

*Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill  
Restoration Project Annual Report

Community Conference On Subsistence  
and the Oil Spill: Summary Report

Restoration Project 95138  
Annual Report

Conference Held September 22-23, 1995  
Sheraton Anchorage Hotel

Facilitators:

Stephen R. Braund & Associates  
with  
Jon Isaacs & Associates  
Larry Mercurieff

This annual 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.

Stephen R. Braund & Associates  
Jon Isaacs & Associates

for:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Subsistence  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1599

October 1995

*Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill  
Restoration Project Annual Report

Community Conference On Subsistence  
and the Oil Spill: Summary Report

Restoration Project 95138  
Annual Report

Conference Held September 22-23, 1995  
Sheraton Anchorage Hotel

Facilitators:

Stephen R. Braund & Associates  
with  
Jon Isaacs & Associates  
Larry Mercurieff

This annual 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.

Stephen R. Braund & Associates  
Jon Isaacs & Associates

for:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Subsistence  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1599

October 1995

Community Conference On Subsistence  
and the Oil Spill: Summary Report

Restoration Project 95138  
Annual Report

**Study History:** Restoration Project 95138 was initiated as part of a detailed study plan in 1995 to implement subsistence goals stated in the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Restoration Plan.

**Abstract:** Six years after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill (EVOS), people from the spill area found that their subsistence activities were still being impacted. Due to reduced subsistence uses, opportunities to teach subsistence skills and traditional knowledge had also been reduced, thereby affecting cultural life. A conference was sponsored by the EVOS Trustee Council and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Division of Subsistence to bring together elders, youth, and other subsistence users from all over the spill region to share observations, experiences and ideas about their continuing subsistence and natural resource problems and possible solutions. The following goals emerged: to allow users from 20 communities to talk to one another about their common experiences related to the spill and subsistence; to facilitate communication between communities, regions, resource managers and the EVOS Trustee Council; and to identify how communities can be more involved in the restoration of subsistence resources. Outcomes included the formation of a Steering Committee composed of representatives from each region as the vehicle for continuing the work begun at the conference and the formation of a committee to seek funding for a spirit camp/healing conference. The conference was videotaped to serve as an educational tool.

**Key Words:** Alaska Peninsula, Alutiiq culture, community participation, *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, Kodiak Peninsula, Lower Cook Inlet/Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound, subsistence resources, traditional knowledge.

**Citation:**

Stephen R. Braund & Associates, and Jon Isaacs & Associates. 1995. Community conference on subsistence and the oil spill: summary report, *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Restoration Project Annual Report (Restoration Project 95138), Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, Anchorage, Alaska.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Study History/Abstract/Key Words/Citation . . . . .   | i       |
| Background . . . . .  | 1       |
| Developing the Conference . . . . .   | 1       |
| <br>The Conference . . . . .  | <br>2   |
| Friday Morning, September 22, 1995 . . . . .  | 2       |
| Welcoming Remarks . . . . .   | 2       |
| Keynote Address . . . . .   | 3       |
| Father Michael Oleksa . . . . .   | 3       |
| Panel: Reviewing the Experience of the Spill & Its Effects on Subsistence .                       | 4       |
| Open Microphone . . . . .   | 5       |
| Friday Afternoon, September 22, 1995 . . . . .  | 6       |
| Panel: Report on Research and Status of Resources and Ecosystems . .                              | 6       |
| Dr. Robert Spies, EVOSTC Chief Scientist . . . . .  | 6       |
| Stan Senner, EVOSTC Science Coordinator . . . . .   | 7       |
| Dr. Tom Nighswander, Oil Spill Health Task Force . . . . .  | 7       |
| Open Microphone . . . . .   | 8       |
| Working Groups - Session #1 . . . . .   | 9       |
| Saturday Morning, September 23, 1995 . . . . .  | 9       |
| Opening Remarks . . . . .   | 9       |
| Working Groups - Session #2 . . . . .   | 10      |
| Saturday Afternoon, September 23, 1995 . . . . .  | 10      |
| Where Do We Go From Here? . . . . .   | 10      |
| Themes and Actions . . . . .  | 12      |
| 1. Coordinate Between Villages and Between Regions . . . . .                                      | 12      |
| 2. Recovery of Resources & Health of the Ecosystem . . . . .                                      | 13      |
| 3. Role of Local Knowledge in Natural Resource Recovery . . . . .                                 | 13      |
| 4. Involve Young People and Address Their Concerns . . . . .                                      | 14      |
| 5. Actions to Restore Confidence in People's Decisions About<br>Subsistence Food Safety . . . . . | 15      |
| 6. Legal Considerations . . . . .   | 15      |
| Saturday Night, September 23, 1995 . . . . .  | 15      |
| <br>Appendix A: Conference Agenda . . . . .   | <br>A-1 |
| Appendix B: Conference Participants . . . . .   | B-1     |
| Appendix C: Working Groups and Committees . . . . .   | C-1     |
| Appendix D: Father Oleksa's Talk . . . . .  | D-1     |

## COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ON SUBSISTENCE AND THE OIL SPILL - SUMMARY REPORT

### Background

Six years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, people from the spill area find that their subsistence activities and culture still are affected by the oil spill. The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council (EVOSTC) is responsible for restoring the fish, birds, animals and habitat harmed by the oil spill, as well as the human uses (such as subsistence) of the injured resources. The Trustee Council provided funding to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Subsistence to organize a conference that would bring together elders, youth and other subsistence users from all over the spill region to share their observations, experiences and ideas about the continuing subsistence and other natural resource problems and possible solutions. Funding for the project provided for four people from each of the following 20 communities to travel to Anchorage for the conference:

|             |             |            |                |
|-------------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Chenega Bay | Port Graham | Larsen Bay | Chignik Bay    |
| Tatitlek    | Seward      | Old Harbor | Chignik Lagoon |
| Cordova     | Seldovia    | Ouzinkie   | Chignik Lake   |
| Valdez      | Akhiok      | Port Lions | Ivanof Bay     |
| English Bay | Karluk      | Kodiak     | Perryville     |

### GOALS OF THE CONFERENCE

The Trustee Council's goal in sponsoring this conference was "to promote the recovery of injured natural resources and subsistence uses of natural resources of the oil spill area through a conference that will involve elders, youth, and other representatives of spill area communities as well as selected scientists involved in spill area research" (Detailed Project Description, p.1).

In planning the conference, the following goals emerged for the conference itself:

- To provide elders, youth & other subsistence users from 20 communities a chance to talk to one another about their common experience related to the oil spill and subsistence.
- To facilitate communication between communities, regions and resource managers/EVOS Trustee Council.
- To identify how communities can be more involved in the restoration of subsistence resources.

### Developing the Conference

The ADF&G Division of Subsistence contracted with Stephen R. Braund & Associates (SRB&A) and their subcontractor, Jon Isaacs & Associates (JIA), to help develop the conference format and run the conference. SRB&A sent letters to the village, tribal or IRA council in each community to announce the conference and to ask them to list the four individuals from their community who would be attending the conference. SRB&A also

notified the schools and school districts so that they might suggest student participants to the local council and excuse participating students from school. Regional organizations were also informed of the conference and their input was encouraged. The Agenda Committee decided to hold the conference in Anchorage on September 22 and 23, 1995, at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel.

In May, SRB&A and ADF&G Division of Subsistence assembled an Agenda Committee of representatives from nine communities to give input and help guide the design of the conference and the topics to be covered. The Agenda Committee met in May and again in June by teleconference to discuss ideas and review drafts of the agenda. Realizing that meeting during the summer would be difficult for everyone's schedule, the committee reviewed later drafts of the agenda by fax and mail, and they were encouraged to give feedback by calling SRB&A collect. A copy of the final agenda can be found in Appendix A. A list of conference participants, the Agenda Committee and other involved parties can be found in Appendix B. Appendix C lists the nine working groups formed during the conference.

Steve Braund and Fred Elvsaas (from Seldovia) were to be co-facilitators of the conference (the people who keep the conference moving along on track). When Fred Elvsaas was unable to attend for medical reasons, Larry Mercurieff graciously agreed to co-facilitate. He had participated in the Nuuciq Spirit Camp in the summer of 1995 and came highly recommended by some of the Agenda Committee members who had worked with him there.

