Notice of Intent to Submit Marine Debris Cleanup Contract Amendment

As the summer of 2012 progressed, Gulf of Alaska Keeper documented the spread of lightweight Japanese tsunami debris throughout a good portion of Prince William Sound. By early October, tsunami debris, primarily consisting of many varieties and forms of Styrofoam, urethane building insulation, plastic bottles and containers, and hard plastic fishing floats, had inundated shorelines throughout the interior of PWS. From aerial surveys conducted by GoAK and Airborne Technology Inc., and from GoAK marine debris monitoring projects and other beach surveys, it is clear that tsunami debris has spread from Hinchinbrook Entrance as far west as Perry Island, as far south as Latouche Island and as far north as Storey Island. At the end of September and into early October, GoAK conducted a 10-day tsunami debris cleanup project on the northeast end of the Knight Island archipelago for the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. The amount of Styrofoam tsunami debris found in nearly every nook and cranny of this short piece of central PWS shoreline was simply astounding. We also recovered numerous containers and drums of household chemicals, industrial chemicals and fuel from the tsunami.

Given that the Styrofoam will disintegrate, and containers of hazardous chemicals will rupture, further spreading contaminants throughout PWS, GoAK will seek to amend its marine debris contract with EVOSTC in order to remove as much Styrofoam and other tsunami debris as possible from inside PWS during the summer of 2013. GoAK will request that the two cleanup projects already scheduled for 2013 and 2014 be delayed one year to 2014 and 2015 in order that an additional season of cleanup work can be done in PWS during the summer of 2013.

This amendment will simply request funds necessary to pay for work vessels, the cleanup crew, and debris disposal fees during the summer of 2013. Any hazardous material located during this project will be identified and secured for later removal by a State environmental contractor. We do not anticipate needing to lease helicopters or any large landing craft or barges for this project, nor do we anticipate needing any special equipment necessary to complete this project. We anticipate cleaning all of the islands in central PWS including those in the Naked Island group, the Knight Island archipelago, Perry Island, Applegate Island, Axel Lind Island, all the Dutch Group islands, Smith Island, Green Island, Seal Island, northern Latouche Island, and the northern points of Montague Island. As time and conditions allow, we will also attempt to clean as far down the eastern side of Zaikof Point at the northeast corner of Montague Island by working out of Zaikof Bay. GoAK anticipates that federal or Japanese funding may be available to help with tsunami debris cleanup. If GoAK obtains any of those funds, they will be used to clean the extremely fouled eastern Montague Island Gulf of Alaska shoreline. Our goal will be to use EVOSTC funding to prevent further tsunami debris damage to the PWS environment.

The GoAK cleanup crew and project managers will meet over the couple of weeks to plan to discuss and plan this project. We will submit a detailed proposed cleanup amendment before the end of December.