



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: 24220502

Project Title: Clean Water Act Assessment of Beaches with Lingering Oil

Principal Investigator(s): Terri Lomax, ADEC Water Quality Program Manager

Reporting Periods and Due Dates: August, September, and October 2024

| <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: November 27, 2024

Project Website: <https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/evos-lingering-oil/>

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

- Project progress is on schedule.**
- Project progress is delayed**
- Budget reallocation request for this reporting period.**
- Personnel changes.**

1. Summary of Work Performed:



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DEC utilized the literature completed during the previous quarter to guide the development of a draft contract for the final stages of this grant project. The end result of the contract is to draft and finalize a listing methodology for lingering oil, associated technical supports documents, and gather data and conduct a Clean Water Act assessment of Exxon Valdez impacted beaches. The contract was put in place in May 2024 and work begin immediately. DEC identified priority and preferred approaches for the development of a listing methodologies and using existing data available, the contractor identified options for the development of the methodology. DEC and its contractor then began working through scale, magnitude, and durations questions for each parameter identified in the listing methodology.

Objective #1 Identifying waters of concern.

Task A. Identify Waters of Concern.

Status: Ongoing. DEC recently submitted and received approval for a proposed amendment addressing the continuation of this task. Through the literature review, DEC recognized that the identification of waters of concern will continue to evolve throughout the life of this grant.

Task B. Develop a set of standards suitable to gauge recovery and compliance with water quality standards.

Status: Initiated. Utilizing information gained from the Literature Review, DEC determined the best course of action is the development of a standalone listing methodology (LM) rather than updating a current petroleum hydrocarbon LM. The contract was initiated on April 25, 2024, it outlined the following tasks:

1. Identify Listing Methodology Options

Description: The contractor will schedule a kick-off meeting via MS Teams (or another agreed-on platform) with the DEC project team no later than one (1) week after the contract award. Assume the kick-off meeting will last one (1) hour to discuss the project expectations and process, review existing documents shared by DEC, confirm timelines and deliverable due dates, and address any immediate questions.

Completed- Meeting outlined expectations.

2. Develop Draft LM and Technical Approach Document

Description: With DEC selection of one LM approach, begin the development of the selected listing methodology and associated technical approach document. The LM style should be geared to the public and easily consumed while the technical approach document will outline the legal and statistical merits of the LM to be used by DEC.

Pending: DEC reviewed the merits of different approaches, discussed scale of potential attainment or impairment listings and provided direction on the selected approach. The draft documents are due Dec 11, 2024.

3. Finalize LM and Technical Approach



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Description: DEC will utilize the final draft of the LM and TA to begin the required public outreach. DEC will share both documents with EPA and conduct a public comment period on the two documents. The contractor will create outreach material to assist in explaining or educating the public about the chosen LM approach.

Once the public comment period and EPA review is completed, DEC will provide comments and edits to the contractor. The contractor will incorporate comments and/or edits received from DEC into revised deliverables for final DEC review. An additional project team meeting may be needed to review comments and edits.

4. Data Analysis

Description: Utilizing the data requirements set out in the final LM, the contractor will solicit and gather data from various sources on EVOS impacted beaches. The final list of beaches must include currently listed beaches as impaired by DEC. Selected beaches will include locations where lingering oil is predicted, observed or known to occur. DEC is focused on the nearshore and shorelines environments, not open marine environments.

The contractor will analyze the collected data against the final LM and draft proposed statuses using DEC's categories as identified in Integrated Report.

DEC finalized the definition of Listing Oil specific to our project. This definition will allow DEC to differentiate between beaches impacted by freshly oil versus lingering oil.

Task C. Compile available information regarding impaired waters

Status: No work to report on this Objective/Task.

Task D. Develop GIS map

Status: Ongoing. Through the annotated bibliography contract, DEC began the process of compiling data with geolocations from several documents for use in the planned Clean Water Act assessment of impacted beaches. Initial work showed disagreement between DEC listed impaired beaches, field data, and model predictions of locations with lingering oil. This task has been extended in recognition of evolving list of waters of concern. Draft and final GIS maps will be created during several tasks outlined in the most recent contract.

Objective #2 Updating Clean Water Act status of impaired beaches.

Task A. Develop listing methodology.

Status: A contract was put in place to assist DEC in the development of a listing methodology and technical approach document on April 25, 2024. The contractor and DEC met several times to discuss technical and federal requirements of impairments listings and potential approaches that could be employed by DEC. The contractor provided three options for DEC consideration. These options considered the 1) best available data, ranked on age of data; 2) weight of evidence; and 3) preferred data. These approaches considered narrative criteria, sediment chemistry data, SCAT data, and model-based data.



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DEC evaluated these suggested approaches and identified a preferred approach for the development of the LM. This approach prioritizes multiple lines of evidence (data). In this approach field observations are the highest tier of evidence, followed by sediment chemistry, biological data, modelling outputs, and an overwhelming evidence policy. DEC and the contractor are determining the parameter thresholds, age, and scale for each tier of evidence.

Task B. Evaluate Data.

Status: No work to report on this Objective/Task.

Objective 3. Stakeholder Involvement during this reporting period.

Task A. Communication Plan.

Status: Completed. DEC identified communities and opportunities to share resources and learn more about community concerns related to lingering oil.

Task B. Public Engagement.

Status: Ongoing. DEC will continue to investigate options to present to local communities or environmental managers from affected EVOS communities. A factsheet summarizing the project was prepared for the Alaska Forum on the Environment for February 2024.

DEC developed a listserv to reach out to interested members of the public. Project updates and opportunities for engagement will be noticed here in addition to the usual channels for public engagement. The Literature Review was shared with via our list serv.

The previous contractor, Geosyntec, was granted permission to share their work at the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry North America conference in June 2024. The title of the proposed session is “Lingering Oil and Lasting Impacts: Prince William Sound 35 Years After Exxon Valdez”.

No additional communication or engagement occurred during this period.

2. Abstract:

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation initiated the Clean Water Act Assessment of Beaches with Lingering Oil grant in February 2023. During this quarter DEC, in conjunction with a contractor, finalized a definition of lingering oil. This definition is needed to address when different Alaska Water Quality Standards (WQS) apply. New work was initiated on drafting a framework for reviewing data against WQS, this is called a listing methodology. DEC selected an integrated approach with multiple tiers of data to account for the variety and lack of complete datasets for any one beach location.



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3. Coordination and Collaboration:

ADEC Division of Water coordinated with the Division of Spill Prevention and Response (SPAR) to develop the draft contract to ensure state regulations regarding oil cleanup standards, contaminated sites, and impaired waters are adhered to. DEC Division of Water invited SPAR and the Division of Law to provide comments on a draft lingering oil definition. Additionally, we provided the draft definition to the EVOS Trustee Council for comments during the September EVOSTC meeting.

4. Response to EVOSTC Review, Recommendations and Comments:

N/A

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 | | \$0 | \$59,481 | \$51,015 | \$51,783 | \$51,032 | \$213,311 | \$7,832 | \$96,868 |
| Travel | | \$0 | \$0 | \$6,640 | \$6,640 | \$6,640 | \$19,920 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Contractual | | \$0 | \$38,978 | \$93,426 | \$76,574 | \$0 | \$208,978 | \$22,418 | \$80,684 |
| Commodities | | \$0 | \$0 | \$750 | \$750 | \$0 | \$1,500 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Equipment | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Indirect Costs | Rate = 0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| SUBTOTAL | | \$0 | \$98,459 | \$151,831 | \$135,747 | \$57,672 | \$443,709 | \$30,249 | \$177,552 |
| General Administration (9% of subtotal) | | \$0 | \$8,861 | \$13,665 | \$12,217 | \$5,191 | \$39,934 | \$705 | \$12,152 |
| PROJECT TOTAL | | \$0 | \$107,320 | \$165,496 | \$147,964 | \$62,863 | \$483,643 | \$30,954 | \$173,217 |
| Other Resources (In-Kind Funds) | | | \$6,624 | \$6,823 | \$7,027 | \$7,238 | \$27,712 | \$0 | \$915 |