DRAFT Meeting Summary – Pending Future PAC Approval

A. GROUP: *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council (EVOSTC) Public Advisory Committee (PAC)

B. DATE: September 26, 2018

C. LOCATION: Dr. Glenn A. Olds Conference Room, 4210 University Drive, Anchorage, AK

D. MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: (T = via teleconference)

Name	Principal Interest
Kurt Eilo	Sport Hunting/Fishing, PAC Chair
Gary Fandrei	Aquaculture/Mariculture
John French	Science/Technical, PAC Vice-chair
Stacy Studebaker	Recreational Users
Amanda Bauer	Commercial Tourism
Patience Andersen-Faulkner	Subsistence
George Skladal	Public at Large
Emilie Springer	Commercial Fishing

E. NOT PRESENT:

Name	Principal Interest
David Totemoff, Sr.	Native Landowner
VACANT	Conservation/Environmental

F. OTHER PARTICIPANTS:

Name	Organization
Elise Hsieh	Trustee Council Executive Director
Lauri Adams	Trustee Council Habitat Program Director
Philip Johnson	Designated Federal Officer, U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)
Shiway Wang	Trustee Council Science Coordinator
Linda Kilbourne	Trustee Council Staff
Helen Woods	Alaska Resources Library and Information Services
Cherri Womac	Trustee Council Staff
Mandy Lindeberg	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Brandon Bornemann,	Kenai Watershed Forum
Mark Fink	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Joseph Cosgriff	DOI
Lauren Rusin (T)	Kachemak Heritage Land Trust
Sylvia Kreel (T)	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Ron Britton (T)	U.S. Forest Service

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Veronica Varela (T)	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Doug Campbell (T)	USFWS

H. SUMMARY:

At 9:32 a.m. the Designated Federal Officer (Philip Johnson) opened the meeting and took roll call of PAC members. Eight members were present, establishing a quorum.

The PAC approved the agenda and also approved the April 2, 2018, meeting summary. The chair will sign the meeting summary, and it will be posted on the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council (EVOSTC) website.

Johnson updated the PAC on the status of the solicitation for PAC membership nominations for the 2018-2020 term. A Federal Register notice for this solicitation was published in August 2018. In addition to existing PAC members, one new nomination was received. Earlier in 2018, the Conservation/Environmental representative vacancy was also advertised in the Federal Register. Two nominations were received; however, no selection was made. Currently, there are twelve potential applicants for the ten PAC positions. A DOI official requested re-advertising the solicitation with the goal of obtaining additional nominations for the Secretary to choose from. This should not be interpreted as criticism of the current PAC members.

Public Comment: The floor was opened for public comment, telephonically and for attendees. There were no public comments.

Executive Director's Report:

Elise Hsieh reported that the annual budget is projected to be similar to last year, with a decrease in administrative costs and increased expenditures for the data portal. The joint trust funds have been invested fairly aggressively and the stock market have done well. This has allowed adherence to the anticipated long-term budgets and some additional spending. The account balance is starting to taper, as anticipated by the long-term spending plan and with a shift in asset allocation to allow for an organized spend down. The joint trust funds are not intended to be perpetual and should now be on a glide path to spend down.

Hsieh has been with the program for ten years, and she provided some perspective on her tenure. Fiscally, they have reorganized Council administration resulting in excellent audit results and implementation of the long-term program's desired by successive councils and public and scientific comment and feedback. The Habitat Program has been re-established after a fallow period a few years ago. In the past, the habitat program ran through the Alaska Departments of Law (ADOL) and Natural Resources (ADNR) due to specialized personnel who have since retired, but now EVOSTC staff do this work. Habitat enhancement has also come to the forefront with programs such as Stream Watch and various watershed and fish passage work. For example, ADNR Division of Parks and Recreation has been doing great stream restoration work and several fish passage enhancement projects (replacing and improving culverts on priority streams).

EVOSTC Annual Budget:

There was little specific discussion of the budget. Stacy Studebaker, however, asked whether new capital projects were being considered. Hsieh indicated there has been increased discussion of those projects recently.

John French asked about potential expansion of the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward to build out the last of four large coastal galleries. This fourth gallery has a roof and dirt floor, but no other improvements.

Hsieh noted that any capital projects would need to fit within the legal constraints associated with the settlement agreement, and she cautioned that large projects could would impact the longevity of the Science Programs so that should also be considered.