### The Conference

We almost called it off! The week when all 80 people were scheduled to travel from their villages to Anchorage for the conference, a typhoon swept in from Asia, grounding most air services throughout Prince William Sound, Lower Cook Inlet, Kodiak and the Alaska Peninsula, and washing away Seward's access to the highway. Fortunately, the storm let up enough for most of the participants to travel to Anchorage in time for the conference. Some of those who did not arrive in time for the first day were able to participate the second day. Every community except Tatitlek had at least one participant, and, for most communities, all four participants were present.

Friday Morning, September 22, 1995

### Welcoming Remarks

The conference opened with welcoming remarks from Steve Braund and Larry Mercurieff, co-facilitators. Jim Fall, Regional Program Manager of the ADF&G Division of Subsistence, and Molly McCammon, Executive Director of the EVOS Trustee Council Restoration Office, both made welcoming remarks. They acknowledged that "you are the experts" and have much to share and teach. Jim Fall described the conference as an opportunity for healing and sharing, an opportunity to learn from elders, from each other, from the western scientists and for the western scientists to learn from local people.

Molly McCammon brought best wishes for a good conference on behalf of the six trustees. She explained that the Trustee Council's purpose is to make decisions about restoring the habitat and quality of life. The Trustee Council consists of three state trustees

(the Attorney General and the commissioners of the Department of Fish and Game and the Department of Environmental Conservation) and three federal trustees (the local directors of the U.S. Forest Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Department of Interior). She also explained that, although no tribal trustee now sits on the EVOS Council, the laws have changed so that there will be a tribal trustee on the council following any future oil spill. Lacking a tribal trustee, the Council seeks Native involvement in the restoration process through their Native representatives on the public advisory group: Martha Vlasoff, Chuck Totemoff and Brenda Schwantes.

Lillian Elvsaas read a message from Fred Elvsaas whose comments were about the regulatory recognition of subsistence. He said that although subsistence is called 'personal use' and other names in the regulations, "it is our culture." "If we are going to preserve our subsistence lifestyle, we can't rely on anyone but ourselves."

#### Keynote Address: Elenore McMullen, Chief of Port Graham

Elenore McMullen, keynote speaker, was unable to make it to Anchorage because of the storm. The next day, Walter Meganack Jr. arrived from Port Graham and read from Elenore's speech notes. Her comments reviewed the experience and the lessons of the oil spill, including:

- Within the community: The emotional pain of the dying sea and animals, and the need for individuals to work together as a community on dealing with frustration, grief, fear and anger. The need to focus on children, on talking and listening, on educating parents about caring for ourselves, on Native arts and dance, and on sobriety.
- The need to respond to outside pressures: Not understanding reports about the spill's effects, not knowing who to believe, and wondering if reporting harvests to Fish and Game would be used against us in litigation.
- The feeling that the lawsuit gave us: that we as people were less valued than the animals and shoreline, and that they would try to erase all the damage to our people with money which others got on our behalf.
- Ways we changed: No more family clamdigging; decline in people's involvement in subsistence; caring more for our environment; more use of Native dance and song; a strengthening of the community in terms of our tools for self-help and communication; moving towards developing our own containment program if another spill occurs; opinions about future oil exploration; stronger belief in Native villages managing things and being valued for our work and information instead of doing others' work for free; concern about our role in a future disaster and local control.
- Studies of subsistence numbers do not truly reflect the significance of subsistence in terms of the cultural, spiritual and psychological importance to Alutiiq people.

#### Father Michael Oleksa

Father Oleksa gave a very thought-provoking description of subsistence that focused on the responsibilities of "traditional/local" peoples (i.e., subsistence users).

- Traditional/local people were "planted" in their particular villages with a sacred trust of responsibility to care for each other, the animals, and their lands.

- Subsistence is not so much an economic activity but a personal relationship with each other, the animals and the land.
- The process is important: putting something of yourself into getting the food that feeds your family and friends. It is an important part of your identity as a human being.
- You must be able to communicate the meaning of subsistence to yourselves and others. If subsistence dies out, it will mean the end of the planet because only traditional/local people can properly protect and care for those lands.

A paraphrased version of Father Oleksa's talk can be found in Appendix D.

#### Panel: Reviewing the Experience of the Spill and Its Effects on Subsistence

The conference organizers had intended to arrange speakers for this panel ahead of time so the speakers could have time to think about what they wanted to say. However, because of the storm, we had to wait and see who made it to the conference before we could find panelists. Martha Vlasoff, moderator for this panel, recruited several people who were willing to talk even though they did not have much time to prepare. Some of their main points follow:

- Lydia Robart (Port Graham): She sang a "thank you ancestry" song. People forgot what they do and where they come from (ancestry). It's important to remember the songs, eat the traditional foods, and make offerings. The oil spill was devastating: Money created social problems, VECO and other outsiders were running around, unemployment after the cleanup, frustration and people returning to alcohol. Communication was lost, kids were neglected, elders didn't trust their traditional foods anymore.
- Donna Malchoff (Port Graham): She was 11 when the oil spill happened. The parents were not around because they were earning money, but a lot of strangers were around. There was lots of confusion and emptiness and loss. Kids didn't get to learn subsistence skills. It took from our culture and traditions. The trial challenged subsistence by asking: "Why fight for it if you are earning big money?" The people have a responsibility to the land. There is a need for community education on how to prevent and deal with disasters.
- Monica Reidel (Cordova): She felt loss and confusion when the oil spilled. The greatest loss was the interruption of the subsistence lifestyle and the neglect of the children because the parents were so busy. Herring was a big loss because of its importance in the food chain. One man from Cordova said the fact that restoration is going on without a settlement gets in the way of healing from the post-traumatic stress. Spirit camps are a way to share knowledge and tradition. The EVOS restoration funds could create a valuable legacy by funding archaeological repositories, recovery and spirit camps, and subsistence processing projects.
- Elizabeth Kalmakoff (Ivanof Bay): Ivanof Bay was the last village reached by the spill. For a long time, they didn't think it would reach them. The oil spill affected their clam beds, which are still diminished. That affected their trade with other villages for caribou. Dungeness crab, bottomfish and seals also declined. They didn't know what was safe to eat and wondered about later effects. Now they are working on improvements by taking only what they need so they don't overuse animals still trying to recover. They have to help each other and share because there are less resources and increasing people.



- Virginia Aleck (Chignik Lake): The oil spill was devastating, then made her angry because their subsistence life was being jeopardized. As health aide, she saw a lot of people complaining of health problems that were caused by stress. When their salmon fishery finally opened, they were fishing right in the oil spill. ADF&G said it was just sludge but the locals had never seen this sludge before. It was oil. They reported it and got no response. Many species declined. People were confused and afraid of the subsistence foods. They want their clam beds restored and safe to eat.
- Gail Evanoff (Chenega Bay): When the oil spill happened, Chenega Bay had only had a few years of being peacefully settled there, after moving because of the earthquake. This was the worst disaster in North America - very emotional. Native people must never forget this and have much to fight for. Subsistence still hasn't recovered, and people still wonder if the food is safe after seeing the beaches nuked with chemicals. People need to take it upon themselves to protect the resources (Chenega Bay took pride in their spill response), demand a total cleanup of oil spills, and make industry understand their responsibilities and work with Native people who are the caretakers of the earth.
- Hank Eaton (Kodiak): At first, people did not think the spill would reach Kodiak - but it did and the impacts were great and are still being felt. "Subsistence" is an abstract concept - non-Natives don't understand it, or the subsistence tradition. We have a culture, and it's our right and responsibility to defend it. We should be able to live our traditional life without regulations. Father Oleksa talked about the intelligence of animals - they must be intelligent since they never developed a bureaucracy! I wish the bureaucrats would just leave us alone so we could go back to what we were doing before they got here.

