outreach and education materials. This information may include a summary of Program highlights or summary of key points for the agencies to incorporate in their ongoing outreach

efforts. A list of Trust Agency outreach contacts will be provided to the Program proposer selected by the Council for funding. Outreach efforts by the Program should focus on developing and maintaining accurate and timely content for the Program's website as a primary source of information on the Program. Any additional outreach materials that include information not contained in publically-available proposals or annual reports must be approved by the Council office prior to public circulation. Materials should be brief and direct the target audience to the Program's website. The cost of outreach efforts for this Program should not exceed \$30,000 per year.

The following are mandatory requirements for individual project proposers within a Program proposal. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process. These include:

1. Project proposals that seek to continue adding new data to data sets collected in the first five-year Program using the same protocols and project design must provide an assessment of the past protocols and project design in terms of their appropriateness for achieving the proposed project and Program goals. If changes to past protocols and project design are needed or if a new approach to project design is proposed, the proposal must include a justification for the changes including rationale based on statistical analyses such as power or sensitivity analysis of the proposed sampling design.
2. Project proposals that seek to begin work that was not undertaken in the first five-year program must provide a justification of how the project will provide data useful to addressing management objectives and Program hypotheses.

The following are preferred requirements for potential proposers. Proposers that meet these requirements will be rated more highly during the review process. The Council prefers a long-term monitoring Program that:

1. Continues to reassess the Program's progress and relevancy and considers newly-available technologies;
2. Demonstrates an understanding and synthesis of existing scientific literature, research results, and scientific knowledge that includes outcomes of prior Council work;
3. Demonstrates an effective and balanced use of funds, including establishing appropriate collaborations with other organizations and experts, achieving the most efficient use of funds, and taking advantage of existing infrastructure;
4. Provides a detailed plan for local and Alaska Native community involvement in the Program. The degree to which the activities of the proposed program allow involvement with local communities and incorporation of local knowledge will vary, but interaction with communities is required. Reviewers will give additional consideration to proposals that demonstrate meaningful community involvement and/or make use of local and traditional ecological knowledge.

The following are mandatory requirements for each fiscal year of the program. The submitted budget for each year shall include the staffing and funds necessary to meet these requirements. *(See the Council's Reporting Procedures and Budget Forms for details.)*

1. An annual report must be presented to the Council on March 1 of each fiscal year (except FY17) and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Program Summary Status Form and Budget Form *(Attachments D and F of Reporting Procedures)* and
 - b. A completed Project Reporting Form and Budget Form for each project in the Program *(Attachments C and E of Reporting Procedures)*.
2. A funding request must be presented to the Council on September 1 of each fiscal year and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Long-Term Program Proposal Form and Budget Form (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>) and
 - b. A completed Long-Term Project Proposal Form and Budget Form for each project in the Program (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>).

DATA MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Council faces challenges in ensuring that critical data and the products of the Long-Term Monitoring and Herring Programs are available to the general science and natural resource management communities, both now and into the future. The data must also be useful for gaining an effective understanding of the effects of the Spill, recovery status of affected ecosystems, and the potential for restoration and/or management actions to facilitate the recovery of injured resources and services.

This call for a Data Management Program requires a comprehensive Program to meet the data needs of both the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Programs and their individual researchers. Potential proposers in this Focus Area will be required to provide a coordinated and collaborative plan created in consultation with the Program Lead(s) from each team. A list of parties interested in submitting Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Program proposals will be posted on the Council's website.

In 2012, in the previous cycle of this invitational process, the Council selected the Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS) and the National Center for Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) to build and maintain a data management system that would serve the needs of the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Programs and the Council. The current data system contains over 40GB of shared data from over 35 Program projects and provides a web-based portal for file sharing and Program information. Information on the data collected as part of the FY12-16 Data Program can be found on the Council's website and on the Gulf of Alaska Data Portal. *(See References)*

The FY17-21 Invitation is an open, competitive invitation and seeks to continue a Program which maintains continuity and builds upon the efforts of the first five-year cooperative agreement. The Council expects the funding request for the Data Management Program to decrease to levels required

to maintain the infrastructure that was completed in the first five-year Program without further visualization development.

For the FY17-21 Invitation, the Council anticipates funding this data management Program at up to \$1,000,000 (not including 9% GA) for the entire five-year term. Funding may be proposed as unevenly allocated across the five-year term, as appropriate to the proposed activities. Any multi-year funding must be approved annually by the Council. In addition, projections of future funding are dependent upon investment funds, which are affected by market fluctuations.