Patience Andersen-Faulkner asked why the Bering River coal field buy-back had not been pursued by the Trustee Council. In response, Hsieh explained that this unsolicited project has been proposed a number of times over the years. It has not been pursued, however, as it is outside the spill area and the Trustees had a variety of concerns regarding the project.

The PAC passed a motion to approve the annual budget.

FY 2019 Draft Work Plan:

The Science Coordinator presented information on the FY19 Draft Work Plan and the status of the various funded programs. FY19 is the third year of the second five-year program. All projects submitted proposals for renewal.

The Science Coordinator (Coordinator) discussed a letter of thanks from Sherri Dressel at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). In 2016, the Trustee Council provided $70,000 to ADF&G to support Prince William Sound database and ArcGIS work to fulfill outstanding requests from Trustee Council-funded researchers and Science Panel members. This effort also was intended to develop work processes and upgrade infrastructure so that ADF&G can respond more quickly to future data requests. All the work has been completed for $10,000 less than originally projected. Trustee Council support allowed ADF&G to make tremendous progress with data management for regions affected by the oil spill during a challenging time of State budget cuts. This work has also helped facilitate increased collaboration between ADF&G and Trustee Council-funded researchers.

The Science Synthesis workshop will be held in February 2020, and the PAC is invited to attend. There will be two days of presentations and a PAC meeting.

Long-Term Monitoring Programs – Herring Research and Monitoring (HRM):

The Coordinator reported that the HRM Program is continuing to progress. Program goals are being achieved in a timely manner, and all projects are recommended for funding by the Science Panel and Coordinator, except for one project (19170111-D Studies of Reproductive Maturity of

Herring). The Science Panel has concerns about the timing of evaluating archived scales for method validation and timing of sample analysis. The principal investigator (PI) will respond to the Science Panel comments and will submit a revised proposal by Friday, 12 October, 2018.

The herring program continues to make contributions to the literature:

- Eight projects papers have already been published; three are in review, and six are in preparation. Also this year, a 2017 paper that Paul Hershberger coauthored was awarded the American Fisheries Society Publications Award for best paper of the year in the Journal of Aquatic Animal Health.

FY18 Outreach activities include so far:

- Program PIs published seven articles in the Delta Sound Connections newsletter.
- Field Notes Podcasts for five projects were posted in the Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC) website.
- The PWSSC website has been updated with more information and a search tool was added to allow quick identification of on-going versus completed projects.

Overall, HRM plans for FY19 have not changed from their original submission in FY17 except for three projects:

HRM Project 19120111-A - Program Coordination
The Science Panel and Coordinator feel strongly that the HRM program would benefit from additional administrative assistance. Starting in FY19, the program coordinator from the Gulf Watch Alaska program will assist with activities such as reviewing all reports and proposals before they are submitted to the EVOSTC office.

HRM Project 19120111-B - Herring Migration Cycles
ADNR is now requiring that a bond be posted and that annual fees be paid for land use permits associated with deploying the underwater acoustic arrays. For FY19, the bond cost is $2,600, the annual fee is $2,700, and indirect costs are $1,600, for a total of $6,900. These costs were unexpected; however, they are required and the Science Panel and Coordinator support the request for the additional funding.

HRM Project 19120111-G - Adult Pacific Herring Acoustic Surveys Project
The project PI anticipates compressed field seasons in the future due to recent patterns of fish distribution and behavior and the complication of multiple projects competing for ship time. It has been difficult to schedule acoustic sampling that will complete the survey. The results from these surveys have an immediate impact on biomass assessments and understanding of herring distribution and biology in Prince William Sound (PWS). The Science Panel and Coordinator support the request for an additional $10,300 in annual funding starting in FY19. This will support five days of separate ship time, allowing two simultaneous surveys in the eastern and western regions of herring spawning range in PWS.

Some highlights from FY18:

Postdoc Research

- Postdoc Maya Groner started with the program in FY18 and is primarily collaborating with Paul Hershberger.
- Her research so far has been focused on two topics. The first is experimentally quantifying the relationship between the *Ichthyophonus* pathogen load and mortality in herring. A pilot experiment was already conducted. Eventually data from this first project will be used in models to estimate mortality due to this disease pathogen in Sitka and PWS.
- Her second project is an experimental infection trial to examine interactions between age and susceptibility to viral erythrocytic necrosis (VEN) in herring. Ultimately, these data will help with modeling population level effects of this virus on herring.

Project 19120111-B Annual Herring Migration Cycle (tagging study- Bishop)

- The February 2018 data confirmed that not all herring winter in northeast PWS; some herring are highly mobile and moved back and forth into Gulf of Alaska (GOA) even during winter months.
- In April 2018, 202 herring were tagged at the only two areas where spawning was known to occur, in Port Gravina and Orca Bay.