#### Open Microphone Session - Highlights (paraphrased)

- Pete Kompkoff (Chenega Bay): I grew up in Old Chenega, where our family had a fish camp nearby and used to catch, cut, and smoke fish all day long in the summer. This year I went back there and caught a salmon to make an offering to my Dad's spirit.
- Martha Vlasoff (Anchorage): The oil spill caused us to lose our confidence - suddenly we couldn't count on always being able to provide for our people by hunting and fishing.
- Mike Elehsansky (Chenega Bay): I grew up in Old Chenega and hunted with my dad before statehood. Subsistence used to be survival - we got what we needed and didn't need a license. Now if you see a deer at the wrong time of year, you can't shoot it. Seals used to be abundant, but now we have to look hard and travel far to find just one.
- Charlie Edwardsen (Barrow): As an observer from the north, I saw what happened disguised as an "accident." Judge Holland insulted all Natives and failed with the government to exercise their trust relationship with the Natives. The State and Feds have no right to regulate subsistence. It's an insult that no Native Trustee is on the EVOS Trustee Council.
- John Boone (Valdez): I moved to Valdez five years ago, just after the spill. I learned today about the study of seals. I've hunted seals and sea otters but I let the deformed ones sink, not realizing they might be deformed because of the oil spill. I wish I had reported those.
- Lillian Elvsaa (Seldovia): We never knew the definition of "subsistence" - we just caught fish any way we can. It's not fair to tell us our ways are wrong and tell us how to fish.

- Larry Evanoff (Chenega Bay): I was working in Nome when the spill happened. When I got home a month later, I was struck by how quiet it was, like a twilight zone. Nothing but cleanup workers. There aren't very many seals anymore.
- Lydia Robart (Port Graham): She talked about traditional delicacies and how people lost the practice of making traditional foods. People depend on and respect the sea.
- Hank Eaton (Kodiak): Subsistence is a tradition that we have to protect. For 25 years, I've been on subsistence committees and nobody's ever come up with a good definition of "subsistence." But we do know what tradition is, and we must uphold it.
- Alix Chartier (Seldovia): We moved to Seldovia 20 years ago, wanting to learn from Natives about their ways. When the oil spill happened, it was a big impact, very painful. We want to tell our Native friends that we appreciate and respect your traditional ways. We all have to earn money, but that's secondary to living the subsistence lifestyle.
- Martha Vlasoff (Anchorage): The local knowledge of local people is important. We know better than anyone about the resources. We must retain ownership of our lands to teach youth and so we can always depend on hunting and fishing. Let's work together.
- Jarod Jones (Chignik Lagoon): Two people came to the villages to train some people to take samples from diseased animals and fish. If you find any diseased animals, call ADF&G or the locally trained people so they can send in the samples to be tested.

Friday Afternoon, September 22, 1995

Panel: Report on Research and Status of Resources and Ecosystems

Gordon Pullar moderated this panel. In his opening comments, he noted that, in addition to the impacts on resources, there were also impacts on Native organizations which are human resources. Compared to the many thousands of years before, the last 200 years have been full of impacts to the Alutiiq people, such as the Russians taking over, the measles epidemic, the 1964 earthquake and tsunami, and the oil spill. These historical events have staggered our people and affected how we do things. Now we are learning better ways to deal with these events.

Robert Spies, EVOSTC Chief Scientist

- Western science is just one way to understand the world.
- When the spill happened, the scientific community worked under some disadvantages: (1) we had very little information on the pre-spill status of different species populations, and (2) we lacked knowledge on the actual effect of oil on the different animals and fish.
- Shellfish: The upper intertidal areas were the most devastated and with the most lasting effect. Mussel beds were not cleaned because of fear of doing more harm than good. They are still oiled. Finally, one project tried moving the mussels and that has been successful.
- Salmon: The impact on pink salmon was major. One project is starting to mark hatchery fish thermally to keep track of wild and hatchery fish, which could be useful for harvest guidelines. Scientists expected a big impact on red salmon because of overescapement in 1989 but it hasn't happened, so far.

- Herring: There have been abnormalities in the larvae since the spill, and impacts on reproduction and development. The post-spill herring crash was from disease, and it is possible that fish exposed to the oil spill were more vulnerable to getting diseases.
- Cutthroat Trout, Dolly Varden: Growth patterns were affected.
- Harbor Seals: Seals were impacted and declined. The population has stabilized in the last few years, but is still below pre-spill levels. They need to be conserved.
- Sea Otters: About 4-5,000 were killed in the oil spill. Two surveys have shown not much increase in their population. There is a large population in the Copper River Flats which may move in and help replenish the Sound.
- Sea Lions: There were not many in Prince William Sound to begin with because they are more oceanic. But they are declining drastically and being studied to find out why.

#### Stan Senner, EVOSTC Science Coordinator

- Birds: An estimated 400,000 died from the oil spill. Birds were the most noticeable victims of the oil.
  - Murres: The majority of the birds killed were murres (about 300,000). Their reproduction levels are back to normal, but their overall numbers are still low.
  - Eagles: Their population appears to have recovered from the spill.
  - Harlequin ducks: These are the birds the scientists are most concerned about. They may be continuing to be injured from eating clams and mussels from oiled beaches.
  - Marbled Murrelets, Guillemots, Black Oystercatchers, Black Legged Kittiwakes: Scientists know little about these birds and would like to incorporate your local knowledge and observations of them, before and after the spill. Their numbers are no longer declining, but their populations are not growing, possibly because of what they eat. The link between their food source and their population level is being studied.

#### Dr. Tom Nighswander, Oil Spill Health Task Force & Alaska Area Native Health Service

- Food Safety and Testing:
  - They have analyzed over 1,000 samples (at a cost of \$700 each). They looked for cancer-causing contaminants called PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons).
  - Finfish were found to be able to process and eliminate the oil, so significant levels of PAHs did not show up in their flesh. They were safe to eat.
  - Deer, birds, etc.: no significant levels of PAHs.
  - Seals: they recommended not eating obviously oiled ones.
  - Shellfish: they recommended not harvesting from oiled areas.
  - Generally, the early advice was and still is good: Don't eat from obviously oiled areas.
  - There have not been any increases in cancer or birth defect rates that are unique to the oil spill area.

- Western Science and Native Knowledge:
  - These two types of science see the world differently.
  - Food safety assessment must use both western and Native science.

#### Open Microphone Session - Highlights (paraphrased)

- Charlie Edwardsen (Barrow): How did you measure pre- and post-spill well-being of the people?
- Dr. Nighswander: Mental health was the most devastating impact and it wasn't measured. Only hydrocarbons in subsistence foods were measured.
- Charlie Edwardsen (Barrow): A basic departure in the two kinds of science is that Anglos don't value human impacts.
- Craig Mishler (Division of Subsistence): Please explain the harbor seal decline.
- Kathy Frost (ADF&G Fairbanks): There is a steady decline of 5-6% per year and we don't know why, but more are dying than are being born. Reproduction rates seem okay, and disease is not the cause. That leaves: food, killer whales, or fishing nets as possible causes for the decline. They suspect food is the main cause and are studying this angle.
- Mike Eleshansky (Chenega Bay): Seal pup numbers are really low. Could cruise ships visiting the glaciers everyday affect pupping at the glaciers?
- Kathy Frost (ADF&G): Possibly. Some populations get used to it, others never do and remain sensitive.
- Lillian Elvsaa (Seldovia): Have there been any studies on Korean trawlers and draggers catching seals?
- Kathy Frost (ADF&G): There are federal marine mammal observers on trawlers and these boats are not a problem for seals, although they are for dolphins and other species.
- Monica Reidel (Cordova): About the human element. Dr. Picou studied mental health impacts of the oil spill. How do we bring mental health into the Trustees' scheme of restoration?
- Dr. Nighswander: The Oiled Mayors study was the best accounting of mental health status. I can't answer about the Trustees.
- Stan Senner (EVOSTC office): A change in the law would be required before mental health could be included because the law provides only for natural resources. Even the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA '90), which governs how future oil spills are handled, still focuses only on natural resources.
- Monica Reidel (Cordova): The Eyak Subsistence Recovery Camp was not funded by the Trustees. The idea behind it was that doing subsistence activities leads to mentally healthier people. The Trustees are spending lots of money on everything but people.
- Stan Senner (EVOSTC office): The process has a long way to go before it is able to respond to this need.
- Charlie Edwardsen (Barrow): The government is signatory to the Genocide Convention which requires that anything genocidal pass a certain test. We aren't an incident in time for scientists to review while the pathology continues.
- Lydia Robart (Port Graham): 1989 was devastating. A couple of years later, kittiwakes came in to our beaches and vomited blood and behaved too tamely. Is this because of the oil spill?