A proposal for a Data Management Program must address the following:

1. The Program should be prioritized to meet the needs of the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Programs with respect to data accessibility and preservation. Detailed information on how the data Program meets the needs of the herring and long-term monitoring Programs and their individual projects will be required.
2. Any data collected by the Programs and provided to the Data Management Program for processing must be able to be transferred to the Council at its request with no further cost. An explicit statement of how data will be delivered at the end of the term or the termination of the contract must be included.
3. Data collected must be made publicly available upon written approval by the Herring or Long-Term Monitoring Program Leads.
4. Data and any associated infrastructure must be archived at a minimum of two independent off-site locations. The locations of the archives must be geographically distributed to guard against data loss from natural disasters or technical failure.

Considerations Applicable to Proposers

The following are mandatory requirements for potential proposers. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process. Interested Program proposers must email their contact information and Program of interest to dfg.evos.invitation@alaska.gov by February 1, 2016 to be added to a list of interested proposers on the EVOSTC website to facilitate coordination among potential proposers.

Proposers must demonstrate that they have:

1. A proposal which responds to the call for a Data Management Program, as described in this Invitation.
2. A proposal for a Program that complies with the Council's founding documents and relevant policies and procedures. (*See References.*)
3. An existing administrative structure to manage funds and deliverables; the proposer may be an existing organization or collaboration among existing entities and individuals.
4. A structure to communicate with the Council through a single Program Lead; regardless of the structure of the proposer, they must provide a single, comprehensive proposal.

5. A Program Lead who will work with and be responsive to Council's objectives and requirements.
6. A Program Lead who will facilitate the most cost-effective and technically-supportive stream of funding among the parties.
7. The technical infrastructure and experienced personnel required to make all data, documents, annual and final reports available electronically both to the researchers and to the public based on a clearly defined timeline of deliverables.
8. Plans to continue to reassess the Program's progress and relevancy and consider newly-available technologies.
9. Demonstrated an effective and balanced use of funds, including establishing appropriate collaborations with other organizations and experts, achieving the most efficient use of funds, and taking advantage of existing infrastructure.
10. Established realistic and detailed timelines and milestones specific to individual tasks and the overall Program.
11. Demonstrated a credible, feasible, and detailed administrative structure and technical implementation of the Program, including project team qualifications (education, experience, related work efforts, proposed time commitment, past performance), and availability of facilities and other requirements necessary for Program success.

The following are mandatory requirements for each fiscal year of the Program. The submitted budget for each year shall include the staffing and funds necessary to meet these requirements.

1. An annual report must be presented to the Council on March 1 of each fiscal year (except FY17) and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Program Summary Status Form and Budget Form (*Attachments D and F of Reporting Procedures*) and
 - b. A completed Project Reporting Form and Budget Form for each project (if applicable) in the Program (*Attachments C and E of Reporting Procedures*).
2. A funding request must be presented to the Council on September 1 of each fiscal year and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Long-Term Program Proposal Form and Budget Form (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>) and
 - b. A completed Long-Term Project Proposal Form and Budget Form for each project in the Program (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>).

CROSS-PROGRAM PUBLICATION GROUPS

The Council seeks proposals from a group of researchers interested in focusing on producing an integrated manuscript publication(s). The proposal must be for integrative, cross-discipline, novel work that cuts across Programs and would, at a minimum, integrate data from the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Programs. The goal of this Focus Area is to promote collaboration between the Programs and to assess the data collected by the Programs, natural resource management agencies and other organizations to provide a broader context of the status of the ecosystem in the Spill Area.

The proposed group must include a least one researcher from both the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Programs. Additional members of the proposed group are not required to have previous experience with EVOSTC. Funds available under this Focus Area cannot be utilized for additional data collection. Proposals received in response to this Focus Area will be reviewed independently and, while a proposal may be of any reasonable length, proposals are anticipated to be fewer than five pages.

The final report for each group will be a manuscript(s) published in a peer-reviewed scientific publication. If the group is unsuccessful in publishing their manuscript, other options may be approved in consultation with the EVOSTC Executive Director and Science Coordinator.