Project 19120111-C Modeling and stock assessment (Branch)

- Postdoc David McGowan started in 2018 and has been conducting literature reviews to become familiarized with historical herring research and related oceanographic studies conducted in PWS and the northwest Pacific Ocean, with the goal of exploring analytic approaches that may be applicable to the project objectives. He also reviewed historical data available from ADF&G, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and other sources.
- McGowan's work will examine linkages between physical and ecological processes to PWS herring recruitment. Significant environmental parameters linked to PWS herring recruitment will be included in the Bayesian Age-structured assessment model, with the intent to improve the accuracy of recruitment predictions.

Project 19170111-D Age at reproductive maturity (Gorman)

- Almost 800 adult herring were processed in April 2018, and another 850 were processed in July 2018.Histology samples will be sent for analysis this fall.

Project 19120111-E Disease Program (Hershberger)

- Results from the 2018 health assessments of pre-spawn herring were consistent with previous years.
- Overall *Ichthyophonus* infection prevalence in PWS was 13%. Neither VHSV nor VEN was detected in any of the samples. Overall *Ichthyophonus* infection prevalence in Sitka Sound was 21%; neither VHSV nor VEN was detected in any of the samples. The prevalence of VHSV neutralizing antibodies was 8% in Prince William Sound and 4% in Sitka Sound.

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Project 19160111-F Age & Aerial Surveys (Haught)

- Aerial surveys were down from previous years due to poor spring weather conditions.
- Spatial and temporal distribution of spawning events has been increasingly limited in recent years, and this trend continued in 2018.

Project 19120111-G Acoustic Surveys (Rand)

- Spring surveys were successfully completed and the PIs were able to extend some surveys into other areas.
- Preliminary analysis of echograms show only a small number of aggregated schools in Port Gravina and small isolated schools near Canoe Pass on Hawkins Island and bays in the northeast region of Montague Island.
- Biomass estimates will be completed this quarter.

PAC Discussion of the HRM Program

While the detailed information on specific projects is helpful, the PAC wanted to know the big picture and how herring were doing? The answer is that counts are down.

Project 19170115 Immunological Compromise of Fish (Andrew Whitehead)

This continuing project that is strongly supported by the Science Panel and Coordinator is progressing well.

- Animal exposure experiments were successfully completed in 2018 with collaboration from Paul Hershberger, partners at NOAA, Sitka Science Center, and ADF&G. The successful outcome of the study was in large part due to the PI reallocating funds to purchase a state of the art oil dosing system to ensure that these experiments were performed properly.
- The first draft of a reference genome assembly for herring was completed this year.
- Starting in FY19, this project will be part of the HRM program. This move will help facilitate increased interaction and collaboration with the herring program PIs and also with the GWA program. Having this project in the HRM program will also increase communication among all herring projects and provide this PI with information about the current state of herring populations and the environment.
- The Science Panel and Coordinator recommend continued funding of this project.

***PAC Discussion of the Immunological Compromise Project*:**

The PAC discussed the fact that this PI reprogrammed $50,000 of project funds to purchase a new state of the art oil dosing system that was not in the original project budget. It was discussed that prior similar studies would have been strengthened by use of this equipment. The PAC noted the need for high tech equipment in genetics work, the PAC recommended the additional funding of $50K for the oil dosing system for this project. French asked “what is state of the art”? He also asked questions about what oil fraction was used and about weathering of oil during the experiment. It was noted that the intent of this research was to serve as a retrospective study of conditions observed during the EVOS spill.

Project 1920114 Long-Term Monitoring Programs – Gulf Watch Alaska (GWA):

The GWA Program is progressing well as the Program Management Team continues to provide excellent leadership. Program and project goals are being achieved in a timely manner. The GWA Science Coordinator is making progress with Science Synthesis products, which includes four manuscripts to date. All projects are recommended for funding by the Science Panel and Science Coordinator.

The GWA program continues to make contributions to the literature:

- In addition to the 16 project papers that were published in the Deep Sea Research II special issue, five projects papers have already been published in 2018; one is in press, two are in review, and two are in preparation.

FY18 Outreach activities to date include:

- Seven project PIs participated in an information exchange event held at Port Graham.
- The GWA website has been updated.
- Program PIs published six articles in the Delta Sound Connections newsletter.
- PIs participated in public workshops and interviews.

