



Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council
General Restoration, Habitat Enhancement, Habitat Protection, and Facilities Projects
Quarterly Project Reporting Form

**Detailed instructions for each section below are given in Section II. Quarterly Project Reports in the Reporting Policy on the website, <https://evostc.state.ak.us/policies-procedures/reporting-procedures/>*

Project Number: 24220610

Project Title: Kenai Peninsula Stream Watch

Principal Investigator(s): Brandon Drzazgowski (Stream Watch Coordinator at The Kenai Watershed Forum)

Reporting Periods and Due Dates:

<i>Reporting Period</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
February, March, April	June 1
May, June, July	September 1
August, September, October	December 1
November, December, January	March 1

Submission Date: June 1st, 2024

Project Website: <https://www.kenaiwatershed.org/stream-watch/>

Please check all the boxes that apply to the current reporting period.

- Project progress is on schedule.**
- Project progress is delayed**
- Budget reallocation request.**
- Personnel changes.**



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1. Summary of Work Performed:

Objectives/Project Success:

Listed below are objectives that were met or partially met during the reporting period, including a short description of the methods used to accomplish said objective.

Objective A – Recruit, Train, and enroll at least 60 volunteers annually to participate in the program.

Recruitment for the program began during the reporting period. Flyers for the program describing activities and benefits for volunteers were produced to help give the public more information on Stream Watch. Flyers were posted at high traffic locations in the local area and were posted on the program’s social media accounts. Due to flyers and help from previous volunteers, new members of the public reached out to Stream Watch Coordinators and showed interest in the program. These individuals were provided with a more detailed explanation of the program, and the appropriate information needed to become a volunteer.

Meetings were held with the Forest Service to discuss in-person orientation training content, timing, and location. Once the details were set for in-person orientation, the information was sent out to previous volunteers and the public through the use of a MailChimp newsletter, program social media, and word of mouth. In-person orientation is scheduled for June 1st in Cooper Landing. At the end of the reporting period, 37 individuals have RSVPed for in-person training. Beyond in-person training, one volunteer has already completed the online version of orientation in preparation for the volunteer season.

Objective C – Protect riparian habitat and create a culture of stewardship among members of the public by providing consistent educational messaging to river users at project sites, in social and print media, and through on-site signage:

During the reporting period, KWF Staff, Brandon Drazgowski and Ben Meyer, were invited to present at a Kenai/Soldotna joint Chamber of Commerce meeting. The presentation centered around a local conservation easement and work that was performed there by the Stream Watch program in the spring of 2023. Beyond information about the program, information about the importance of riparian vegetation, restoration techniques, monitoring techniques, educational signage, and information about and thank yous to funders (including EVOSTC) were also provided during the presentation. Local news also chose to highlight the presentation and project to help spread educational information to members of the public that were not in attendance at the Chamber meeting.

Stream Watch has continued educational messaging efforts through the use of Instagram and Facebook social media accounts. The Stream Watch program has regularly placed educational photos and messages on programmatic social media accounts that include information on Stream



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Watch locations, the importance of riparian vegetation, projects performed by volunteers over the volunteer season, and the impacts of litter on various ecosystems. Stream Watch has seen steady growth in audience on both platforms and has utilized partner social media accounts to help the program reach more users.

Please view program social media accounts at the links below:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kpstreamwatch>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/kpstreamwatch?igsh=ZHE5NzN0MmZnNjc3>

Objective G – Continue original efforts to expand Stream Watch to the southern Kenai Peninsula by hiring a seasonal southern coordinator position in order to expand partnerships, increase critical outreach, build institutional capacity, provide high quality engagement for volunteers, and reduce personnel turnover:

After planning meetings between the Kenai Watershed Forum’s Educational and Stream Watch programs during the last reporting period, it was decided that a technician was to be hired and shared between the Jr. Stream Watch program and the regular Stream Watch program. Hiring was performed over the course of the last three months. Kenai Watershed Forum has officially hired Alexis McDonald as the Jr. Stream Watch Technician. Alexis’s role will be to help implement the Jr. Stream Watch program, coordinate high school age volunteers and expose them to careers in conservation. The remainder of her time will be spent with the Stream Watch program to aid with expansion to the lower Kenai Peninsula and to increase the capacity of the program over the course of the summer season. Alexis is scheduled to start employment with KWF in late May.

Objective J - Strengthen relationships with communities and agencies served on the southern peninsula including Ninilchik Village and enroll at least one new member in the Steering Committee from an Alaskan Native Community:

The Stream Watch program has connected with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe to establish a stewardship day during the 2024 summer season. Meetings were held with Alana Shaw to discuss event activities and dates. The Kenaitze Indian Tribe has shown interest in increasing their involvement with the Stream Watch program. Solidification of event details is scheduled to occur during the next reporting period.

Objective K – Support current program activities by contributing additional staff time and funding for supplies and volunteer training.