- Dave Irons (USFWS): Kittiwakes regurgitate zooplanktons and when they do that, it looks like blood. Their tameness, however, could be an effect of the oil. They have been studying every kittiwake rookery since before the spill.

### Working Groups - Session #1

Following that panel and open microphone session, the participants broke into nine working groups that were pre-defined to bring together people from different regions, communities, and age groups. The purpose was to give everyone a chance to talk and share ideas. One exception to the mixture of ages was the group consisting of all youth. Everyone figured out which group to go to based on the sticker (different kinds of sea life) attached to their nametag. Many scientists attended the conference during this afternoon session to be available to answer questions participants had, and to participate in this working group session. Thus, each working group had conference participants from the communities, one or two of the western scientists, plus a facilitator (Division of Subsistence staff or SRB&A/JIA staff).

The question that the working groups discussed was, "How do you integrate local knowledge into resource recovery?" This question was broken down into four sub-questions for discussion:

- How do you learn about fish and wildlife resources and communicate that knowledge?
- How do subsistence users share observations & take action within the community to conserve resources in times of shortage?
- How could managers use local knowledge?
- What would have to happen for subsistence users to feel that their knowledge plays a meaningful role in resource recovery?

The comments and suggestions from working group members were recorded by the facilitator on flip charts and have been incorporated into the Themes and Actions (page 18). After an hour of discussion, everyone reconvened in the main meeting room. One person from each working group presented a summary of their group's discussion.

### Saturday Morning, September 23, 1995

#### Opening Remarks

Steve Braund reconvened the conference, welcoming the people from Port Graham, Akhiok and Old Harbor who had arrived for the conference after weather delays.

Larry Mercurieff spoke about the processes of change. He said that if you really want change, you must rely on yourselves. Really listen to one another, because you have the resources you need among yourselves. How you get where you are going is more important than getting there: the process is more important than the goal. A good process always has good outcomes. In St. Paul in 1983, many crises had caused a lot of trauma in that community. The leaders decided that they needed to follow a process that consisted of listening to the elders, making decisions by consensus, and giving everyone an equal voice, equal power, and mutual respect. It worked. Larry also talked about the power of the sacred circle. People must believe in themselves and their power.

Larry then summarized some of the themes that had emerged on Friday:

- Healing
- Taking control of what is happening to you
- Post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSS) from the ripple effect through time of many traumas

Larry asked, "What must we do to heal?" The United Nations has recognized the importance of indigenous people's cultural roots as the key to protection of the environment. You have a tremendous responsibility to recognize that you are dealing with a spiritual sickness. You have to deal with it in order to deal with subsistence restoration. Maybe you have to follow this on your own, independent of government or Trustee Council support.

The people who had missed the first day were invited to say a few words. Sven Haakanson of Old Harbor talked about experiencing the same trauma and feelings in Old Harbor as others had described. Because of fear of contamination, people could not teach their children to eat their traditional foods. Now if we try to feed them these foods, the kids think it's "yucky." How do we fix this? He also mentioned how the oil spill destroyed many commercial fishing livelihoods as well as the tradition of earning a living that way.

### Working Groups - Session #2

Everyone returned to their same working groups to tackle a new question: "Should communities re-invigorate subsistence?" The sub-questions were:

- Are communities' subsistence practices still affected by the oil spill? How?
- How are communities addressing it? How can this be further remedied?
- How can communities address young people's concerns caused by the oil spill?
- How can communities bridge young people's "learning gap" caused by the oil spill's disruption of subsistence?

After an hour of discussion, everyone again convened in the main meeting room where one person from each working group summarized their group's discussion.

Before breaking for lunch, Larry Mercurieff gave a preview of the afternoon session, when it would be time to "walk the talk" by coming up with ways to turn the problems, concerns, and ideas of the last day-and-a-half into actions. He cautioned people against blaming others for problems and taking on a victim role, explaining that to lay blame is a "power giveaway." In other words, we give away our own power when we blame others instead of taking responsibility for what we can do to fix the problem.

### Saturday Afternoon, September 23, 1995

#### Where Do We Go From Here?

During lunch, the facilitators went through all the working groups' discussion notes recorded on flip charts and identified the main themes and ideas for actions. Six major themes emerged:

1. Coordinate Between Communities and Between Regions
2. Recovery of Resources and the Health of the Ecosystem
3. The Role of Local Knowledge in Resource Recovery
4. Involve Young People and Address Their Concerns

5. Actions to Restore Confidence in People's Decisions About Subsistence Food Safety
6. Legal Considerations

The facilitators synthesized common ideas which emerged from the working groups and listed them under the appropriate theme. Each theme and its associated action was listed on a flip chart, and the six flip charts were placed at the front of the room so that the afternoon's discussion could focus on turning these ideas into actions. These six themes and the ideas for actions are listed below.

While discussing the first theme, people decided that they needed to form a Steering Committee as the vehicle for continuing the work begun at this conference. The Steering Committee would consist, initially, of two people from each of the four regions. As discussion of the action ideas continued, many of the ideas were deferred to the Steering Committee to act on.

Ultimately, we did not have enough time to discuss each item under each of the six themes; we only discussed the first and second themes. When it became obvious that we could not go through all the items, Larry Merculieff asked how people wanted to proceed, in keeping with the idea of giving the responsibility to the group. People were tired after putting a lot of energy into this conference for two days. After some discussion, one person asked Larry for direction. He suggested the need to prioritize and focus only on the top priorities for the rest of the conference. The Steering Committee could follow up on the remaining items not covered today. Larry had observed that the most pressing issues raised repeatedly during the conference had been:

- People's sense of having no voice in what's going on - a sense of frustration
- Youth issues
- Healing
- Local people's place in the research

In considering these priorities, people discussed some of the strategies for taking action on these items. (These strategies were added to the flip charts of themes and action ideas.) Larry talked about how, in order to have a meaningful voice, you must speak from strength and solidarity to take your own power back. Although the discussion bogged down at times and people were tired, people believed that this conference was a very good start.

In discussing healing and the need for more spirit camps, a committee of mostly youth spontaneously formed to take on the task of getting funding for a healing conference. The people who joined this committee are: Virginia Aleck (Chignik Lake), Melissa Berns (Old Harbor), Tony Gregorio (Chignik Lagoon), Donna Malchoff (Port Graham), Iris O'Brien (Cordova), Austin Shangin (Perryville), Shaunna Squartsoff (Port Lions), and Martha Vlasoff (Chugach Regional Resources Commission - Anchorage).

The last thing we did was recruit two people from each region to sit on the Steering Committee. Participants from the four regions caucused to pick their two representatives. The following people are on the Steering Committee:

- Prince William Sound: Pete Kompkoff (Chenega Bay) and Monica Reidel (Cordova)
- Lower Cook Inlet/Kenai Peninsula: Walter Meganack Jr. (Port Graham) and Lillian Elvsaa (Seldovia).
- Kodiak Region: Hank Eaton (Kodiak) and Robert Katelnikoff (Ouzinkie)
- Alaska Peninsula: Priscilla Skonberg (Chignik Bay) and Virginia Aleck (Chignik Lake)

items not covered today. Larry had observed that the most pressing issues raised repeatedly during the conference had been:

- People's sense of having no voice in what's going on - a sense of frustration
- Youth issues
- Healing
- Local people's place in the research

In considering these priorities, people discussed some of the strategies for taking action on these items. (These strategies were added to the flip charts of themes and action ideas.) Larry talked about how, in order to have a meaningful voice, you must speak from strength and solidarity to take your own power back. Although the discussion bogged down at times and people were tired, people believed that this conference was a very good start.