Overall, plans for FY19 have not changed from their original submission in FY17, except for the following projects:

GWA (1 & 2) Project 19120114-E, Seabird Abundance Project and GWA Project 19120114–O, Humpback whale predation
This seabird project previously leveraged a NOAA vessel for the November and March marine bird surveys, while the humpback whale project also leveraged the same NOAA vessel for March humpback whale surveys in FY17 and FY18. This vessel will no longer be available for these projects in FY19 and beyond. Each project, therefore, is requesting its own vessel for the spring March surveys because the marine bird and humpback whale studies have different objectives, require different survey methods, and differ in spatial coverage. The Seabird Abundance Project requests an additional $24,000 annually to continue the November and March cruises as described in the original project. The Humpback Whale Project requests an additional $24,900 annually to continue the March cruises to accomplish objectives described in the original project.

Both projects provide useful information to the HRM program. For example, marine birds aggregate in herring nursery bays during nonbreeding seasons, which may impact juvenile herring populations, and March humpback whale surveys have provided an important assessment of spring whale abundance and predator consumption of pre-spawning herring schools. The Science Panel and Coordinator recommend the additional funding for both projects. The Science Panel and Coordinator have encouraged the PIs on these projects to communicate with other PIs to explore sharing vessel time whenever possible.

GWA Project 19120114-C - Forage Fish Project
This project requests an additional $71,000 annually to reinstate acoustic forage fish surveys in PWS previously conducted by the HRM program. These surveys are important for annual

ground-truthing of aerial surveys, which will be reinstated with funding from the PWSRCAC and conducted by the HRM program starting in FY19. If approved the established time-series that began during the North Pacific marine heat wave in 2014-16 will be extended and used to monitor the recovery of middle-trophic level species following this major Gulf-wide perturbation. The Science Panel and Coordinator find these data valuable and recommend the additional funding to reinstate the summer aerial forage fish surveys.

GWA Project 19120114-A - Science Coordination Project
This project requests an additional $63,200 annually for FY19-21 to partially fund a postdoc candidate that will be dedicated to synthesis efforts across program components. The candidate is well qualified; as a current PhD student in the GWA program, he is already familiar with the Program and has been highly productive. The postdoc will contribute to the existing four synthesis manuscripts that have been outlined by the GWA Science Coordinator and will be expected to make independent contributions to synthesis efforts. The Science Panel and Coordinator recognize that this would be a cost-efficient opportunity to fund a program-experienced postdoc; therefore, they recommend the additional funding to support this position.

Highlights from FY18 for the three components in the GWA program include:

Environmental Drivers Group

- At least 69 publications used data collected at the GAK-1 station, and since 2000, the citation list has grown by nearly three publications a year. This clearly demonstrates the importance and usefulness of this long-term data set.
- 2018 spring and early summer observations in PWS indicate the spring bloom was about on time, and the surface layer water temperature was above average, but heading back toward average temperatures. Some warm water copepods were still present.
- Water temperatures in 2017 were cooler than during the 2014-2016 heatwave but were still above long-term averages. The zooplankton response to environmental variability in Kachemak Bay was higher between years, relative to the differences among locations.
- The summer abundance of toxic phytoplankton species that cause paralytic shellfish poisoning were sensitive to warm temperatures and were higher in Kachemak Bay compared to lower Cook Inlet.
- Interannual variability in plankton dynamics was high and plankton populations responded rapidly to the warm conditions of 2014-2016 with changes in abundance, composition, and timing.

Pelagic Group

- All seven of the remaining threatened AT1 pod of killer whales have survived to 2018.
- The October marine bird survey encounter rate has been decreasing over the past three years.
- Increased use of PWS by murres during winter coincided with the marine heat wave that occurred from 2014 through 2016. Since the die-off, murre densities were observed to be below the long-term monthly averages during fall 2016 and 2017 surveys, but were slightly above average densities observed during February 2016 & 2017 surveys.

Nearshore Group

- Sea star observations to date include low densities across all four regions (WPWS, KBAY, KEFJ and KATM) through 2018. Some recruitment and recovery has been observed in Western PWS and Kenai Fjords National Park but not in Kachemak Bay National Park or Katmai National Park and Preserve.
- Intertidal water temperature anomalies confirm that the marine heat wave observed offshore in the GOA starting in 2014 also occurred in nearshore habitats across the northern GOA in May of 2014.
- For the second year in a row, the GWA nearshore project, in collaboration with the National Park Service, tested the use of a small Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to map intertidal sites along the KATM coast. The elevation data collected by the UAS will allow PIs to track changes in topography over time. It will also allow PIs to examine the relationship between species presence and abundance relative to elevation in the intertidal zone.

