THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Natural Resources
DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION
DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1340
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565
Main: 907.269.8731
Fax: 907.269.8917

August 31, 2017

Ms. Elise Hsieh
EVOS Trustee Council
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Re: Request for Reauthorization of remaining funds for
DNR-DPOR Habitat Restoration and Protection, Project 17170116
Quarterly Project Report for August 2017

Dear Ms. Hsieh:

Last fall the Council approved funding for the six riverbank restoration projects noted below. The primary goal of each project is to restore fish habitats that have been adversely impacted by human activity and to provide continuing habitat protection into the future. In their FY17 approval, the Council funded up to approximately $2.214 million for the proposed six projects.

It was anticipated that portions of the funding will require reauthorization. **Thus, reauthorization for the KRSMA: Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection in the amount of $327,000 is requested for FY18**. All other funding has been received. Table 1 summarizes those distinct scopes along with the approved funding for each.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL FY17 PROJECT SCOPE	APPROVED FUNDING
KRSMA: Eagle Rock Riverbank Protection	*$ 447,390*
Crooked Creek SRS Riverbank Restoration	*$ 486,031*
KRSMA: Kenai River Ranch Riverbank Restoration	*$ 181,158*
KRSMA: Pipeline Crossing Riverbank Restoration	*$ 307,871*
Anchor River SRA Riverbank Protection	*$ 464,994*
FY18 Reauthorization Request; KRSMA: Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection	**$ 327,000**
FY18 Request for Reauthorization	*$ 327,000*

Attached for your files is the status report for the subject project to include budgetary information, anticipated completion date, and narrative of progress. Also attached is the proposal component for the KRSMA: Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection, Phase I scope. This project is awaiting the request for project proposals from the Alaska Transportation Alternatives

Program (ATAP), which is expected to come out in the summer of 2018. As such, the timeline for completion of that scope is anticipated toward the end of 2020. All other scopes are expected to be completed by the end of 2019. If successful, the ATAP grant will fund $1,149,320 of the that scope's total cost. If unsuccessful, then we will revisit the project with the Council at that time.

Please let me know if you need additional information regarding this project.

Sincerely,

Rys Miranda, P.E.
Chief of Design and Construction
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Attachments as stated

ALASKA STATE PARKS
CAPITAL PROJECT WORKSHEET

Project Title: KRSMA: Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection, Phase I
Project Location: Kenai, Alaska
Latitude: 60°31’31.53”N **Longitude:** 151°12’41.32”W

Project Description:
The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DNR-DPOR) is proposing to construct Phase I of a two-phase project which consists of approximately 500 linear feet of elevated light-penetrating (ELP) walkway along a heavily trampled riverbank along the Kenai River Estuary at the Kenai River Flats Unit of the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA). Four sets of river access stairs will also be constructed in addition to the ELP walkway. The combination of ELP walkway and river access stairs will allow foot traffic to travel above the sensitive riverbank and into the river without impacting the riparian resources. The ELP walkway will be designed and constructed in accordance with Kenai Peninsula Borough Ordinance 21.18 for light penetration criteria.

This project will also install one orientation kiosk panel and two interpretive signs intended to facilitate redirecting human impacts and to promote public participation in the long term success of the project and project objectives.

Project Justification:
The Kenai River Flats Unit is quickly becoming a popular fishing access site. Visitor counts show an increasing trend, from state fiscal year 2010 through state fiscal year 2013 (see Table 1). As more well-

known fisheries become over-crowded, anglers and dip-netters go to this site as an alternative river access point. The increase in use has led to more people trampling the riverbank to gain river access resulting in damage to its riparian resources and fish habitat deterioration as depicted in Figure 1. This project will provide managed river access for this popular fishery and be proactive in preventing further deterioration of riparian resources along this section of the Kenai River. Without this project, people will continue to trample over the riverbank to gain river access which will inhibit the natural recovery of damaged resources and further deteriorate fish habitat along the riverbank. Degradation of the riverbank habitat affects more than the area that is directly impacted. Overhanging vegetation is lost as banks slough which can decrease areas of cooler water in times of high heat, in addition the sediment transfer of degraded banks can cause an increase in turbidity downstream of the impacted area making the effects of the habitat degradation larger than the localized area. Creating infrastructure may deter user groups from creating many paths to a destination and decrease the overall footprint of impact.

Table 1 - Facility Visitation Counts

	FY2010		**FY2011***		**FY2012**		**FY2013**	
	Resident	Non-Res	Resident	Non-Res	Resident	Non-Res	Resident	Non-Res
July	3,441	620	---	---	5,971	1,228	6,913	1,333
August	678	797	---	---	2,232	837	2,312	917
September	837	0	---	---	1,256	419	1,256	698
October	0	0	---	---	698	0	837	0
November	0	0	---	---	0	0	0	0
December	0	0	---	---	0	0	0	0
January	0	0	---	---	0	0	0	0
February	0	0	---	---	0	0	0	0
March	0	0	---	---	0	0	0	0
April	917	159	---	---	0	0	698	0
May	0	1,767	---	---	593	0	558	0
June	1,116	0	---	---	488	558	2,511	2,232
Totals	6,989	3,343	---	---	11,238	3,042	15,085	5,180
	10,332		---		14,280		20,265	

*Data is not available for FY2011

This project will primarily address injured resources Dolly Varden (recovered), Pink Salmon (recovered), and Sockeye Salmon (recovered) and the injured human service Recreation and Tourism (recovering). The referenced injured resources are listed as recovered (2014 Injured Resources and Services Update), however, this project seeks to provide long term habitat protection which plays a critical role in ensuring that the recovered status of those resources are sustained. Protection and of the natural vegetation will also benefit injured resources Bald Eagle (recovered), Barrow's Goldeneye (recovered), Common Loons (recovered), Common Murres (recovered), Harlequin Ducks (recovered), and Pigeon Guillemots (not recovering), which are found at the Kenai River Flats.

Figure 1 - Site Conditions with Evident Resource Damage (July 16, 2015)

Figure 2 - Access Trails Deteriorating Riparian Zone (July 27, 2015)

Figure 3 - Habitat Degradation Resulting from Unmanaged Access (July 27, 2015)

Figure 4 - Habitat Degradation Resulting from Unmanaged Access (July 27, 2015)

Figure 5 – Access Trails Deteriorating Riparian Zone (July 27, 2015)

Figure 6 - Access Trail Deteriorating Riparian Zone (August 2, 2016)

Project Support:
This proposed project is consistent the objectives of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Plan to restore the environment, specifically, through habitat restoration and protection. Additionally, this project is in support of DNR-DPOR's mission to provide outdoor recreation opportunities and conserve and interpret natural, cultural, and historic resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people. This project is aligned with the Kenai River Comprehensive Management Plan and is supported by the following groups:

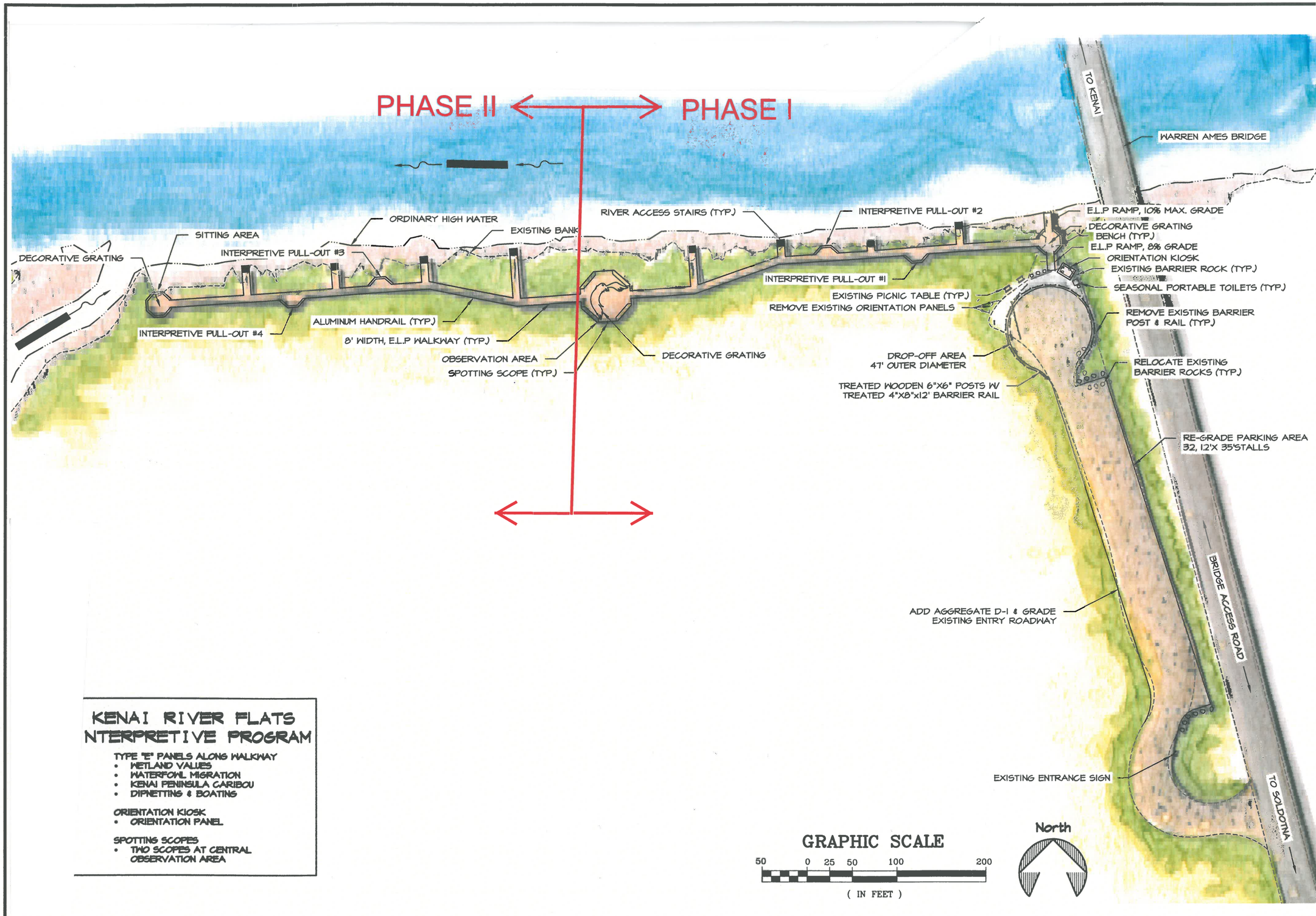
- Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board,
- Kenai River Sportfishing Association, and
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Restoration Center.