In discussing healing and the need for more spirit camps, a committee of mostly youth spontaneously formed to take on the task of getting funding for a healing conference. The people who joined this committee are: Virginia Aleck (Chignik Lake), Melissa Berns (Old Harbor), Tony Gregorio (Chignik Lagoon), Donna Malchoff (Port Graham), Iris O'Brien (Cordova), Austin Shangin (Perryville), Shaunna Squartsoff (Port Lions), and Martha Vlasoff (Chugach Regional Resources Commission - Anchorage).

The last thing we did was recruit two people from each region to sit on the Steering Committee. Participants from the four regions caucused to pick their two representatives. The following people are on the Steering Committee:

- Prince William Sound: Pete Kompkoff (Chenega Bay) and Monica Reidel (Cordova)
- Lower Cook Inlet/Kenai Peninsula: Walter Meganack Jr. (Port Graham) and Lillian Elvsas (Seldovia).
- Kodiak Region: Hank Eaton (Kodiak) and Robert Katelnikoff (Ouzinkie)
- Alaska Peninsula: Priscilla Skonberg (Chignik Bay) and Virginia Aleck (Chignik Lake)

### Themes and Actions

Following are the themes and actions that were synthesized from the working group sessions.

#### 1. Coordinate Between Villages and Between Regions

- Form a steering committee with 2 representatives from each of the 4 regions. This committee will be the main outcome of the conference and will be the vehicle for following up on the actions that we came up with at this conference.
  - ♦ Have a student representative from each of the four regions sit on the steering committee.
- Annual Conference to bring regions/villages together to talk about:
  - ♦ Successes and failures from previous years' efforts (e.g., Community Facilitator Project)
  - ♦ Teach survival and other cultural skills
- Hold community exchanges (defer to Steering Committee)
  - ♦ Learn each others traditions
  - ♦ Visit each other
  - ♦ Use the ferry system



- Utilize community facilitator project (Funded by EVOS Trustee Council) to improve communication between villages
  - ♦ Evaluate this program at annual conference
  - ♦ Consider bringing together Community Facilitators for periodic meetings
  - ♦ Defer to steering committee: when to have Community Facilitator meetings and where to meet
- Involve Native associations and regional non-profits in programs, research, communication networks
- Coordinate and communicate between villages on fish, wildlife and other living things - status and harvest levels. Use other commissions.
- Use computers/e-mail to communicate. EVOSTC funded this year.
  - ♦ Consider pros and cons of EVOSTC vs. local, independent funding.
  - ♦ Consider who should be hooked up.

## 2. Recovery of Resources & Health of the Ecosystem

- Better communication is needed between the village and regional levels, and with western scientists, concerning when a resource is stressed and when to reduce harvests (deferred to Steering Committee)
- More projects are needed on shellfish restoration, seeding and restoring clambeds (deferred to Steering Committee)
  - ♦ Could be done as a school project; teach local people
  - ♦ Already done as EVOSTC project on limited basis
  - ♦ Scheduled to expand next year
  - ♦ Contact EVOSTC for more information
  - ♦ Steering Committee should track these projects
- Villages need to report diseased animals and fish to ADF&G; Local people should collect and submit samples for testing; Government needs to get back to communities with results.
  - ♦ People want to know: what would ADF&G like us to do with abnormal fish and wildlife? Coordinate with new Abnormalities Project (Karen Shemet and Rita Miraglia - ADF&G Subsistence)
  - ♦ EVOSTC funded sampling kits in villages that requested them and trained volunteers.
  - ♦ Can information or samples provided by the people be compensated as part of EVOSTC policy? Review categories and circumstances under which village involvement should be compensated; approach EVOSTC about it.

## 3. Role of Local Knowledge in Natural Resource Recovery

- Local involvement in research
  - ♦ Follow AFN research protocol
  - ♦ There should be community involvement in the research design
  - ♦ Hire local people, including high school kids
  - ♦ Report/communicate results back to community (accountability) in understandable terms

- ♦ Compensate people for their time being interviewed. Also consider payment for the volunteers collecting samples under the new abnormalities project.
- Elders train/educate western scientists about their local area and the species to be studied
- Train local people in western research:
  - ♦ Train in local data collection and observations
  - ♦ Local people work as interns in other organizations (for example, Prince William Sound Science Center)
- Improve trust/cooperation/communication between community and researchers
  - ♦ Having the same researchers come back year after year makes a big difference, instead of someone new and unfamiliar with the local area and local ways
- Local responsibility
  - ♦ Keep logs and journals locally containing observations about the ecosystem
  - ♦ Elders record information for the next generation
- Coordinate research with sensitivity to local harvest and religious activities (timing)
- Put a Native Trustee on the EVOS Trustee Council (Deferred to Committee to draft a resolution and get villages to review it)
- Use local knowledge to develop more sensible regulations. (For example, work with ADF&G and USFWS on developing co-management strategies.)
- Use regional organizations or specific committees to incorporate local knowledge into the recovery and management of fish, wildlife & other living things (for example, Bristol Bay Native Association, Sea Otter Commission)

Hunters and food preparers could make a report to the annual gathering/conference (for example, report on their impressions of the health of the animals and safety of foods)

#### 4. Involve Young People and Address Their Concerns

- Spirit Camps:
  - ♦ More of them, more often
  - ♦ Hunting and survival camps
  - ♦ Form committee formed to get funding from Dept. of Community and Regional Affairs for a healing conference (done).
- Start teaching kids about subsistence at a younger age
  - ♦ through family
  - ♦ through schools
- Give young people a seat or at least a voice on councils and commissions
- Establish subsistence cultural education centers
  - ♦ Elders teach youth skills
  - ♦ Compensate for subsistence loss of skills and knowledge
- Involve young people in developing curriculum and programs for spirit camps, schools and cultural centers
  - ♦ ask what their priorities are
  - ♦ make programs relevant and cool

- Do school projects about the oil spill
  - ♦ Report on how the spill and cultural gaps affect them, then present these reports to the village
  - ♦ Have field trips (for example, with elders) that teach about understanding the environment
- Get funding to train youth in research skills (internships could do this too)
- Arrange youth exchanges with other villages
- Teach schoolteachers to value subsistence and local traditions
- Hold community outings, events, picnics with traditional foods. Take camping trips where you don't take any food - just eat what you catch and pick while out there.

#### 5. Actions To Restore Confidence In People's Decisions About Subsistence Food Safety

- Get better, more frequent reporting of test and research results to villages
- Train locals to use western science plus traditional knowledge to evaluate food safety
- Develop system in villages to rely on local knowledge, observations on food safety
- Develop more restoration projects aimed at shellfish, re-establishing clambeds

#### 6. Legal Considerations

- Get the human element accounted for in damage assessment. "The lawsuit left us feeling like we as people were less valued than the mammals and birds and shoreline."
- Put a Native Trustee on EVOS Trustee Council now
- Pursue compensation, trust oversight (Department of Interior) for Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSS), mental health damages, healing centers and counseling
- Proposals for areas affecting villages should be reviewed and approved by village people
- Protect confidentiality, immunity of Native people sharing information on fish and wildlife
- Pursue actions related to court system and judges selected to hear Native cases

#### Saturday Night, September 23, 1995

As a nice way to celebrate everyone's hard work, we gathered again that evening for a delicious potluck of traditional Alutiiq foods - salmon prepared in a variety of ways, salmon eggs and rice, agutag, various berry jams and butters, and more. The food was contributed by people from the villages, ADF&G staff, and the facilitators. The hotel had also prepared a sit-down halibut dinner, which we ate while the Kodiak Alutiiq Dancers entertained us with their drumming, singing and dancing. The evening celebration of Alutiiq culture was a fitting finale to the two days we had spent talking about the oil spill, subsistence, tradition and culture.

## APPENDIX A

# COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ON SUBSISTENCE & THE OIL SPILL

September 22-23, 1995 - Sheraton Anchorage Hotel

## SPONSORS

**Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council**  
**Alaska Department of Fish & Game Division of Subsistence**

## FACILITATORS

**Stephen R. Braund & Associates**  
with  
**Jon Isaacs & Associates**  
**Larry Merculieff**

## GOALS OF THE CONFERENCE

- To provide elders, youth & other subsistence users from 20 communities a chance to talk to one another about their common experience related to the oil spill and subsistence.
- To facilitate communication between communities, regions and resource managers/EVOS Trustee Council.
- To identify how communities can be more involved in the restoration of subsistence resources.