***PAC Discussion of the GWA Program*:**

Studebaker noted the poor fish returns observed this past summer, including sockeye in Kodiak Island.

Project 19120113 Data Management

The Data Management team continues to make excellent progress and goals are being achieved in a timely manner. The process for uploading information, the workspace for sharing data, and ability to make data publicly available appears to be seamless. The Data Management team provided detailed instructions and good support to PIs and programs, EVOSTC staff, and reviewing committees. PI compliance is high, which is a reflection of how well the program is functioning and its ability to support the long-term monitoring programs. The Science Panel and Coordinator recommend continued funding of this program.

PAC Discussion of Data Management

Fandrei noted that the absence of some old reports is an important issue that should be corrected. He supports providing more administrative support for uploading remaining data, metadata, and reports.

Project 19110853 Pigeon Guillemot Restoration Project

This has been a surprisingly successful restoration project.

- During this five-year restoration study (2014-2018), counts of pigeon guillemots at Peak, Naked and Story islands have more than doubled from 69 to 167 individuals, and the number of nests increased more than four times (11 to 51 nests). Numbers of pigeon guillemots counted at control islands did not show a similar increase in population.
- The PIs request a continuation of their project to determine when or if mink might return and to continue monitoring the population recovery of pigeon guillemots.
- The PIs propose to:

    - Search for evidence of mink in guillemot breeding areas.
    - Monitor the recovery of pigeon guillemots.
    - Monitor relative food availability, using black-legged kittiwakes as indicators of forage fish availability.
- The Science Panel and Coordinator recognize the importance of this follow-up project and the goal of determining when the mink might return. This information will add to what is already known about fox predation on seabirds. Furthermore, the utility of this method of culling mink better informs our ability to conserve and restore pigeon guillemots and other ground-nesting seabirds.
- The Science Panel and Coordinator recommend funding this continuation project and recognize that it will not cost much more to conduct the kittiwake monitoring ($7,500 annually). They believe this would cost-effectively add forage fish availability information to this project and knowledge of seabird ecology in PWS.

PAC Discussion of Pigeon Guillemot Restoration Project

Bauer recognized the excellent results from the Pigeon Guillemot project. She supported the kittiwake "add on" as these seabirds have not been doing well.

Project 19190122 Chinook Salmon Feeding Ecology Project (new non-program proposal submission)

The Science Panel had concerns about the proposal methods, and the PI agrees with the Science Panel. The PI has withdrawn the proposal and will consider revising and resubmitting for FY20.

General PAC Discussion of the FY2019 Work Plan

Eilo complimented the thoroughness of how information was presented. It was well organized and clear.

Studebaker asked for a more holistic synthesis of the Science Program. In the future, can the PAC get more of an overview or bigger picture look at where things stand? This could include graphs, discussion of trends, etc. What are the main messages?

It was noted that the Science Program has produced some unique and very important long-term datasets.

Andersen-Faulkner said that this is an aggressive Work Plan and that it looks good.

The PAC passed a motion to adopt the FY19 Draft Work Plan, with additional funding for the Whitehead project.

Habitat Program

Adams briefed the PAC on Habitat Program activities. This included habitat restoration and protection projects.

Habitat Restoration

The PAC was asked to consider the reauthorization of one project and approval of two new projects

Ongoing Habitat Restoration Projects:
ADNR State Park's Habitat Restoration and Protection Projects: reauthorization of one of six projects, Kenai Flats Project 17170116
The Trustee Council previously approved funding for six riverbank restoration projects that address fish habitat restoration and the protection of habitats that support numerous species affected by EVOS. The primary goal of each project is to restore fish habitats that have been adversely impacted by human activity and to provide continuing habitat protection into the future. The Council funded up to approximately $2.214 million for the six projects. For one project, Project 1 - Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA), Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection, the EVOSTC office recommended and the Council funded up to $327,000 of the $1,436,650 total, as there is potential for federal or other funds to complete the anticipated total budget. EVOSTC staff recommended reauthorization of the previously approved $327,000 for Project 1 - Kenai River Flats Riverbank Protection. Funding was scheduled for release after award of grant funds from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) under the Alaska Transportation Alternatives Program. The project application has been submitted to ADOT&PF; however, a decision on grant awards has not yet been made.