For the FY17-21 Invitation, the Council may fund up to three proposals over the five-year term for a maximum of \$50,000 (not including 9% GA) per proposal. Proposals are due to the Council on September 1, 2016 through September 1, 2020 for work proposed in FY17 through FY21, respectively. Funding may be proposed as unevenly allocated across the five-year term, as appropriate to the proposed activities. Council multi-year funding must be approved annually by the Council. In addition, projections of future funding are dependent upon investment funds, which are affected by market fluctuations.

Considerations Applicable to Proposers

The following are mandatory requirements for potential proposers. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process.

Proposers must demonstrate that they have:

1. A proposal that is focused within the Spill- Area and has the primary objective of providing data interpretation that furthers the Council's goals of understanding the effects of the Spill on the natural resources of Spill Area, the effects of potential other stressors that may be preventing the full recovery of natural resources, and possible restoration or management actions that may facilitate the recovery of natural resources;
2. A proposal that includes at least one researcher from both the Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Programs. Additional group members are not required to have any experience with the EVOSTC and can be from any organization, agency, or Program.
3. A proposal that responds to the cross-Program publication groups Focus Area, as described in this Invitation;

4. A proposal that complies with the Council's founding documents and relevant policies and procedures; *(See References.)*
5. A Group Lead responsible for communication with the Council; (regardless of the structure of the proposers, a single, comprehensive proposal must be submitted for each group) and
6. Targeted peer-reviewed scientific journal(s) that can provide their finally published articles for public use without additional charge to the user (Open Access). Publications that will not allow papers for use without additional cost to the user cannot be considered.

The following are mandatory requirements for each fiscal year of funding. The submitted budget for each year shall include the staffing and funds necessary to meet these requirements.

1. An annual report must be presented to the Council on March 1 of each fiscal year and will include the following:
 - a. A financial accounting of any Council funding received in the past year including a comparison of the requested budget versus the actual budget
 - b. A brief annual report summarizing the past year's work.
2. A funding request must be presented to the Council on September 1 of each fiscal year and will include the following:
 - a. A completed Cross-Publication Group Project Proposal Form and Budget Form (<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.invites>)

LINGERING OIL

One of the most surprising revelations from two decades of research and restoration efforts since the Spill is the persistence of subsurface oil in the intertidal environment in a relatively un-weathered state. This oil, estimated in 2004 to be around 97.2 metric tons (or 23,000 gallons), is contained in discontinuous patches across beaches that were initially impacted by the Spill (<http://www.evostc.state.ak.us/static/PDFs/LingeringOilReport.pdf>). The patches cannot be visually identified on the beach surface, but their presence may be a source for exposure to oil for resources that seek food in sediments where the oil persists. Survey work funded by the Council indicated that the oil is decreasing at a rate of zero to four percent per year, with only a five percent chance that the rate is as high as four percent. As a result, oil has persisted for decades.

Passive and subsistence uses were significantly impacted by the Spill and this has affected the overall health of the communities in the Spill Area. The presence of lingering oil has also impacted the public's perception of the Spill Area, who no longer views it as the pristine environment that was present before the Spill occurred. This perception has continued to preclude full recovery for some passive and subsistence uses. It may require additional resources to evaluate, monitor, and redress the impact of lingering oil on these uses in the Spill Area. An important function of this information gathering would be to pass this information back to the communities and the general public.

Other Council efforts to date have included the development of a spatial probability model which has been used to identify beach segments with a high likelihood of persistent oil and the identification of the factors limiting the degradation of the oil, and evaluation of remediation treatment options. A project completed in FY15 has identified the locations where heavier amounts of lingering subsurface oil are expected, evaluated the feasibility of various methods of restoring these sites, and estimated the costs of the selected methods.

Upon receiving additional information from these recent lingering oil studies the Council will evaluate whether there is a need for undertaking additional restoration measures in habitat with lingering subsurface oil. Thus, no prospective funding amount has been proposed.

Lingering Oil proposals funded under this Invitation may be proposed off-cycle and as single-year projects or multi-year projects. All multi-year projects require funding to be authorized annually by the Council. As in the past, the Council has not established a set amount of funding for projects in this Focus Area.

Considerations Applicable to Proposers

The following are mandatory requirements for potential proposers. Proposals that do not meet each of these criteria will be considered non-responsive to the Invitation and excluded from the review process.

