



# Chugach Regional Resources Commission

Chenega Bay

Eyak

Nanwalek

Port Graham

Qutekcak  
Native Tribe

Tatitlek

Valdez Native  
Tribe

April 1, 2010

Laurel Jennings  
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council  
441 West 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Suite 500  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Re: Notice of Intent to Prepare Supplemental EIS  
For EVOS Restoration Efforts

Dear Members of the EVOS Trustee Council:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and member villages of the Chugach Regional Resources Commission, I would like to take this opportunity to provide comments on the Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill (EVOS) restoration efforts.

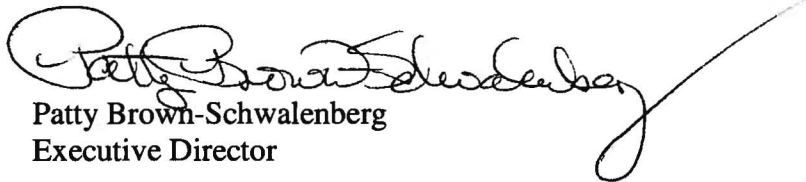
As we have testified on numerous occasions, the Native communities in the Chugach Region were devastated by the EVOS and are still suffering from its long term effects, socially, culturally, economically, and environmentally. The long working relationship this organization has enjoyed with the Trustee Council has resulted in many beneficial research, monitoring, and restoration projects, but these efforts to not begin to touch the surface of what still needs to be done.

While it is clearly understood that restoration funds cannot be expended on projects that address the social impacts of the people in the oil spilled area, efforts can be made to scientifically address those resources and issues that are of primary concern to the communities. Issues such as the decline in herring, harbor seals, and shellfish, and lingering oil are all important to the Chugach communities. As time goes on, it becomes more and more difficult to determine what has been directly caused by the oil spill and what has been caused by other factors, or both. This is the very reason why we recommend continuation of research into these areas. These issues are important to the people most affected by the oil spill, so should be of utmost important to the Trustee Council. Making a conscious decision to focus on areas of concern to the villages will, in effect, send a positive message.

Finally, and most importantly, research and/or restoration efforts in these areas must include the communities. There have been efforts by the Trustee Council in the past to emphasize “community involvement” in projects undertaken with restoration funds. These efforts have been conspicuously absent in the Native community over the past several years, and this needs to change. Indeed, meaningful community involvement costs money, but this is an expense that we believe is necessary and will go a long way towards providing a positive impact on the Native people that have been severely affected by the oil spill. As always, the Chugach Regional Resources Commission is willing to partner with the Trustee Council and its member agencies to serve as a facilitator in this process.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the SEIS.

Best regards,



Patty Brown-Schwalenberg  
Executive Director