The remaining projects and their previously approved EVOSTC funding are listed below. These projects do not require reauthorization and are advancing with status as indicated below:

1. KRSMA: Eagle Rock Riverbank Protection ($410,450) – Riverbank restoration work at the boat ramp area is complete. Design work is commencing for the riverbank restoration scope and elevated light-penetrating walkway at the lower portion of the facility.
2. Crooked Creek State Recreation Site Riverbank Restoration ($445,900) – Design work and permitting are underway.
3. KRSMA: Kenai River Ranch Riverbank Restoration ($166,200) – Revegetation and demolition work are complete.
4. KRSMA: Pipeline Crossing Riverbank Restoration ($282,450) – Design work and permitting are underway.
5. Anchor River State Recreation Area Riverbank Protection ($426,600) – Design work and permitting are underway.

New Habitat Restoration Projects:
ADNR KRSMA Riverbank Protection Project: Funny River and Morgan's Landing Project 19190121
This ADNR project benefits EVOS-affected resources, such as Dolly Varden, pink salmon and sockeye salmon, and EVOS-impacted services such as tourism and recreation, by protecting habitat impacted by foot traffic accessing these fisheries. The Funny River restoration will include 105 feet of elevated light penetrating walkway at the confluence of the Kenai and Funny Rivers to replace a previous section of walkway that had outlived its intended useful life and was

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removed for public safety. Two sets of river access stairs will also be constructed to accommodate managed river access. The original walkway was part of an EVOSTC-funded project from the mid-1990s. This project will also install three interpretive displays to facilitate redirecting human impact and promote public participation in the long-term success of the project objectives. The cost for the Funny River bank restoration is $248,525. The Morgan's Landing restoration will restore 700 linear feet of habitat along the Kenai River, construct 24 linear feet of ELP walkway with one set of river access stairs, and install three interpretive displays to facilitate redirecting human impact and promote public participation in the long-term success of the project and its objectives. The cost for the Morgan's Landing restoration is $507,710. These projects are supported by the Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board and the Kenai River Sportfishing Association.

USFS & ADFG PWS Instream Flow Protection Project 19190125
The ADF&G and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) collaboratively propose to acquire the necessary hydrologic data and jointly file for reservations of water on identified priority streams and lakes within western PWS. Securing adequate instream flows in rivers and water levels in lakes with reservations will provide protection in perpetuity to fish and wildlife habitats within these important areas affected by EVOS. State instream flow law allows for a reservation of water, as adjudicated by ADNR. ADNR recommends a minimum of five years of continuous streamflow or lake level data to support reservations of water. This project proposes to collect the hydrologic data needed to file reservation of water applications on two lakes and four streams that were selected to provide long-term healthy habitat for multiple fish and wildlife species and the services of subsistence and passive use affected by EVOS. This project will also benefit affected wildlife species dependent on healthy rivers and lakes, including bald eagles, common loons, and river otters. Project objectives will be accomplished by collecting sufficient hydrologic data to meet ADNR guidelines, quantifying instream flow requirements for fish species at various life stages, and preparing reservation of water applications for submittal to ADNR to protect fish and wildlife habitat, migration, and propagation. The five-year cost for this project is $452,500, with $166,000 in kind services contributed by the U.S. Geological Survey, ADF&G, and USFS.

PAC discussion – Habitat Restoration

Studebaker indicated she is very supportive of this type of work, as it greatly improves these habitats. These restoration projects offer tangible benefits.

Eilo noted that impacts from sport fishermen have been significant and that these are great mitigation projects. For example, Eagle Rock had been a "mud pit," and now the wetlands are being restored.

Eilo also liked the use of interpretive panels and the fact that they give credit to the EVOSTC for this restoration work. This is excellent outreach.

French stated that these restoration projects are small compared to overall impacts of human activities. He asked if there was a need for a Master Plan for the Kenai River watershed?

Habitat Protection

Adams discussed four new parcels for consideration. All are on the Kenai Peninsula, with three located on the Kenai River. She noted that this is the first step in a long process, which includes due diligence, legal review, and court filings. The estimates provide an initial upper limit to what the EVOSTC will approve. The actual costs of acquisition are based on fair market appraisals.

Deep Creek Property, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, KEN 4013
This is an approximately 88.3 acre property bordering Deep Creek on the southern Kenai Peninsula and just upstream from the State of Alaska's Deep Creek State Recreation Area. ADF&G maintains a fish weir on the property by permission of the private owner, and the State would like to acquire the property for its habitat values and public recreational access. A small portion of an adjacent landowner's property (3.5 to 5 acres), which includes an existing ATV trail providing access to the Deep Creek property, is also proposed for purchase in order to enable public access to the Deep Creek property from the road end. The two adjacent properties would require separate purchase agreements to be negotiated. The larger parcel along Deep Creek could be purchased without the adjacent access acreage and still provide public access along the creek, but the smaller adjacent access property would not be purchased unless the large Deep Creek parcel also is acquired. The total funding request for both properties is not to exceed $500,000, including due diligence and closing costs for the transactions. The final purchase prices will be determined based on the final appraisals.

Corr Property, Kenai River, Alaska, KEN 4014
This is an approximately 67 acre property on the lower Kenai River and a portion of the larger homestead owned by the Corr family since 1958. The EVOSTC has long been interested in acquiring the Corr property for its high habitat values. It includes one of the longest (close to a mile) stretches of undeveloped river front property on the Kenai River, and is near other properties previously purchased with funds from the Council and managed for public use and habitat protection by the State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. There typically are a lot of king salmon in this stretch. The funding request amount is still being developed and will be included as soon as it is available. It is estimated that this project may cost about $2-$3 million.

Killey River Property, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska KEN 4015
This property encompasses an approximately 3,263 acre group of parcels currently owned by Cook Inlet Region, Incorporated (CIRI). The parcels are located in the lower Killey River watershed, including extensive wetlands and fish rearing habitat, and also include additional river frontage along the Kenai River. The purchase will be made in combination with a land exchange between the USFWS and CIRI that will also enable the final approved configuration of the Cooper Landing bypass to proceed. Under Refuge management, this large acreage of undeveloped, high habitat value lands will provide enhanced public access for sport hunting and fishing on lands that have up until now been in private ownership by CIRI. The Nature Conservancy is also willing to donate two additional parcels of land to the Refuge. The funding request is up to $20.5 million, including due diligence and closing costs. The final purchase price will be determined based on the final appraisals.

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Kenai River Fair Property, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, KEN 4016
This is an approximately 47.13 acre parcel along the Kenai River adjacent to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The property is also adjacent to property that would be purchased from CIRI, as described above. USFWS will acquire this property for addition to the Refuge. The property is already subject to a conservation easement, which allows some limited private development, but no public use. Upon purchase, the property will be managed by the USFWS for its habitat values and potential public access for sport fishing and hunting along a stretch of the Kenai River that has limited public access. The funding request is for up to $120,000, which includes due diligence and closing costs. The final purchase price is determined based on the appraisal.

PAC discussion – Habitat Protection

Studebaker indicated this is a great use of EVOS funds (both stream restoration and habitat protection).

Studebaker asked about the status of the Long Island project in the Kodiak Archipelago. Adams reported that it is progressing, and they anticipate closing soon.

French believes there are different ways of dealing with habitat protection. He urged the EVOSTC to keep a good balance between the habitat projects, science projects, and possibly capital projects. Hsieh noted that habitat funds are separate from science funding, per the settlement agreement. French then noted that the Kenai River does need active protection.

EVOSTC Outreach Project status update

Helen Woods, Alaska Resources Library and Information Services (ARLIS) staff, provided an update to the PAC on various outreach projects.

EVOS 30th Anniversary Commemorative Film
The video is moving along, still scheduling interviews. Hsieh and Woods saw a rough cut yesterday, and it looks good.

- Approximately ten minutes in length
- Goal is to be timeless - not linked to 2019, but can be used again
- Idea is to tell the story of the spill, its impact, and the use of the settlement fund for research and habitat protection
- Will be available as a digital file
- Associated poster promoting film
- Associated two-panel pop-up traveling display
- Will provide to community venues in the spill affected area to raise awareness
- Venues can keep the film, posters, and pop-up display as long as they need/want
- Venues will contact EVOSTC staff when ready to return materials
- Remaining interviews:
    - Mandy Lindeberg
    - Jeep Rice

    - Mike Weber
- Robert Stephens (Mat) is finding some amazing source material, and he is beginning to worry about how to fit it into about10 minutes; however, that is a good problem to have
- Goal is to complete by December 1st; it currently is about one-third done

EVOS 30th Anniversary Commemorative Film Clip for social media and EVOS 30th Anniversary Commemorative Film Poster
These products will be created upon completion of the film.

Two-panel Traveling Display
Drafts of the traveling display panels are complete; currently in review process.