This project qualifies and has the potential to receive funding from the Alaska Transportation Alternatives Program (ATAP) – a competitive, federal-aid grant program administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. DNR-DPOR plans to submit a project proposal in the next grant cycle, which is anticipated to occur in 2018. If successful, federal-aid funds could pay for 80% of the project cost, or $1,149,320. EVOS funds would then be used as the required 20% non-FHWA matching funds, or $287,330.

Estimated Project Cost: $1,436,650
Estimate Year: 2015
Estimate Type: Preliminary

Attachments:

1. Concept Site Plan
2. Letters of Support



KENAI RIVER FLATS NTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

TYPE "E" PANELS ALONG WALKWAY
- WETLAND VALUES
- WATERFOWL MIGRATION
- KENAI PENINSULA CARIBOU
- DIPNETTING & BOATING

ORIENTATION KIOSK
- ORIENTATION PANEL

SPOTTING SCOPES
- TWO SCOPES AT CENTRAL OBSERVATION AREA

STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

CONCEPT OVERVIEW

KENAI RIVER FLATS KRSMA
RIVER BANK RESTORATION
PROJECT No. 7XXXX-X

ALASKA STATE PARKS

PREPARED: AMR
DRAWN: AMR
REVIEWED: RBM
DATE: 06/13/15

SHEET 1 OF 1 SHEETS

KENAI RIVER

Special Management Area

"Working together...for the river"

ADVISORY BOARD

October 13, 2015

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508-4626

Dear EVOS Trustee Council Members:

The Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board was recently informed that Alaska State Parks will be submitting five proposals to the EVOSTC for funding consideration. These five proposals are all located on the Kenai Peninsula along freshwater rivers and consist of protecting and restoring riparian habitat and providing infrastructure to accommodate public recreation.

Alaska State Parks has proposed the following projects for funding through the EVOSTC:

- Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection
- Pipeline Crossing Riverbank Restoration – Kenai River
- Eagle Rock Riverbank Restoration – Kenai River
- Crooked Creek Riverbank Restoration – Kasilof River
- Anchor River Bank Restoration

Riparian vegetation provides important food, shelter, and shade which support juvenile salmon. Other benefits of healthy riparian habitat include influencing water temperatures, decreasing near shore stream velocities, and providing resting places for juvenile fish. In addition, healthy riparian systems also provide important habitat for wildlife. All three of the Kenai River projects will construct elevated light penetrating boardwalks which will help to support recreational use along the river.

The Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board fully supports these projects and urges the EVOSTC to fund these proposals. Thank you for considering these proposals.

Sincerely,

Ted Wellman
President

Kenai Area Office, PO Box 1247, Soldotna, AK 99669, 907-262-5581
Kenai Peninsula Borough, 144 N. Binkley, Soldotna, AK 99669 907-262-4441
Gilman River Center 514 Funny River Road, Soldotna, AK 99669, 907-260-4882
Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Kenai Peninsula Borough

KENAI RIVER CENTER

KENAI RIVER SPORTFISHING
ASSOCIATION

November 2, 2015

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508-4626

Dear EVOS Trustee Council Members:

Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA) is a 501 c 3 non-profit fishery conservation organization. KRSA was notified that Alaska State Parks (ASP) is submitting five proposals for funding to EVOSTC, located on the Kenai Peninsula and include site work on the Anchor, Kasilof and Kenai Rivers. They seek to protect and restore riparian fish habitat and provide infrastructure for public recreational uses, primarily for angling. Specifically, the ASP proposals for funding through EVOSTC are:

- Anchor River Bank Restoration
- Crooked Creek Riverbank Restoration – Kasilof River
- Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection
- Eagle Rock Riverbank Restoration – Kenai River
- Pipeline Crossing Riverbank Restoration – Kenai River

Riparian fish habitat provides protective rearing habitat for juvenile salmon, other fish, and also wildlife by providing food, shelter, and shade. Other benefits of healthy riparian fish habitat include moderating water temperatures and near shore stream velocities. All three of the Kenai River projects will construct elevated light penetrating boardwalks, which has been shown to provide public access to the anglers while maintaining the integrity of fish habitat. The Kasilof River – Crooked Creek project dovetails with the recent EVOSTC approval of a project to restore impaired water flows from a damaged culvert on Crooked Creek.

KRSA enthusiastically supports these five projects and urges the EVOSTC to fund these proposals. Thank you for time and attention in this matter.

Respectfully,

Ricky Gease

Ricky Gease, Executive Director
Kenai River Sportfishing Association

NOAA FISHERIES

Exxon Valdez Trustee Council

c/o Elise Hsieh

4210 University Drive

Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4626

Dear Exxon Valdez Trustee Council,

I would like to send this letter in support of the six habitat restoration projects proposed by . Alaska State. The restoration of streambanks and the installation of light-penetrating walkways will benefit the river habitat in the Kenai Peninsula by reducing the extensive damage to the banks which can reduce overhanging vegetation and increase turbidity in these system. Both of these effects are detrimental to salmon populations in the streams. The work proposed will enhance habitat outside of the direct area by allowing for cooler water temperatures due to shagging from vegetation and by directing human traffic thereby reducing the footprint of degradation. Work performed on EVOS parcels or in stream systems with other EVOS projects will add benefit to investments already made.

Sincerely ,

Erika Ammann
NOAA Restoration Center
222 West 7th Ave
Anchorage, AK
99513

ADNR-DPOR HABITAT RESTORATION AND PROTECTION PROJECT 17170116

FY2018 2ND QUARTERLY PROJECT UPDATE
AUGUST 31, 2017

Location/Site:	KRSMA: Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection, Phase I
Approved Budget:	$ 327,000.00
Amount Spent:	$ 0.00
Remaining Balance:	$ 327,000.00
Anticipated Completion Date:	December 31, 2020
Narrative: This scope of the project is on hold awaiting the request for project proposals from the Alaska Transportation Alternative Program (ATAP), which is anticipated to come out in summer of 2018.	

Location/Site:	KRSMA: Eagle Rock Riverbank Protection
Approved Budget:	$ 447,390.00
Amount Spent:	$ 0.00
Remaining Balance:	$ 447,390.00
Anticipated Completion Date:	December 31, 2019
Narrative: Project funds have been received and budget structures set up. Environmental work and data collection activities are commencing.	

Location/Site:	Crooked Creek SRS Riverbank Restoration
Approved Budget:	$ 486,031.00
Amount Spent:	$ 0.00
Remaining Balance:	$ 486,031.00
Anticipated Completion Date:	December 31, 2019
Narrative: Project funds have been received and budget structures set up. Environmental work and data collection activities are commencing.	

Location/Site:	KRSMA: Kenai River Ranch Riverbank Restoration
Approved Budget:	$ 181,158.00
Amount Spent:	$ 0.00
Remaining Balance:	$ 181,158.00
Anticipated Completion Date:	December 31, 2019
Narrative: Project funds have been received and budget structures set up. Environmental work and data collection activities are commencing.	

Location/Site:	KRSMA: Pipeline Crossing Riverbank Restoration
Approved Budget:	$ 307,871.00
Amount Spent:	$ 0.00
Remaining Balance:	$ 307,871.00
Anticipated Completion Date:	December 31, 2019
Narrative: Project funds have been received and budget structures set up. Environmental work and data collection activities are commencing.	

Location/Site:	Anchor River SRA Riverbank Protection
Approved Budget:	$ 464,994.00
Amount Spent:	$ 0.00
Remaining Balance:	$ 464,994.00
Anticipated Completion Date:	December 31, 2019
Narrative: Project funds have been received and budget structures set up. Environmental work and data collection activities are commencing.	