

September 21, 2022

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
4230 University Drive, Suite 220
Anchorage, AK 99508-4650

Dear Federal and State EVOS Trustees,

On behalf of the EVOS Trustee Council Public Advisory Committee, I am writing to follow up after our September 7, 2022 meeting.

At our meeting that day, we were asked to consider two action items which came about as a result of the EVOS Trustees' meetings in October 2021 and January 2022. The action items were:

1. Review of a general operating budget for EVOS TC staff and a long-term research program management budget for contracted project management.
2. Review of the Draft Resolution regarding the Restoration Reserve which would revoke the March 3, 1999 Resolution and move forward with amending Public Law No. 106 – 113 to combine the remaining funding in the EVOSTC's Habitat and Research accounts.

We recommended full funding of the FY23-FY33 general operating budget request made by EVOSTC staff as it was submitted. We also recommended full funding for the FY23-FY31 long-term research program management budget. Staff provided a detailed, thorough budget and thoroughly developed work plan for managing the projects that are currently underway and those that were recently initiated.

We spent most of our meeting time on September 7, 2022 discussing the merits and consequences of the second item, combining Habitat and Research funding accounts. You have learned by now of the result of our vote: two in favor, one abstention, two opposed, and two in favor that may be recused because of a potential conflict of interest (The DOI Ethics Office is currently conducting an investigation).

Several Public Advisory Committee members expressed a high level of frustration at finding ourselves in this position, given that we had spent two days in September, 2021 going through each proposal and making recommendations for funding based on what we understood to be the amounts available at the time. Those recommendations were disregarded, as was the EVOS Trustee Council's legacy of investing in long-term scientific research on injured marine resources of Prince William Sound.

Now this year we were asked to make a very difficult choice between making a recommendation to combine subaccounts to allow projects funded by the Research subaccount to progress beyond FY26, or to honor the original intent of the March 1999 resolution and the long-term research and monitoring request for proposals that was issued in 2021 which would result in the

Research subaccount being drained by the end of FY25 and millions remaining in the Habitat Subaccount.

If the EVOS Trustee Council decides to take another tack, and reconsider spending decisions made last year, we would be pleased to assist in that process.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to meeting with you on October 5, 2022.

Sincerely,

EVOSTC Public Advisory Committee Members

Kristin Carpenter, Chair
Mike Stekoll, Vice Chair
Amanda Bauer
Cynthia Berns
R.J. Kopchak
Linda Leary
Stacey Simmons
George Skladal
John Whissel