

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill
Restoration Project Annual Report

Community Involvement Project

Restoration Project 99052A
Annual Report

This report has been prepared for peer review as part of the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council restoration program for the purpose of assessing project progress. Peer review comments have not been addressed in this annual report.

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Study History: This project was initiated in 1995 through initiative from spill area communities, primarily Alaska Native, to become more involved in the restoration process. The cultural tie to subsistence, not only as the dependence on injured resources from the oil spill, but as the building blocks to the Alutiiq culture, motivated spill area residents to become involved in the activities that will assist in the recovery of subsistence resources. It was designed to provide information to communities regarding data and scientific research performed by the Trustee Council science program, facilitate a direct line of communication between spill area residents and the Trustee Council and its staff, and promote the inclusion of community-based projects, as well as community involvement in science projects throughout the life of the restoration effort.

Abstract: The contamination caused by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill resulted in concern by residents of spill-affected communities over the safety of wild food sources and the integrity of the environment affected by the oil spill. This project stems from concern by residents of these communities that their involvement was not adequately taken into consideration and that the information collected by scientists throughout the spill area was not reaching the communities. In an effort to enhance communication between the Trustee Council and the communities and to increase involvement in the process, a community facilitator was hired through subcontracts between Chugach Regional Resources Commission and the village councils in Chenega Bay, Tatitlek, Valdez, Cordova, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Seldovia, Ouzinkie, Seward, and Chignik Lake. Furthermore, a spill area wide community involvement coordinator was hired by Chugach Regional Resources Commission to facilitate communication between communities, the Trustee Council, and principal investigators. An internship program was instituted in conjunction with the Kodiak Island Borough School District and Ouzinkie Tribal Council to have oil spill interns in the six Kodiak Island communities to better inform and involve the communities in the restoration process, as well as educate local youth in science the restoration processes.

Key Words: Alaska Peninsula, Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC), community facilitators, community involvement, community involvement coordinator, internship, Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak Island, lower Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, traditional ecological knowledge, traditional knowledge.

Project Data: (will be addressed in the final report)

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INTRODUCTION

The *Exxon Valdez* oil spill caused severe disruption to the lives of many people living in the spill impact area. The spill also caused residents of the area to be concerned about the safety of their wild food sources and the integrity of the surrounding natural environment. While scientific studies aimed at restoring the resources and services damaged by the oil spill occurred throughout the spill area, most of the researchers worked for agencies or institutions based outside the spill area itself. Residents of the spill area felt that they were not adequately involved in the restoration process, either through regular communication with the researchers and the Trustee Council, or through participation in restoration activities, including the use of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) of the region. This project intended to involve Native communities through a network of community facilitators throughout the region and a spill area wide community involvement coordinator in the Anchorage Trustee Council office. An internship program was instituted in conjunction with the Kodiak Island Borough School District and Ouzinkie Tribal Council to have oil spill interns in each of the six communities on Kodiak Island to better inform and involve the communities in the restoration process, as well as educate local youth in science the restoration processes.

OJECTIVES

1. To increase the involvement of spill area communities in the restoration efforts of the Trustee Council.
2. To improve the communication of findings and results of restoration efforts to spill area residents, including village and city councils, other community groups, and the appropriate regional organizations in a format that is meaningful and easy to read and understand.

METHODS

The Chugach Regional Resources Commission through a cooperative agreement with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game coordinated this project. CRRC contracted with tribal councils in ten communities within the spill area, including Tatitlek, Cordova, Chenega Bay, Valdez, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Seldovia, Ouzinkie, Chignik Lake, and Seward, to provide a community facilitator to work on the project. CRRC also hired Hugh Short to serve as the spill area wide community involvement coordinator for the project.

Community facilitators were responsible to provide a monthly report to the community involvement coordinator identifying community issues or concerns, ideas for restoration projects, or any other news regarding the restoration effort; assist the community involvement coordinator with increasing community involvement in the restoration effort through local resource inventories and other outreach efforts; work with the community

involvement coordinator to coordinate community meetings as well as community visits by principal investigators; disseminate twice-monthly updates to community members and organization, including the local government; and attend the 10th Anniversary Workshop in March of 1999.

