

## Gulf of Alaska Keeper

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### Progress Report

**Project Number:** 12120116

**Project Title:** Gulf of Alaska Keeper Tsunami Debris Cleanup Project

**PI Name:** Chris Pallister

**Time period covered:** May 8 through September 11, 2013

**Date of Report:** September 11, 2013

**Report prepared by:** Chris Pallister

**Project website (if applicable):** goak.org


Gulf of Alaska Keeper's (GoAK) cleanup crew has been cleaning PWS beaches since May 8, targeting Japanese Tsunami Marine Debris (JTMD). To date 16 landing craft loads of debris have been hauled to Whittier where the debris was then transported by Alaska Waste to Central Alaska Recyclers' facility in Anchorage for sorting. Non-recyclable items were then sent on to the Anchorage landfill. Over 64 tons of debris have already been removed during this project. That is approximately 650-cubic yards of debris. The cleanup crew continues to work finishing the last stretch of southeast shoreline on Knight Island. We expect another one to two loads will come into Whittier before the project is complete. Over 300 miles of targeted beaches have been cleaned in the EVOSTC funded effort.

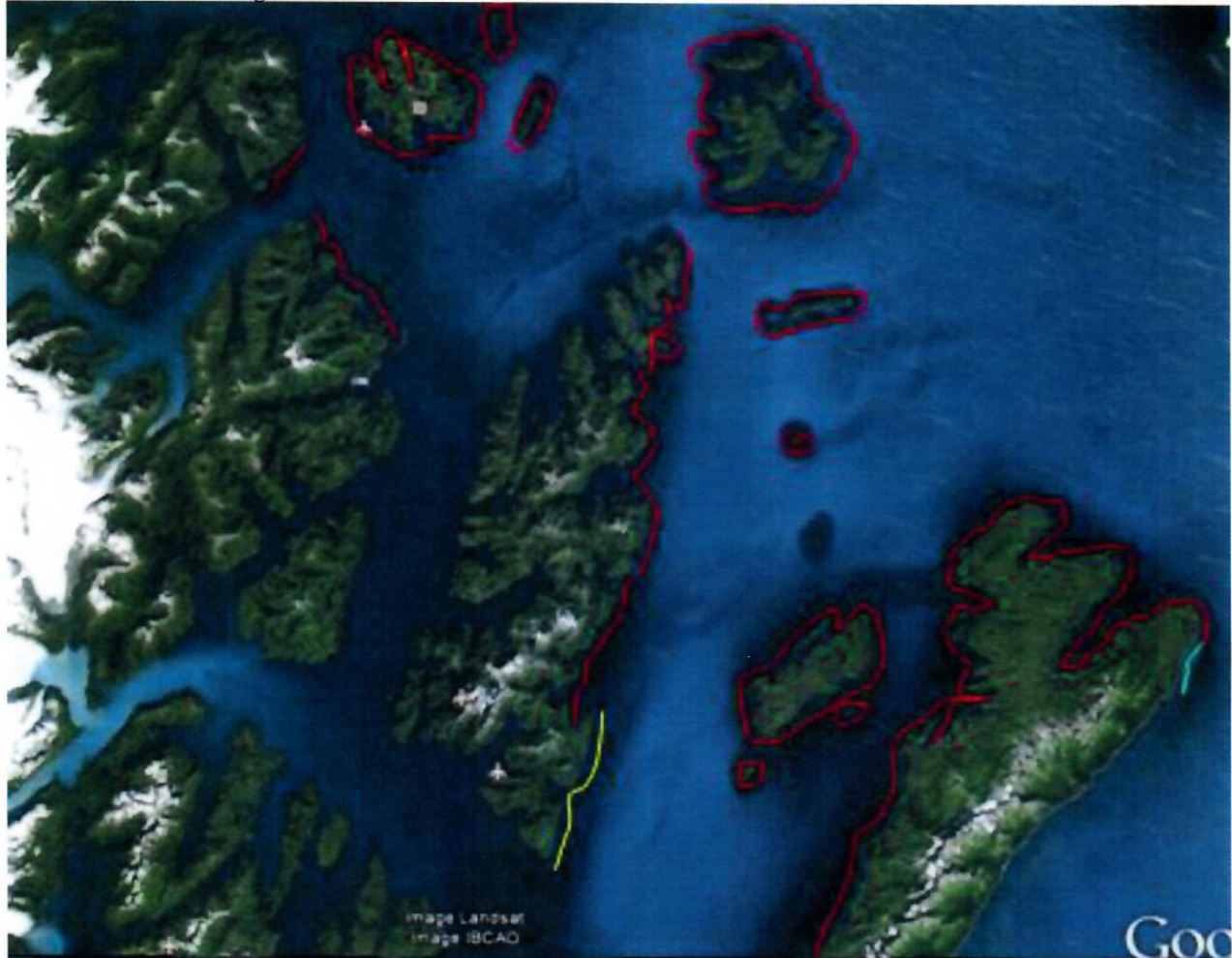
With the exception of a few miles around the tip of Zaikof Point at the northeast corner of Montague Island, all of this shoreline had been cleaned by GoAK within a few years of the arrival of the JTMD. Most of the volume of the debris collected on previously cleaned debris consisted of Styrofoam, urethane foam, other construction insulation foam, large aquaculture buoys, drums, fuel cans, and other types of plastic containers. Many thousands of Japanese plastic bottles were also recovered during this cleanup.