Stream Watch Coordinator Brandon Drzazgowski spent the majority of the reporting period assessing and recreating online orientation videos. Much of the online orientation content was re-recorded and added to the online training course to help provide volunteers with fresh information to help them become ambassadors for Stream Watch. New videos helped to reframe



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content presented by the program in a more concise format. Shortening the videos also helps to keep the attention of volunteers during training and allows for a higher retention of information.

Meetings were held with the Forest Service to discuss in-person orientation. A timeline was created for the in-person event, a location was secured, and guest speakers were contacted. A majority of the in-person orientation was planned during the reporting period, but will continue to be finalized and implemented throughout the following reporting period. Information about the training was also provided to previous volunteers and members of the public to help recruit participants.

During the meeting, USFS and KWF staff also discussed supply needs for the 2024 season. A list of supplies was created to give a better idea of expenses for the coming season. Beyond discussing supplies needed in program and caches for ambassadors, new uniforms were purchased for the program and sent out for embroidery. Ambassador volunteers will receive new uniforms after completing their training.

Objective L – Leverage EVOSTC funding to obtain additional investments in program expansion and to further develop Stream Watch to maximize the beneficial impacts to natural resources and services:

During the previous reporting period, Stream Watch submitted a grant application to the National Forest Foundation in attempts to fund a seasonal intern and supplies required by the program. Inside of this application, the Stream Watch Coordinator's time, funded by EVOSTC, was leveraged to meet the matching fund requirements of the application. Some travel funding provided by EVOSTC was also used as a match towards the application. During this reporting period, KWF was notified that the proposal was approved.

Similar to the National Forest Foundation grant, KWF also applied for a grant to support Stream Watch through the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership. Stream Watch utilized travel and the coordinator's time, funded by EVOSTC, as match to help leverage more funds for personnel time, supplies, and travel. This grant was submitted during the reporting period. Although an application ranking meeting was held during the reporting period and outlook is positive, the official answer on the application will not be announced until a future reporting period.

Deviation from Original Objectives:

No deviations from original objectives were seen during the reporting period. Stream Watch was able to perform on schedule and have an impact in the appropriate areas over the spring season.



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Problems/Unusual Developments:

The most notable problem/unusual development during the reporting period was staff turnover at the US Forest Service. The USFS houses two positions that have a large hand in the facilitation/implementation of the Stream Watch program, particularly at northern river sites. These positions are the USFS Stream Watch Coordinator and the Interagency Coordinator. Kenai Watershed Forum was notified that both personnel in these positions had accepted new positions and were moving on from the program. Due to hiring delays, there is no guarantee that these positions would be filled during the upcoming 2024 season. Vacant positions at the Forest Service have put added pressure on the Kenai Watershed Forum to adopt various tasks regularly covered by the government agency. This has caused coordinators to reassess planning and facilitation of the program for the upcoming summer season. It is likely that regular operations will be hindered due to less staff being able to support volunteers. However, multiple meetings have been held between the USFS and Kenai Watershed Forum to discuss which tasks KWF has the capacity to adopt, which tasks must be handled by other personnel at the USFS, and which tasks may not be possible for this season. A majority of regular coordination tasks have been assigned to new staff for the season, and little alteration of the program is expected during the season. With this being said, some unusual developments are expected over the course of the volunteer season as a result of the personnel turnover.

There have been no other unusual developments or problems experienced throughout the reporting period. Overall, the late-winter/spring season went smoothly.

Additional information:

One piece of additional information that occurred over the reporting period was the hiring of seasonal interns at the Kenai Watershed Forum. Each year, college age students are hired to help with the various programs administered by KWF. Usually, two of these interns are designated to the Stream Watch program to help with implementation and volunteer coordination. This year, however, interns will be on a rotational schedule to allow them experience with all the programs that KWF has to offer. Multiple interviews were held and 4 individuals were selected for the 2024 season. Interns joined KWF staff for a virtual meeting to discuss the summer in greater detail, go over what items would be best to pack for the summer, and answer any questions that the seasonal staff had. Interns will start their official employment with KWF in the next reporting period.

Another piece of information worth mentioning is the planning of stewardship days for the 2024 summer season. Stream Watch staff has been coordinating with multiple organizations interested in volunteering with the program. A large portion of this reporting period has been spent planning with these groups to coordinate a variety of stewardship days centered around revegetation, litter clean-up, invasive species management, and restoration work. A vast majority



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of these stewardship activities will occur in the following reporting period to help support natural areas on the Kenai Peninsula.