Proposers must demonstrate that they have:

1. A proposal which demonstrates a clear linkage to injured natural resources or services;
2. A proposal which is focused within the Spill Area;
3. A proposal which responds to the lingering oil Focus Area, as described in this Invitation;
4. The ability and commitment to make all data, documents, annual and final reports available electronically to the public according to an explicit timeline of deliverables;
5. A Lead PI responsible for communication with the Council regardless of the structure of the proposers. A single, comprehensive proposal must be submitted for each project; and
6. A proposal that complies with the Council's founding documents and relevant policies and procedures. (*See References.*)

IV. Additional Evaluation of Proposals

A. Policy and Legal Review

To be eligible for funding, proposals must be designed to restore, replace, enhance or acquire the equivalent of natural resources injured as a result of the Spill or the reduced or lost services provided by these resources. In addition, proposals must be consistent with the policies contained in the 1994 Restoration Plan. Council staff will review each proposal for responsiveness to this Invitation, completeness and for adherence to the format and instructions contained in this document. A legal and policy review of each proposal submitted pursuant to this Invitation may be conducted by federal and State attorneys.

- Proposers should also note that the following activities, in general, will not be considered for use of Council funding: (1) activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or federal law; (2) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation; and (3) activities that constitute “normal agency activities” that the government would have conducted had the Spill not occurred. (*See Memorandum of Agreement and Consent Decree between the United States & the State of Alaska, Aug. 29, 1991*).
- Program or project proposers that have received funding previously from the Council will be evaluated on their past performance. Proposers that are delinquent in submitting any required interim and final reports to the Council or that have otherwise performed unsatisfactorily will be not be considered for future funding. Submitting all overdue deliverables to the Council by September 1, 2016 requalifies the proposer for funding.

B. Council Science Review

Council staff, Trust Agency staff, and the EVOSTC Science Panel review the proposals and, as appropriate and as schedules may allow, may provide written comments for project refinement to the Program Lead(s) or Proposer. These reviewers will provide funding recommendations to the Executive Director.

C. Public Advisory Committee Review

The Council’s Public Advisory Committee (PAC), representing a cross-section of interest groups affected by the Spill, reviews the proposals and provides the Council with funding recommendations. Evaluation factors to be considered by the PAC include, among other criteria that may be identified by the PAC, whether and how the proposal achieves the requirement of restoring, replacing, enhancing or acquiring the equivalent of natural resources injured as a result of the Spill or the reduced or lost services provided by these resources.

D. Annual Work Plan

Annually, the Council’s Executive Director provides the recommendations and comments of the Council’s Public Advisory Committee, EVOSTC Science Panel, other Council advisors and Council staff to develop an annual draft Work Plan for the Council’s review. This draft Work Plan compiles all of the items comprising the Council’s restoration Program budget for the following fiscal year: Program and project proposals for the fiscal year, as well as Council administration costs.

E. Trustee Council Decision

To assist in their decision as to which proposals will be selected for funding, the Council may take into consideration the recommendations of the Executive Director, Science Coordinator, public comment, Public Advisory Committee, Trust Agency staff, and EVOSTC Science Panel. These recommendations are purely advisory in nature and the final decisions are at the sole discretion of the Council members. Unanimous agreement of all six Council members is required to fund a proposal. It is anticipated that funding decisions for FY17 (i.e., approval of the Work Plan) will be made at a Council meeting in October/November 2016 and funding will be released Feb. 1, 2017.

V. Instructions for Submitting a Proposal

A. What to Submit

The EVOSTC website has a webpage for information, updates about this Invitation, and submittal forms for each Focus Area at: <http://www.evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.IP>

Program proposers must email their contact information and Program of interest to dfg.evostc@alaska.gov by February 1, 2016 to be added to a list of interested proposers on the EVOSTC website to facilitate coordination among potential proposers.

Please submit an electronic copy of the proposal package by **April 1, 2016, 5:00 PM AKDT** to:

Elise Hsieh, Executive Director at dfg.evostc@alaska.gov

Proposal forms must be composed using Microsoft Word with figures and tables embedded. Budget forms must be composed using Microsoft Excel. The proposal and budget forms should not be modified to include additional information not specifically requested. PDF files will not be accepted.