The density of debris collected on shorelines within inner PWS was a fraction of the debris removed from the shoreline around Zaikof Point on Hinchinbrook Entrance. Over half of the debris collected for EVOSTC this season came from just a couple of miles of shoreline near Zaikof Point. The volume of debris in that area exceeds 300-cubic yards or 30 tons per mile. That is considerably higher than the 20 tons we had estimated. At least 50% of the total debris volume is JTMD, but as the JTMD is relatively lightweight, it is only about 15 to 20% of the total weight of debris removed, the balance being derelict fishing gear and many other kinds of plastic debris. GoAK spent as much effort cleaning the few miles around Zaikof Point as they did the other 300 miles cleaned this season.

The 14 PWS marine debris monitoring sites conclusively demonstrated that foam JTMD continued to wash onto PWS beaches over the winter of 2012/2013. The total amount of debris on the monitoring sites decreased by about a third compared to the previous year, but the amount of foam debris remained extraordinarily high, over 25% of the total debris by weight and, of course, much higher by volume. However, we saw very little new foam debris washing onto the beaches during the summer.

We have seen an increase of heavier debris such as laden drums of chemicals appearing on shore this season, primarily on Gulf of Alaska shorelines such as outer Montague and the Kenai Peninsula. Numerous steel 55-gallon drums had Japanese labels on them. We now have several stashes of unknown chemicals awaiting proper disposal. ADEC hazardous-material personnel inspected and removed several drums containing hazardous chemicals that GoAK found on Peak Island. The stashed drums and containers of acid, numerous petroleum products, and unknown chemicals will need to be removed by proper authorities.

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Being Cleaned for EVOSTC   
Cleaned for Alaska Legislature 



PWS shorelines cleaned during 2013 JTMD cleanup. Not shown on this chart, north and eastern Latouche Island, the southwest corner of Elrington Island, and all of Axel Lind Island, Little Axel Lind Island and Bald Headed Chris Island have also been cleaned.

When the cleanup crew is done working at the end of September, a full report will be submitted. The photos below show some of the debris removed and work done this summer.



Derelict dock with encased hazardous chemical drums removed from Naked Island



Cutting up and removing derelict boat hull from Naked Island



Street marker from Japanese tsunami zone found on Naked Island



Load of tsunami debris removed from Green Island



JTMD Styrofoam on Zaikof Point, Montague Island



Tsunami debris collected on Zaikof Point



Transferring JTMD on Zaikof Point



Japanese building components in Rocky Bay, Montague Island



A pile of JTMD on Zaikof Point



One of numerous steel drums found during the 2013 cleanup