Venues contacted

• Alaska SeaLife Center	Seward
• Alaska Marine Highway System	Gulf of Alaska/Southeast
• Anchorage Museum	Anchorage
• Anchorage School District	Anchorage
• Baranov Museum	Kodiak
• Cordova Center	Cordova
• Pratt Museum	Homer
• Valdez Museum	Valdez
• USFS Begich Boggs Visitor Center	Portage
• Crooked Creek Visitor Center	Valdez
• Kodiak NWR Visitor Center	Kodiak
• Prince William Sound Science Center	Cordova
• Kenai Watershed Forum	Soldotna
• Kenai Fjords National Park Visitor Center	Seward
• Alaska Forum on the Environment	Anchorage
• Alaska Marine Science Symposium	Anchorage

Woods will continue to contact other potential venues in the spill area.

Interpretive Panels at Mineral Creek, Diamond Creek and Eshamy Bay
Work on these interpretive displays are in the initial stages. They are being developed with a focus on the EVOSTC's rationale for purchase/protection and will be similar to the Eagle Rock panels in format. Some highlights that will be included for each of the sites:

- Diamond Creek – This parcel enhances recreational opportunities by providing improved access to a large section of beach that prior to purchase was inaccessible to the public. This large wooded parcel is located on a bluff overlooking Cook Inlet and provides habitat for nesting bald eagles.
- Eshamy Bay – This location is among the highest ranked parcels in the oil spill area, based on restoration benefit.
- Mineral Creek – This anadromous stream provides spawning and rearing habitat for pink and sockeye salmon. The parcel contains extensive wetlands and several bald eagle nests. These attributes and the location of the parcel provide opportunities for the

residents of Valdez to enjoy recreational activities, such as bird and wildlife viewing, hiking, wild food gathering, and much needed beach access.

Federal agency collaboration
ADNR has initiated contact with Trustee Council agencies' interpretive offices to request ideas on outreach projects. Hsieh will be part of any meeting(s).

- Peter Christian – National Park Service
- Annette Heckert – USFS
- Katrina Liebich – USFWS
- Kevin Painter – USFWS

PAC discussion – Outreach

Eilo abstained from this discussion, given his role with the Alaska Forum on the Environment.

Are there other school districts that should be included? What about the Kenai Peninsula College?

Other PAC discussion:

There was general consensus that this was a good meeting.

PAC Motions:

Motion: Andersen-Faulkner introduced a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Second by French. **Motion carried**.

Motion: Andersen-Faulkner introduced a motion to approve the April 2, 2018, meeting summary. Second by Studebaker. **Motion carried**.

Motion: Andersen-Faulkner introduced a motion recommending that the Trustee Council approve the FY19 Annual EVOSTC Budget (19190100). Second by Bauer. **Motion carried**.

Motion: Fandrei introduced a motion that the Trustee Council approve the 2019 Work Plan as proposed, with the addition of $50,000 for the Whitehead Project. Second by French. **Motion carried**.

Motion: Studebaker introduced a motion that the Trustee Council reauthorize the habitat enhancement proposals, including two new projects. Second by Bauer. **Motion carried**.

Motion: Studebaker introduced a motion to recommend the Trustee Council approve funding for the four proposed habitat protection parcels. Second by Andersen-Faulkner. **Motion carried.**

Motion: Andersen-Faulkner introduced a motion to adjourn. Second by French. **Motion carried.**

Closing Remarks:

Hsieh noted that the Trustees are always interested in individual comments. It must be clear, however, that these are individual comments and do not represent the entire PAC.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Eilo at 11:40 a.m.

I. FOLLOW-UP:

1. The draft PAC meeting notes and recommendations will be distributed to the EVOS Trustee Council prior to their next meeting, which will be held on October 17, 2018, in Anchorage. The DFO and the PAC Chair will attend the meeting. The DFO will update the Trustee Council on the status of filling the 2018-2020 PAC committee seats. The Chair will summarize the results of the September 26, 2018, PAC meeting. The PAC members are welcome to attend in-person or telephonically.

J. NEXT MEETINGS:

Trustee Council Meeting (Anchorage on October 17, 2018)

K. ATTACHMENTS (provided to PAC members prior to the meeting):

1. September 26, 2018, *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council (EVOSTC) Public Advisory Committee (PAC) draft meeting agenda.

2. April 2, 2018, *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council (EVOSTC) Public Advisory Committee (PAC) draft meeting summary.

3. Draft FY 2019 EVOSTC Annual Budget

4. EVOSTC Draft FY17 – FY21 Work Plan for Restoration, Research and Monitoring Projects: Fiscal Year 2019

5. Habitat Restoration Proposals

6. Habitat Parcel Benefits Reports

L. CERTIFICATION:

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PAC Chairperson **Date**

DRAFT