2. Abstract (200 word max):

Stream Watch had a busy reporting period in preparation for the even busier summer season. Over the course of the last three months, A large portion of time was dedicated to recording new training videos for the program’s online volunteer training. Videos were recorded to replace old content, present information in a more concise manner, and remove repetitive messaging. Preparation of the in-person orientation also began during this reporting period through meetings with partners to discuss location, timeline, content, and recruitment of the general public through various formats. A new seasonal staff member, Alexis McDonald, was hired to help increase the capacity of the program and support expansion of the program's geographical reach. Alexis will split her time coordinating high school age volunteers to fill gaps seen by regular volunteers and regular ambassadors. Stream Watch continued to present messaging to the public through public presentations and social media posts. EVOSTC funding was leveraged to help obtain further funding for program personnel and supplies. The biggest challenge that occurred throughout the reporting period was the departure of major partner personnel from the USFS.

3. Coordination and Collaboration:

Listed below are project partners with whom the Stream Watch program paired during the reporting period, their involvement with the program, and the proper contact listed.

US Forest Service:

The Forest Service (USFS) is the Kenai Watershed Forum’s main partner for the facilitation of the Stream Watch program. The Forest Service helps run the program jointly with the Kenai Watershed Forum during the busy summer season, by managing the project area inside the Russian River Confluence area (including the Russian River Campground and the Russian River Ferry) with the use of the USFS’s Stream Watch Volunteer Coordinator. This project partner helps to schedule volunteers at the Russian River Confluence area, assists with the maintenance and removal of habitat fencing along the Russian River, and records data collected from volunteers inside the confluence area.

Meetings were held between the USFS and KWF to discuss volunteer orientation content/timeline, supply needs for the upcoming season, and how the transition of USFS personnel will look. The Forest Service also helped to record a portion of the online orientation videos housed on the KWF website to help volunteers that are unable to attend the in-person orientation fully prepare for the summer season. Finally, the Forest Service helped to establish a small number of stewardship days for the following reporting period, including a habitat fencing installation day with the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers club.

Contact:

Amanda Goss – Stream Watch Volunteer Coordinator (Forest Service)
Email: amanda.goss@usda.gov
Office Number: 907.288.7747



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Trout Unlimited:

The local Trout Unlimited chapter (Kenai Peninsula Trout Unlimited) has a similar aim as the Stream Watch program. We have begun to work more closely together in order to expand the impact of both organizations. Kenai Watershed Forum and Trout Unlimited are hoping to partner for stewardship projects and educational efforts around the Kenai Peninsula.

During the reporting period, meetings were held with TU's Kenai Engagement Coordinator to discuss possible partnerships and events for the 2024 summer season. Stream Watch has committed to assist TU with a riparian planting day located at a Stream Watch site. This planting day will add a habitat fencing location in the Soldotna area for Stream Watch volunteers to help maintain while spending time with the program. The organizations are looking for other ways to work together in the future.

Contact:

Alexa Millward – Kenai Engagement Coordinator

Email: alexa.millward@tu.org

Office Number: 208-479-5392

4. Response to EVOSTC Review, Recommendations and Comments:

No recommendations or comments were submitted during the previous process reporting period of the project. If recommendations or comments are submitted after this reporting period, they will be properly addressed in the next reporting cycle.



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5. Budget:

Budget Category:	Proposed FY 22	Proposed FY 23	Proposed FY 24	Proposed FY 25	Proposed FY 26	5-YR TOTAL PROPOSED	QUARTERLY EXPENDITURES	ACTUAL CUMULATIVE
Personnel	\$71,430	\$66,225	\$66,225	\$61,020	\$55,815	\$320,715	\$9,550	\$79,713
Travel	\$4,838	\$4,838	\$4,838	\$4,838	\$4,838	\$24,192	\$4,628	\$7,717
Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commodities	\$1,950	\$1,950	\$1,950	\$1,950	\$1,950	\$9,750	\$0	\$2,740
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Indirect Costs (28.25%)	\$22,097	\$20,626	\$20,626	\$19,156	\$17,685	\$100,191	\$4,005	\$25,473
SUBTOTAL	\$100,315	\$93,640	\$93,640	\$86,964	\$80,289	\$454,848	\$18,183	\$115,643
General Administration (9% of subtotal)	\$9,028	\$8,428	\$8,428	\$7,827	\$7,226	\$40,936	\$1,636	\$10,408
PROJECT TOTAL	\$109,343	\$102,067	\$102,067	\$94,791	\$87,515	\$495,784	\$19,819	\$126,051
Other Resources (In-Kind Funds)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

INSTRUCTIONS: This summary page provides a five-year overview (FY 22-26) of proposed funding and actual cumulative spending which includes the non-trustee agency and trustee agency worksheets. **This Summary Page should automatically populate as the formulas reference the cells in the non-trustee agency and trustee agency worksheets. Please make sure the totals given are correct.** The column titled 'Actual Cumulative' will be updated each fiscal year and included in the annual report (include information on the total amount actually spent for all completed years of the project). On the Project Annual Report Form, if any line item exceeds a 10% deviation from the originally-proposed amount; provide detail regarding the reason for the deviation.

COMMENTS: