

American Land Conservancy

369 Pine Street, Suite 700
San Francisco, CA 94104

April 1, 2010

Ms. Laurel Jennings
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
441 West 5th Avenue, Suite 500
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Ms. Jennings,

American Land Conservancy (ALC) is a 501(c) 3 organization whose mission is to protect the nation's natural heritage by conserving land for the benefit of people and wildlife. It has been ALC's privilege to work for Kodiak archipelago Native corporation landowners who have, or are, participating in the habitat protection focus area of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council's comprehensive restoration plan.

Since ALC's involvement in EVOS restoration began ten years ago in 2000, we have successfully collaborated with the EVOS Trustee Council to achieve over 8,000 acres of permanent high quality coastal habitat protection in Perenosa Bay on north Afognak Island.

ALC looks forward to continuing to help landowners interact with the Trustee Council to see if their parcels meet the conservation objectives of the EVOS restoration plan. With regard to your adoption of guidelines for habitat protection using remaining funds, ALC understands the logic in the Council having both large and small parcel categories and we urge the Trustees to remain flexible in reaching your restoration goals through the use of remaining habitat dollars.

ALC also believes that the Trustee Council should continue interacting with non-profit land trusts to aid in facilitating your objectives if it is cost effective for the Council. This recommendation includes Trustee consideration of a greater reliance on the transaction capabilities of non-profits while retaining the key prioritization and decision-making within the Council's authority. In short, "put us to work" whenever it suits your purposes and lowers transaction costs.

In addition, ALC will seek to assist the Council by obtaining non-EVOS funding from private and government sources to help stretch EVOS habitat protection funds to their widest possible extent. We also urge the Council to explore wider use of conservation easements because easements can be just as effective in achieving long term conservation as fee title purchases and they can be less expensive than fee purchases.

In reviewing prior comments about the EVOS Trustee Council in my files, I came across a letter from the Wildlife Management Institute regarding the restoration plan. The letter's blunt message about the Trustee Council's restoration plan is shared by many who have an interest in your work:

“You got it right the first time.”

This sentiment is an apt recognition of the extraordinary successes the Council has achieved in the twenty-one years since the *Exxon Valdez* tragedy.

Sadly, the devastation to natural resources caused by the spill and the many Alaskan lives and livelihoods that were negatively impacted by the worst environmental accident in U.S. history cannot be fully restored. Nonetheless, because of the Trustee Council's efforts, future generations of American's are going to be able to experience the spill region in all its wild splendor and biological productivity.

Thank you for the opportunity to work closely with the Trustee Council to help obtain your habitat protection objectives and for providing this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Tim Richardson
Alaska Program Director
American Land Conservancy