## AGENDA

### Friday, September 22, 1995: LOOKING BACK

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 7:30      | <i>Registration, administration (per diem, etc.) &amp; coffee</i>  |
| 8:30      | Welcome and opening remarks: ♦ <i>Steve Braund</i> , co-facilitator<br>♦ <i>Larry Merculieff</i> , co-facilitator<br>♦ <i>Jim Fall</i> , ADF&G Subsistence<br>♦ <i>Molly McCammon</i> , EVOS Trustee<br>Council Restoration Office   |
| 9:00      | Keynote Address: <i>Elenore McMullen</i> , Chief, Port Graham  |
| 9:30      | Speaker: <i>Father Michael Oleksa</i>  |
| 10:00     | Break  |
| 10:15     | Panel presentation: <b>REVIEWING THE EXPERIENCE OF THE OIL SPILL AND ITS EFFECTS ON SUBSISTENCE.</b> Moderator: <i>Martha Vlasoff</i> , Chugach Regional Resources Commission. 8 panelists/5-10 minutes each (1 youth and 1 other conference participant from each region - Prince William Sound, Lower Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Alaska Peninsula). |
| 11:30     | Open Microphone: Questions, comments and discussion.   |
| 12:15     | Catered Lunch  |
| 1:00-1:15 | Administration - per diem, etc.  |

## APPENDIX A

- 1:15 **Speakers panel: *REPORT ON RESEARCH & STATUS OF RESOURCES & ECOSYSTEMS*.** Focus on (a) health of ecosystem/status of subsistence resources and (b) contamination/safety of food resources, including the following key species groups:
- shellfish
  - birds
  - herring & the resources that feed on herring
  - salmon
  - seal and sea lion
- Moderator: *Gordon Pullar*, Alaska Native Human Resource Development Program, UAF.
- Speakers: ♦*Robert Spies*, EVOS Trustee Council Chief Scientist, on the status of resources & the ecosystem.  
♦*Stan Senner*, EVOS Trustee Council Science Coordinator, on the status of resources & the ecosystem.  
♦*Tom Nighswander*, Oil Spill Health Task Force, on food safety.
- 2:15 **Open microphone: question & answer, comments and discussion**
- 3:00 **Break**
- 3:15 **Working group session - Information exchange between subsistence users and scientists: *HOW DO YOU INTEGRATE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE INTO RESOURCE RECOVERY?***
- How do you learn about fish and wildlife resources and communicate that knowledge?
  - How do subsistence users share observations & take action within the community to conserve resources in times of shortage?
  - How could managers use local knowledge?
  - What would have to happen for subsistence users to feel that their knowledge plays a meaningful role in resource recovery?
- 4:30 **Plenary session: *REPORTS FROM EACH WORKING GROUP*.**
- 5:20-5:30 **Wrap-Up of Day 1 and Adjournment**



### **Saturday, September 23: LOOKING AHEAD**

- 8:30 **Plenary Session: Synopsis of Day 1 & Review of major points.**
- 9:00 **Working group session: *SHOULD COMMUNITIES RE-INVIGORATE SUBSISTENCE?***
- Are communities' subsistence practices still affected by the oil spill? How?
  - How are communities addressing it? How can this be further remedied?
  - How can communities address young people's concerns caused by the oil spill?
  - How can communities bridge young people's "learning gap" caused by the oil spill's disruption of subsistence?
- 10:30 **Break**
- 10:45 **Plenary Session: *REPORTS FROM EACH WORKING GROUP*.**
- 11:30 **Open microphone: Comments and Discussion.**
- 12:00 ***Lunch (on your own)***

## APPENDIX A

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 1:30 | <b>Plenary Session: <i>WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?</i></b> Develop consensus on actions for the following issues and discuss who (i.e., local communities, state, federal agencies) does what. Try to answer the question “ <b><i>WHAT ACTIONS NEED TO BE TAKEN TO PROMOTE NATURAL RESOURCE RECOVERY AND SUBSISTENCE?</i></b> ” in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actions to promote the recovery of resources &amp; health of ecosystem</li><li>• Actions to restore confidence in people’s ability to make decisions about the safety of subsistence foods</li><li>• Actions related to the role of local knowledge in natural resource recovery</li><li>• Actions to re-invigorate subsistence</li><li>• Actions to involve young people and address their concerns</li><li>• Actions, if needed, to coordinate between villages and between regions</li><li>• Other actions?</li><li>• How do we keep the communities and local people involved in the actions?</li></ul> |
| 3:00 | <i>Break</i>  |
| 3:15 | <b>Plenary Session. Synopsis: <i>CONCLUSIONS/CONSENSUS FROM THE CONFERENCE</i></b>  |
| 3:45 | <b>Open Microphone</b>  |
| 4:15 | <b>Closing remarks</b>  |
|      | <b>Closing prayer</b>   |
| 4:30 | <b>Adjourn</b>  |
| 6:00 | <b>Alutiiq Traditional Foods Potluck Dinner</b>   |
| 7:30 | <b>Kodiak Alutiiq Dancers</b>   |

## APPENDIX B

# COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ON SUBSISTENCE AND THE OIL SPILL

September 22-23, 1995 - Sheraton Anchorage Hotel

### Participants

**Chenega Bay** - Chenega Bay IRA Council: 573-5132

Mike Eleshansky  
Larry Evanoff  
Pete Kompkoff  
Gail K. Evanoff

**Karluk** - Karluk IRA Council: 241-2218

Nancy Lind  
Alicia Lynn Reft  
Mary Reft  
Kathryn Reft

**Tatitlek** - Tatitlek Village IRA Council: 325-2311

Unfortunately, due to weather, Tatitlek  
people were unable to attend.

**Larsen Bay** - Larsen Bay Tribal Council: 847-2207

Clyda Christensen  
John Alpiak  
Jennifer Clampffer  
Virginia Squartsoff

**Cordova** - Native Village of Eyak: 424-7738

Monica Reidel  
Iris O'Brien  
Tomas Andersen  
Martin "Tiny" Anderson

**Old Harbor** - Old Harbor Tribal Council: 286-2215

Sven Haakanson, Sr  
Melissa Berns  
Beverly Haakanson  
Mary Haakanson

**Valdez** - Valdez Native Association: 835-4951

Helmer J. Olson  
John Boone  
Becki Kompkoff  
Patrick J. Olson

**Ouzinkie** - Ouzinkie Tribal Council: 680-2259

Verna Bennett  
Sharon Anderson  
Robert Katelnikoff  
Alexandria Muller

**Nanwalek** - Nanwalek Traditional Council: 281-2248

Carol Kvasnikoff  
Nick Tanape Jr.  
Keith Seville III

**Port Lions** - Port Lions Tribal Council: 454-2234

Herman Haakanson  
Shaunna Squartsoff  
Daryl Griggs  
Marilyn Wagner

**Port Graham** - Port Graham Vill. Cncl: 284-2227

Walter Meganack  
Donna Malchoff  
Lydia Robart

**Kodiak** - Kodiak Tribal Council: 486-4449

Virginia Abston  
Kathy Johnson  
Mike Kelly  
Hank Eaton

**Seldovia** - Seldovia Native Association: 234-7890

Lillian Elvsaa  
Albert Wilson  
Paula Elvsaa  
Alix Chartier

**Chignik Bay** - Chignik Bay Vill. Cncl: 749-2231

Roy Skonberg  
Bertha Skonberg  
Priscilla Skonberg  
Minnie Skonberg

**Seward** - Qutekcak: 224-3118

Leo Kunnuk  
Victor Ashenfelter

**Chignik Lagoon** - C. Lagoon Vill. Cncl: 840-2264

Alvin Pedersen  
Brent Pedersen  
Jarod Jones  
John Jones

**Akhiok** - Akhiok Tribal Council: 836-2229

Edward Phillips  
Mitch Simeonoff  
Roy Rastopsoff  
Mike Eluska

## APPENDIX B

### **Ivanof Bay - Ivanof Bay Village Council: 669-2204**

Archie Kalmakoff  
Elizabeth Kalmakoff  
Alfred Kalmakoff  
Artemie Kalmakoff III

### **Chignik Lake - Chignik Lake Vill. Cncl: 845-2212**

Doris Lind  
Tim Shangin  
Mitchell Lind  
Virginia Aleck

### **Perryville - Perryville Village Council: 853-2203**

Ralph Phillips  
Rebecca Kosbruk  
Austin Shangin  
Steve Phillips

### **Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council: 278-8012**

Molly McCammon, Executive Director  
Sandra Schubert, Project Coordinator  
Robert B. Spies, Chief Scientist  
Stan Senner, Science Coordinator

### **Alaska Department of Fish & Game Division of Subsistence: 267-2353**

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Jim Fall      | Lisa Scarbrough |
| Bill Simeone  | Karen Shemet    |
| Rita Miraglia | Ron Stanek      |
| Craig Mishler | Ana Lewis       |

### **Attending Scientists:**

Tom Nighswander, Oil Spill Health Task Force & AANHS (Anchorage) - 257-1822  
James Brady, ADF&G (Anchorage) - 267-2125  
Kathryn Frost, ADF&G (Fairbanks) - 459-7213  
David Irons, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Anchorage) - 786-3453  
Doug Reger, AK Dept. of Natural Resources Office of History & Archeology (Anchorage) - 762-2622  
Stanley (Jeep) Rice, National Marine Fisheries Service/NOAA (Juneau) - 789-6020  
Tom Rothe, ADF&G (Anchorage) - 267-2206  
Joe Sullivan, ADF&G (Anchorage) - 267-2213  
Dean Hughes, ADF&G (Anchorage) - 267-2207  
Bruce Wright, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (Juneau)

### **Other Invited Participants:**

Martha Vlasoff, Chugach Regional Resources Commission - 562-6647  
Gordon Pullar, Alaska Native Human Resource Development Program, UAF - 272-9531  
Father Michael Oleksa, St. Nicholas Orthodox Church (Juneau) - 586-1023

### **Conference Facilitators:**

Steve Braund, Stephen R. Braund & Associates - 276-8222  
Lisa Moorehead, Stephen R. Braund & Associates - 276-8222  
Jon Isaacs, Jon Isaacs & Associates - 274-9719  
Larry Mercurieff - 279-6566

### **Agenda Committee:**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Virginia Aleck - Chignik Lake                          | Fred Elvsaa - Seldovia                 |
| Margaret Roberts - Kodiak                              | Kathryn Reft - Karluk                  |
| Karen Katelnikoff - Tatitlek                           | Elenore McMullen - Port Graham         |
| Derenty Tabios - Chugachmuit                           | Monica Reidel - Native Village of Eyak |
| Mike Eleshansky - Chenega Bay                          | Gary Kompkoff - Tatitlek               |
| Martha Vlasoff - Chugach Regional Resources Commission |  |



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Staff assistance to Agenda Committee provided by:**

Bill Simeone - ADF&G Division of Subsistence, with assistance from Rita Miraglia, Craig Mishler,  
Lisa Scarbrough, Karen Shemet, and Ron Stanek  
Sandra Schubert - EVOS Trustee Council  
Steve Braund - Stephen Braund & Associates  
Lisa Moorehead - Stephen Braund & Associates  
Jon Isaacs - Jon Isaacs & Associates

### **Conference Sponsors:**

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council  
Alaska Department of Fish & Game Division of Subsistence

## APPENDIX C

### Working Groups

#### FIRE URCHINS (all youth):

Steve Phillips - Perryville  
Brent Pedersen - Chignik Lagoon  
Kathy Johnson - Kodiak  
John Alpiak - Larsen Bay  
Jennifer Clampfner - Larsen Bay  
Paula Elvsaas - Seldovia  
Mike Eluska - Akhiok  
Facilitator: Ron Stanek - ADF&G  
Subsistence - Anchorage  
Dean Hughes - ADF&G Anchorage  
Bruce Wright - NOAA Juneau

#### STING RAYS & OCTOPI

Walter Meganack Jr. - Port Graham  
Hank Eaton - Kodiak  
Sven Haakanson Sr. - Old Harbor  
Lillian Elvsaas - Seldovia  
Gail K. Evanoff - Chenega Bay  
Carol Kvasnikoff - Nanwalek  
John Boone - Valdez  
Edward Phillips Sr. - Akhiok  
Roy Rastopsoff - Akhiok  
Alfred Kalmakoff - Ivanof Bay  
Facilitator: Jim Fall - ADF&G Subsistence  
- Anchorage  
Bob Spies -, EVOS Trustee Council  
Stan Senner - EVOS Trustee Council  
Jody Seitz - Cordova

#### CORAL REEFERS

Mary Reft - Karluk  
Virginia Abston - Kodiak  
Archie Kalmakoff - Ivanof Bay  
Elizabeth Kalmakoff - Ivanof Bay  
Priscilla Skonberg - Chignik Bay  
Albert Wilson - Seldovia  
Tomas Andersen - Eyak/Cordova  
Patrick J. Olson - Valdez  
Beverly Haakanson - Old Harbor  
Facilitator: Jon Isaacs, Jon Isaacs &  
Associates, Anchorage  
Mike Castellini - UAF - Fairbanks

#### REGAL ANGELFISH

Roy Skonberg - Chignik Bay  
Mike Eleshansky - Chenega Bay  
Virginia Aleck - Chignik Lake  
Alexandria Muller - Ouzinkie  
Victor Ashenfelter - Seward  
Donna Malchoff - Port Graham  
Facilitator: Bill Simeone - ADF&G  
Subsistence - Anchorage  
Dave Irons - USFWS - Anchorage

#### SABER TOOTHED BLENNIES

Alix Chartier - Seldovia  
Mitch Simeonoff - Akhiok  
Jerod Jones - Chignik Lagoon  
AJ Kalmakoff III - Ivanof Bay  
Martin Andersen III - Eyak/Cordova  
Rebecca Kosbruk - Perryville  
Ralph Phillips - Perryville  
Verna Bennett - Ouzinkie  
Facilitator: Lisa Scarbrough - ADF&G  
Subsistence - Anchorage  
Jeep Rice - Auke Bay Lab - Juneau

#### SEA TURTLES

Helmer Olson - Valdez  
Ralph Phillips - Perryville  
Minnie Skonberg - Chignik Bay  
Mary Haakanson - Old Harbor  
Mike Kelly - Kodiak  
Iris O'Brien - Cordova  
Becki Kompkoff - Valdez  
Facilitator: Lisa Moorehead - Stephen  
Braund & Assoc. - Anchorage  
James Brady - ADF&G - Anchorage

#### SEAHORSES

Shaunna Squartsoff - Port Lions  
Marilyn Wagner - Port Lions  
Lydia Robart - Port Graham  
Larry Evanoff - Chenega Bay  
Mitchell Lind - Chignik Lake  
Bertha Skonberg - Chignik Bay  
Facilitator: Rita Miraglia - ADF&G  
Subsistence - Anchorage  
Joe Sullivan - ADF&G - Anchorage

## **APPENDIX C**

### **CHERUBEISH**

Doris Lind - Chignik Lake  
Sharon Anderson - Ouzinkie  
Herman Haakanson - Port Lions  
Austin Shangin - Perryville  
John Jones - Chignik Lagoon  
Monica Reidel - Eyak/Cordova  
Martha Vlasoff - Chugach Regl. Resources  
Commission - Anchorage  
Charlie Edwardsen - Barrow  
Facilitator: Karen Shemet - ADF&G  
Subsistence - Anchorage  
Tom Nighswander - Alaska Native Hospital  
- Anchorage

### **SEA ANEMONES**

Clyda Christiansen - Larsen Bay  
Leo Kunnuk - Seward  
Alvin Pedersen - Chignik Lagoon  
Robert Katelnikoff - Ouzinkie  
Pete Kompkoff - Chenega Bay  
Tim Shangin - Chignik Lake  
Facilitator: Craig Mishler - ADF&G  
Subsistence - Anchorage  
Tom Rothe - ADF&G - Anchorage

## APPENDIX C

### Steering Committee

#### Kodiak region:

**Hank Eaton**  
Kodiak, AK 99515

**Robert Katelnikoff**  
P.O. Box 56  
Ouzinkie, AK 99664  
680-2254 phone  
680-2215 fax

#### Prince Wm. Sound

**Pete Kompkoff**  
c/o Chenega Bay IRA Council  
General Delivery  
Chenega Bay, AK 99574

**Monica Reidel**  
P.O. Box 1005  
Cordova, AK 99574  
424-3241

#### Alaska Peninsula

**Priscilla Skonberg**  
P.O. Box 5  
Chignik Bay, AK 99564  
749-2433

**Virginia Aleck**  
P.O. Box 18  
Chignik Lake, AK 99548  
845-2233

#### Lower Cook Inlet/Kenai Peninsula

**Walter Meganack Jr.**  
Port Graham Village Council  
P.O. Box 5510  
Port Graham, AK 99603

**Lillian Elvsaaas**  
Seldovia Native Association  
Drawer L  
Seldovia, AK 99663

### Healing Conference Project Committee

**Austin Shangin**  
PO. Box 116  
Perryville, AK 99648  
853-2233

**Melissa Berns**  
*During the school year:*  
P.O. Box 4192  
Kodiak, AK 99615  
486-5925  
*During the summer:*  
P.O. Box 44  
Old Harbor, AK 99643  
286-2232

**Shaunna Squartsoff**  
P.O. Box 63  
Port Lions, AK 99550  
454-2207 or 2333

**Tony Gregorio**  
General Delivery  
Chignik Lagoon, AK 99565  
840-2262

**Iris O'Brien**  
P.O. Box 1503  
Cordova, AK 99574  
424-5857

**Donna Malchoff**  
P.O. Box 5548  
Port Graham, AK 99603  
284-2230

**Virginia Aleck**  
P.O. Box 18  
Chignik Lake, AK 99548  
845-2233

## APPENDIX D

### Father Oleksa's Talk (paraphrased)

I am a storyteller, an historian.

To understand subsistence, we must start by looking back.

We are all part of a story that's been going on for thousands of years. You have to know the story to know your role in it, or else it's like walking on-stage in the second act of a play and not knowing your lines.

Everybody says "We have to save subsistence." Well, why? Why is it important to us?

You have to be able to articulate "why" in order to defend yourselves with regard to subsistence. Other people have social, political, and economic tools to attack subsistence and wipe us out. We need to have the words to communicate.

If we can't explain subsistence, we can't explain why villages are important to us. And if we can't explain why villages are important, we can't explain ourselves.

Villages are different. In Kodiak, there's McDonald's where you can get your fast food, there's intersections with stoplights... If that's what you want, go live in Kodiak! But villages are different, and they exist for a reason of their own.

I like to call it the "Traditional/Local" way of life. It's always local: local wisdom about the specific plants and animals that live there, nowhere else. It is true for that place and those people planted there. The Native people are also planted there in that place. It's an eternal and sacred trust; we have to be where we are. We are responsible for that little spot on the planet. We can't be responsible for the whole planet, so the creator put us there to take care of this particular place.

The basis for the subsistence way of life is to be there where we belong by the design of the Almighty, of the planet. It doesn't matter if you move to Anchorage for a job - you are still responsible for that place where you were born. It doesn't matter how much money you have; that has nothing to do with subsistence.

Subsistence is being who you are. Being responsible for that little corner of the universe where you were born. Our ancestors took responsibility for it for thousands of years.

No matter where you go, home is still home. People move but they come back. They come back to be in a personal relationship with their relatives and friends. And they come back to eat their subsistence food, because eating their food renews their ties to their people

## APPENDIX D

and to their plants and animals. To eat the food they grew up on is part of their identity as a human being. It's who they are.

Subsistence is their birthright. It has nothing to do with economics. Subsistence renews relationships, and relationships are a central part of the subsistence lifestyle. Modern society is based on individuals who move around. Traditional/local people are tied to a place and to a network of relationships tied to that place. It's not just their relationship with people but with the animals too. In all the old stories, the myths and legends that traditional/local people tell, the animals are smart and intelligent, they see and hear and smell things and know things that we don't know. In some ways they are superior. In stories from the European culture, however, people are always smarter and animals are inferior; they are alive, but always dumber. In traditional/local people's stories, animals know the language, so we always have to speak respectfully. If they are smarter, you can't surprise them; you can't sneak up on them. If you catch an animal, it's not because you were smarter, faster, or stronger. You can only catch an animal which gives itself to you. It sacrifices itself. You have to appreciate that sacrifice. All traditional art in Alaska depicts the animals we hunt and eat, who give themselves so we can stay alive. It is a loving and respectful relationship between the people and the animals. It is one loving community.

The land that was entrusted to us is our homeland. The process is important. Here is a story of some women who took a Yupik basket-making class. The first week, they learned to sing a song to the grass before picking it. The second week they learned a song to sing while picking the grass. The third week they learned a song to sing while drying the grass. By this time they were getting frustrated. They wanted to learn how to weave baskets, not learn singing! The fourth week, when the teacher said they were going to learn the song to sing while weaving, the students protested: "No more singing!" They said they didn't want to learn any more songs; they were here to learn how to weave, and after four weeks, they still hadn't begun basket weaving! At that, the teacher explained that you can't make a basket without singing to the grass before you pick it, as you are picking it, as you are drying it, and singing as you weave the grass into a basket. So, a basket is a song made visible. The process of making the basket is every bit as important as the final product.

You can get a job, earn money, and go to the store for food, but there's nothing of you in the food you buy. But when you walk on the land that's been trusted to you, and risk the seas and the weather and gather food to feed your children and friends, there's something of you in it. That is the process.

Think about greeting cards. In our lifetime, we must get thousands of them: birthdays, graduation, marriage, Christmas cards... But which ones do we save? Not the Hallmark ones, but the ones that a child has made. Why? Because they put themselves into it. The relationship is there. The love is there.

You can buy blueberries from the store, but they are nothing more than calories in a bag. You have to be there. My wife is a Yupik from Kwethluk, and she flew all the way

## APPENDIX D

from Juneau to Kwethluk to pick salmonberries with her relatives. Those must be the most expensive berries in the world! But the point is that each berry renews her relationship with her people and her relationship with the tundra, her homeland. Each salmonberry is a treasure to her. It's all about the process of doing this activity together in relationship to the earth, about putting something of yourself in those berries.

European culture sees their lives in terms of being at work or not being at work. Traditional/local people don't think about being at work or at play; on or off the job. When traditional/local people do their activities, sometimes it looks like work, sometimes it looks like play, but, more to the point, it's doing a meaningful activity. Something meaningful that re-establishes our relationship to the land and to other people. A process that puts you in contact with yourself, your land, and your community. Yes, it is work, but not "work or play." It gives meaning to our lives. It defines who we are. Any threat to take it away is a threat to our existence. We weren't created to submit to a dominant cultural way (work/non-work). A job is meaningless. We were created to be guardians of a small piece of earth. To be in a healthy and loving and respectful relationship with that place and with the plants and animals and humans that live there. We were born to a life where process is more important than what gets done. Our work is caring for the land that was entrusted to us.

If we are able to communicate this to our kids, and to outsiders, our land and our way of life will be around for a long time.

If we lose subsistence, we don't just lose the language and the villages. But it will mean the end of the planet. The importance of being Chenega Bay or other villages is that as long as people there live the subsistence way of life, that little part of the world will be saved. Because if we are caring for the land, it can't be taken over by corporations who will cut all the trees for timber. Only the traditional local tribal peoples of the earth who live there can save the lands they are responsible for, the lands they protect and care for. As the subsistence lifestyle is threatened and villages disappear, so will the earth. If you hadn't been there, the Exxon Valdez oil spill might still be out there.

You are the sacred guardian of a little corner of earth that is your birthplace. You must be there, loving it for it to survive. Your work is to love your place, your people, and to respect the land, your people, yourself and the animals -- to live in this harmony so the earth itself can live.