Potential Tsunami Debris Response Funding Sources

To date, there is only one certain targeted funding source for tsunami debris cleanup response and that is the Japanese donation of $5,000.000 to the five states and two territories impacted by the debris. However, at this time, only about $200,000 has been specifically allocated for Alaska's tsunami debris response. ADEC negotiated an agreement amongst the intended recipients of the Japanese donation providing that after the initial allocation to each recipient, the remaining balance of 3.5 to 4 million dollars will be allocated on an "as needed" basis. ADEC "hopes" the balance of that money will come to Alaska because Alaska has received by far the most tsunami debris, has more coastline than all the other impacted territories together, and has the most logistically difficult beaches to clean. However, the amount that Alaska ultimately receives is speculative and the timeline uncertain. ADEC plans to have the initial allocation distributed to contractors by April.

Gulf of Alaska Keeper and several other NGOs are spearheading an effort to encourage the Alaska legislature to allocate funds for the tsunami debris cleanup. Well-placed Republican legislators will introduce and support the legislation. However, the final outcome of this effort is unknown. Any appropriation could be vetoed by the Governor, even if we succeed in bringing it to his desk.

There has been no federal money allocated to address the tsunami debris problem although Senators Begich and Murkowski attempted to include that funding in the disaster relief bill from which it was recently stripped. They insist they will continue to seek federal money for tsunami debris cleanup efforts.

Gulf of Alaska Keeper has applied for a $150,000 grant from NOAA to remove tsunami debris and other marine debris from the Kenai Fjords National Park and the nearby islands in the Alaska National Maritime Wildlife Refuge. However, NOAA's marine- debris budget has been reduced considerably from the levels of just a few years ago and GoAK funding is doubtful.

The Chugach National Forest RAC granted Gulf of Alaska Keeper a 4-year marine debris cleanup fuel and disposal fee grant of $100,000. That is $25,000 each season for 4 years to help pay for fuel costs and disposal fees generated by marine debris cleanup efforts. There are two years left on that grant, so GoAK has $50,000 available to support any marine debris cleanup work, including tsunami debris cleanups, in PWS through 2014.

The only definite funding for tsunami debris cleanup work is the **$200,000** Japanese tsunami debris funding. GoAK's **$50,000** GoAK Chugach Forest RAC funding could be used to support the Japanese money, but only if GoAK received an ADEC contract funded by the Japanese donation. It can also be used to support EVOSTC funded cleanup projects in PWS.

Cleanup Proposal Amendment Summary

In the amended proposal, Gulf of Alaska Keeper proposes that the two EVOSTC marine debris cleanup projects scheduled for this summer and next, be delayed one year each and an additional year of funding be used to clean tsunami debris from approximately 250 miles of shoreline within PWS. Public outreach contractual obligations over the next two years in the existing EVOSTC marine debris agreement would be honored, but the actual cleanup effort this season would change from the Barren Islands to PWS. The Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies and the Marine Conservation Alliance Foundation's educational and public outreach efforts would continue and be funded per the original proposal. UAA and the College of William and Mary marine debris research efforts would also continue per the original agreement.