An internship program was instituted in conjunction with the Kodiak Island Borough School District and Ouzinkie Tribal Council to have oil spill interns in each of the six communities on Kodiak Island to better inform and involve the communities in the restoration process, as well as educate local youth in science the restoration processes. The responsibilities of the interns closely mirrored those of the community facilitators.

The community involvement coordinator was responsible for the following tasks: produce a monthly newsletter for communities regarding restoration efforts; update local resource inventories; coordinate the participation of community facilitators in the Restoration Workshop and other meetings; work with TEK specialist and community facilitators to develop community involvement and traditional knowledge components in restoration projects; organize community meetings; participate in the Restoration Workforce meetings; provide a community report to the Public Advisory Group; attend all Trustee Council meetings and report outcomes to communities; collaborate with the science coordinator and communication specialist to disseminate research results; provide technical assistance to communities on projects; provide input to the Restoration Update newsletter; and prepare quarterly project status reports for the Restoration office staff.

RESULTS

Technical Assistance

The community involvement coordinator and other staff assisted spill area communities with the submission of several project proposals for the Trustee Council FY00 workplan and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs-administered criminal settlement fund. The subsistence cluster was set for approximately \$1.23 million:

00052, Community Involvement	\$201.5
00210, Youth Area Watch	\$122.0
00223, P.G. Pink Salmon Project	\$75.0
00245, Community-based Harbor Seal	\$56.5
00247, Kametolook River Coho	\$23.2
00263, P.G. Stream Enhancement	\$23.4
00273, Surf Scoter Life History	\$205.4
00401, Spot Shrimp Population	\$88.7
00482, PSP Test Kit Optimization	\$55.6
00610, Kodiak Is. Youth Area Watch	\$61.8
00256B, Solf Lake Stocking	\$159.9
00416, Chenega Bay O'Brien Creek	\$27.2
<u>00481, Documentary-Intertidal Resources</u>	<u>\$120.0</u>
TOTAL	\$1,238.2

In addition the above projects that were funded by the Trustee Council, the former Department of Community and Regional Affairs, now the Department of Community and Economic Development, funded numerous subsistence projects. Hugh Short, Rita Miraglia, John Gliva, Jim Fall, and Lisa Scarborough served on the panel that worked on funding the projects. Below is a list of those projects.

Nanwalek Traditional Knowledge Camp	\$24.0
Nanwalek Sockeye Enhancement Project	\$145.0
Tatitlek Fish and Game Processing Equipment	\$10.0
Port Graham Pink Salmon Enhancement	\$145.0
Chenega Bay Subsistence Building	\$260.0
Chignik Lagoon River Weir	\$154.8
Tatitlek Mariculture Facility	\$63.1
<u>Port Graham Skiff Dock</u>	<u>\$20.0</u>
TOTAL	\$821.9

Three projects are on hold pending further information:

Chignik Lake Archaeological Equipment	\$71.0
Ivanoff Bay Mariculture Feasibility Study	\$125.0
Karluk Subsistence Building	\$265.0

Increased Community Involvement/Information Transfer

The community involvement coordinator and community facilitators accomplished numerous tasks regarding increasing community involvement and disseminating data and research results to communities. The following are some examples of continued efforts to involve and inform communities in the restoration process.

Hugh Short, community involvement coordinator, traveled to most of the communities involved in the project. Short traveled to these communities to accomplish many of the objectives set out in the detailed project description. During the FY99, Short travel to the following communities at least once, and several more than once: Valdez, Tatitlek,

Chignik Lake, Seldovia, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Chenega Bay, Ouzinkie, Larsen Bay, Kodiak, and Cordova. During these community visits, community facilitators were instrumental in performing liaison duties to ensure that meetings were scheduled, the key decision-makers and stakeholders were available to meet with, and accommodations were set. Visits pertained to topics such as the Restoration Reserve, archaeological repository project, criminal settlement proposals, civil settlement proposals, Lower Cook Inlet Waste Management Plan, traditional knowledge workshops and training, scientific data transfer meetings, and other numerous issues regarding the restoration program.

It is very difficult to measure the level of community involvement, comparing it to past years and determining if there has been an increase or decrease. The purpose of this project is to provide meaningful involvement to community residents that live in the region, be it through providing research information, opportunities to receive funding for community projects, or various other avenues of involvement. I would like to describe each participating community's successes in FY99 through the community involvement project.

Valdez

The Valdez Native Tribe is the contracting Native organization that provides facilitating services to Chugach Regional Resources Commission and the Trustee Council. Charles Hughey has served as the community facilitator in this community since the beginning of FY98. Valdez is dissimilar to many of the other involved communities in the project because of its size, composition of a majority of non-Natives, and composition of various different Alaska Native groups living in the community. Athabascans, Alutiiqs, Eyaks, and Tlingits make up the population of Native groups and membership in the Valdez Native Tribe.

Charles Hughey has made it a priority to not only keep the Tribe informed and involved in the restoration process, but has reached out to the City of Valdez, commercial fisherman, and various other organizations within the community. In addition, the Valdez Native Tribe, primarily through Charles Hughey, submitted and received funding for a population assessment of spot shrimp in the Prince William Sound in FY98. The project continued through FY99. This species has traditionally been a strongly used subsistence resource. The local Tribe is very concerned about the decline in population from pre-spill and post-spill numbers. Valdez Native Tribe has partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to collaborate on the research.

Tatitlek

Gary Kompkoff, President of the Tatitlek I.R.A. Council, has served as the community facilitator since the initiation of /052A. He has been very involved since the restoration process began and continues to involve his tribal council and community to the extent that benefits the injured resources and will allow for the perpetuation of the traditional way of life.

Numerous activities took place in FY99 in Tatitlek through the Community Involvement Project and Traditional Ecological Knowledge project. In October 1997, TEK specialist

Henry Huntington, community involvement coordinator Hugh Short, and Dan Rosenberg, principal investigator for 98263, travel to Tatitlek to hold an informational workshop with local duck hunters. Continued partnership between Dan Rosenberg and the village of Tatitlek occurred through FY99. Local residents and Youth Area Watch students assisted in the fieldwork of the project.

In addition, Tatitlek is involved in 99127, Tatitlek Coho Salmon Release; 99210, Youth Area Watch; and 99052B, Traditional Ecological Knowledge. Tatitlek has been very involved in the criminal settlement projects as well.

Cordova

The community of Cordova is facilitated through the Eyak Traditional Council. Bob Henrichs, President of the council, has served as the community facilitator since the inclusion of Cordova in the project in FY 96. Cordova is a predominantly non-Native community and has a large population of commercial fisherman. Bob Henrichs, a commercial fisherman, has been very successful in outreach to this group, and representing both the Native and commercial fish perspectives to the Trustee Council.

Cordova is involved in the restoration process primarily through two projects. They include 99052B, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and 99244, Harbor Seal Biosampling

Chenega Bay

Chenega Bay, arguably the village hardest hit by the 1989 spill, is a community of approximately fifty residents. Pete Kompkoff has served in this position since FY98. Chenega Bay has been involved throughout the process, primarily with subsistence and oil removal projects. In FY98, Chenega Bay was very active in continued involvement in the restoration process through their integral input in 99256B, Solf Lake Stocking; 99244, Harbor Seal Biosampling; 99210, Youth Area Watch; and 99052B, Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

Seward

The Qutekcak Native Tribe is contracted to provide facilitation duties for the community of Seward. Seward is a large community, primarily made up of non-Natives. The community facilitator for FY99 was Trudy Dotomain.

The community facilitator and council worked closely with the regional Native non-profit, Chugachmiut, to prepare a proposal for the archaeological repository RFP. Qutekcak has been very involved, directly and indirectly through the CIP, in the repository process. Seward was involved additionally in the TEK project and Harbor Seal Biosampling project.

TEK specialist Henry Huntington assisted Jody Seitz in her research on local and traditional knowledge of juvenile herring and feed fish in Prince William Sound and the lower Kenai Peninsula (98320T).

Seldovia

The Seldovia Native Tribe is the organization responsible to provide facilitation services. Lillian Elvsaaas has served as the Seldovia community facilitator since their inclusion in the program in FY96. Seldovia is involved in the restoration process primarily through two projects. They include 99052B, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and 99244, Harbor Seal Biosampling. Lillian has provided information to the City of Seldovia, the SOS Response Team, and school children in Seldovia regarding the oil spill restoration process. She is active in her tribal council and provides them with updates on subsistence and other services, as well as the status of injured resources in the spill area.

In FY99, Lillian worked with the City of Seldovia on the Lower Cook Inlet Waste Management Plan. She served as the liaison between the Department of Environmental Conservation, Montgomery-Watson, Seldovia Native Tribe, and the City of Seldovia.

In January, Henry Huntington, Hugh Short, and Dan Rosenberg held informational meetings on sea ducks, in conjunction with the Trustee Council-funded 99263, with local hunters in Nanwalek and Seldovia. Lillian was instrumental with setting up the meeting. These meetings focused on the integration of traditional knowledge with western science in the evolution of Rosenberg's project. Rosenberg continues to work with the community facilitators, students, and locals to involve them in his project.

Port Graham

Port Graham is involved in the project through the Port Graham Village Council. Walter Meganack, Jr. has served as the community facilitator for the village since the inception in FY95. The involvement of Port Graham community residents has increased much since the project began. In FY99, Port Graham was involved in 99052B, Traditional Ecological Knowledge; 99225, Port Graham Pinks; 99244, Harbor Seal Biosampling; and 99263, Port Graham Streams. Mr. Meganack was very involved in the funding and implementation of all of the above projects that involve Port Graham. In addition to civil settlement projects, Port Graham has three additional criminal settlement projects funded through the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

The village council submitted a proposal to the Trustee Council to assist in the reconstruction of the hatchery for FY99. Additionally, the village council and the Community Facilitator worked with the Department of Community and Regional Affairs on an on-going basis to secure funding through the state's oil spill criminal settlement. Walter Meganack, Jr. continued planning the construction of the floating skiff dock to coincide with the construction of the new hatchery/cannery. He also worked with Jody Seitz to coordinate interviews for a "Coastal Currents" article and radio segment.

Nanwalek

Nanwalek is involved in the project through the Nanwalek I.R.A. Council. Nancy Yeaton has served as the community facilitator for the village since FY95. Ms. Yeaton, in addition to her community facilitator duties, is the village natural resource specialist. In both of these capacities, she handles much of the issues regarding the oil spill and natural resources for the village. Nanwalek is involved in the restoration process through

the criminal and civil settlements. The civil projects include 99052B, TEK and 99244, Harbor Seal Biosampling. In addition, they operate a sockeye salmon enhancement project funded through the criminal settlement funds.

In January, Henry Huntington, Hugh Short, and Dan Rosenberg held informational meetings on sea ducks, in conjunction with the Trustee Council-funded 99263, with local hunters in Nanwalek and Seldovia. Nancy was instrumental with setting up the meeting. These meetings focused on the integration of traditional knowledge with western science in the evolution of Rosenberg's project. Rosenberg continues to work with the community facilitators, students, and locals to involve them in his project.

Ouzinkie

Ouzinkie became the facilitating contractor for Kodiak Island in March 1998. Paul Panamarioff, President of the Ouzinkie Tribal Council, serves as the community facilitator for all seven communities on the island. He keeps in contact with all of the councils when issues regarding the restoration effort need to be addressed.

Mr. Panamarioff has been a strong advocate for the implementation of an internship program for high school students in underrepresented communities of the CIP. Much of his outreach in FY98 was to coordinate with the school district and island tribal councils to ensure the funding and implementation for FY99. He continues to keep in contact with his community and the others regarding oil spill issues.

Additionally, he was instrumental in the funding and implementation of the Kodiak Island Youth Area Watch program that involves all the villages on Kodiak Island. He has worked with the school district and CRRC to reach out to all villages and councils to ensure a successful program.

Chignik Lake

The community of Chignik Lake is involved through the Chignik Lake Village Council. Virginia Aleck has served as their community facilitator since FY96. Ms. Aleck is responsible to facilitate with the additional communities of Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Bay, Perryville, and Ivanoff Bay on the Alaska Peninsula. Most of the projects that have taken place in this region have occurred through funding from the criminal settlement; although in FY99 these communities were involved with 99247, Kametook River; 98286 and 99052B, TEK. In 1997, each of the communities, absent Chignik Bay, received funding from the criminal settlement to build subsistence buildings and create subsistence revitalization and education programs.

In August, Henry Huntington, Bob Small, harbor seal biologist with ADFG, Hugh Short, and Vicki Vanek, Alaska Native Harbor Seal biologist, attempted to go to Chignik Lake to hold an informational workshop on harbor seals. Due to bad weather, we were unable to reach Chignik Lake and had to cancel the workshop.

In 1999, Chignik Lake applied to receive funding for archaeological equipment for the subsistence building to educate youth and adults on their past, as well as bring the artifacts "home."

Because of the distance, the Alaska Peninsula is a challenge to involve to the extent of other communities in the spill area. Virginia Aleck has remained a strong voice and smooth facilitator and strives to include all the Peninsula communities in the restoration process.

Community Facilitator Meetings/Retreats

In October 1998, Hugh Short and Patty Brown-Schwalenberg held a planning meeting in conjunction with the annual Alaska Federation of Natives Convention. This meeting took advantage of many of the spill area residents being in town and centered on the Restoration Reserve. Representatives from the Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Island, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound were present. The main topic was regarding the \$20 million community fund. Many present were very supportive and enthusiastic about the positive possibilities that this community fund could do to advance the restoration effort. They decided to go back their respective communities and garner support through education and outreach.

In January, CRRC and the Division of Subsistence held the Subsistence Assessment Workshop. Attendees included local researchers, community facilitators, and natural resource specialists. This meeting was held to present the data collected during the Subsistence Assessment project and gain input from the spill area residents on interpreting the results. This meeting was very successful in bringing together the tribal and agency views and melding them into a cohesive document.

On January 28, a community facilitators meeting was held in Anchorage. Discussion at the meeting centered on the Restoration Reserve community fund, FY00 proposals, criminal settlement projects, and injured services and species updates. Facilitators met with Molly McCammon to discuss the community fund additionally. This meeting was successful by informing communities on recent and upcoming events regarding the Trustee Council.

On February 16-18, Henry Huntington, Hugh Short, and Patty Brown-Schwalenberg held a TEK Training workshop in Anchorage. Discussed at this workshop were long-term goals of the TEK and CIP projects, the formation of natural resource programs at the tribal level, funding of natural resource programs, and the Restoration Reserve community fund. Community facilitators, natural resource specialists, and tribal council representatives attended this meeting.

As a result of the ideas discussed at the February TEK meeting, a second workshop was held in late-September, early-October, in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin, an Indian Reservation with a strong tribal resource program. The workshop included field trips to the hatcheries, program offices, and harvesting areas, as well as talks from tribal leaders, a tribal judge, and tribal resource managers on the history of their program and the way it

has been organized and run. Like the first workshop, this one helped generate ideas for community roles in management and monitoring.

10th Anniversary Workshop and Memorial Gathering

From March 23-26, the Trustee Council began the 10th Year Symposium commemorating the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. This symposium focused on the whole Trustee Council restoration process, with a primary focus on the science program. All community facilitators attended this meeting.

In an effort to allow Native people in the region to heal and memorialize the oil spill, CRRC began the planning effort of the Memorial Gathering and held it on March 23, 1999. This event was held at the Spenard Recreation Center. This event was very emotional, and included Native dancing, panel discussions, a traditional potluck, and keynote addresses. All invited parties saw this event as very successful.

CONCLUSION

This project is making true strides of involving communities in the restoration process. The facilitators and community involvement coordinator have provided the Trustee Council and staff with recommendations and direction in how to involve the communities to benefit all parties involved. Hugh Short has continued to send out bi-monthly reports to communities, submit articles regarding community involvement in the Restoration Update newsletter, attend all Trustee Council meetings and Restoration Workforce meetings, and perform all duties that are required of the position. He has been able to facilitate a partnership between the Trustee Council and staff and communities.

Community facilitators have continued to perform tasks that are asked of them, including monthly reports, facilitation of community visits, disseminating information and relaying information to and from the communities and the Trustee Council, and developing avenues and projects to become more involved in the restoration process. In cooperation with the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Project, the Community Involvement Project has benefited all parties involved and will continue to advance the mission of the Trustee Council.

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