For submissions by a consortium or organization that did submit a proposal under the FY12-16 Invitation, please provide any changes in the information below. For submissions by a consortium or organization that did not submit a proposal under the FY12-16 Invitation, please provide the following information in addition to the Program and Project Proposal forms (Appendices A-E) for the organization or each member of the consortium:

1. Information on Consortium or Organization

- a. Years in existence.
- b. Current and future sources of funding.
- c. Current staff size by area of expertise (e.g. science management, administration, IT, etc.).
- d. Audited financial statement covering past three years.
- e. Information about facility, including location, ownership, authority to use, size, and resources available.
- f. Statement confirming proposal and related activities are consistent with the founding, authorizing documentation of the Proposer's organization.
- g. Number of members of the organization's existing science or technical review panel. If no panel currently exists, please note as such.

- h. Number of members of the organization's existing public advisory committee or mechanism for public involvement. If no group currently exists, please note as such.
- i. Name and resume of the Program Lead(s) and any key staff. This should include a summary of the experience of the Program Lead(s) in managing large and complex scientific programs.
- j. Capabilities of existing IT infrastructure to make data and reports publically available.

2. Experience with EVOSTC

- a. Amount of funding received by the organization or individual PI's from EVOSTC currently or in the past and listing of projects funded. Note, however, that except in the case of Cross-Program Publication proposals, prior experience with EVOSTC is not a requirement to be eligible to receive funding.
- b. A statement that the proposer has read and clearly understands the Council's founding documents and the policies and procedures that are relevant to the proposal. Any conflicts between the Council's policies and procedures and the proposer's should be addressed in this section.

3. Current Areas of Study and Funding Sources

- a. Listing of the current areas of study for each organization and amount of funds released for each area annually.
- b. Experience of each organization with the Focus Areas of this Invitation must be addressed in the proposal. However, past experience with the Focus Areas is not a requirement for a proposer to be eligible for Council funding.
- c. Amounts and funding sources for any matching funds that would be available in support of the proposed program or individual projects.

4. Collaboration/Coordination

- a. Experience working with state, federal, and private entities to complete projects.
- b. Experience working with local and tribal communities in the Spill Area.
- c. Outreach plan that details the types of outreach envisioned and the audience for each type.

VI. References

EVOSTC Founding and other Documents are available at the Council's website (evostc.state.ak.us), including the items listed below.

Information, proposal forms, and updates for this Invitation can be found at:
<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.IP>

The following can be found at: <http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.listKeyDocs>

- Memorandum of Agreement and Consent Decree between the United States & the State of Alaska (Aug. 29, 1991)
- Agreement and Consent Decree between the United States, the State of Alaska, and Exxon Corporation (Sep. 20, 1991)
- Governments' Memorandum in Support of Agreement and Consent Decree (Oct. 8, 1991)
- Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Plan (Nov. 1994)

2014 Status of Injured Resources & Services:

<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=status.injured>

EVOSTC Policies and Procedures:

<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=policies.home>

Integrated Herring Restoration Program (IHRP):

<http://evostc.state.ak.us/static/PDFs/IHRP%20DRAFT%20-%20July%202010.pdf>

FY12-16 Herring Research and Monitoring Program including Data Management:

<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=projects.herringResearch>

FY12-16 Long-Term Monitoring Program:

<http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=projects.gulfWatch>

FY12-17 Gulf of Alaska Data Portal:

<http://portal.aos.org/gulf-of-alaska.php>

VII. Non-Discrimination Statement

The *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council administers its programs free from unlawful discrimination against any persons based on race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, physical or mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, or parenthood. Each state and federal agency that implements programs funded by the Council also has legally mandated anti-discrimination policies that apply to any contracts entered into as a result of this FY17-21 Invitation. To obtain more information about the anti-discrimination policies of individual agencies, see the links provided below for that agency.

USDA: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=NON_DISCRIMINATION

NOAA: <http://www.eeo.noaa.gov/>

USDOJ: <http://www.doi.gov//pmb/eeo/index.cfm>

ADF&G: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=home.oeostatement>

ADOL: <http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/eeo/>

ADEC: <http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/eeo/>

VIII. Appendices

Electronic forms are available for download at <http://evostc.state.ak.us/index.cfm?FA=pubs.IP>

Appendix A – Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Program Proposal Form

Appendix B – Data Management Program Proposal Form

Appendix C – Herring and Long-Term Monitoring Program Project Form

Appendix D – Cross-Program Publication Group Proposal Form

Appendix E – Lingering Oil Project Proposal Form

Appendix F – Herring, Long-Term Monitoring and Data Management Program Project Budget Form

Appendix G – Cross-Program Publication Group and Lingering Oil Project Budget Form