



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: 25220612

Project Title: Eyak Lake Weir Restoration

Principal Investigator(s): Kate Morse, CRWP; Steve Namitz, USFS; Jeff Stutzke, DOT

Reporting Period: February 2025 - April 2025

Submission Date: May 29, 2025

Project Website:

<https://copperriver.org/programs/fish-habitat-restoration/restoration/eyak-lake/eyak-lake-weir/>
and

<https://copperriver.org/eyak-lake-weir-project-page/> Password: available upon request

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

Project progress is on schedule.

1. Summary of Work Performed:

During this quarter, the Copper River Watershed Project (CRWP) and partners advanced strategic negotiations and implementation planning for the Eyak Lake Weir Replacement Project. While the project experienced delays due to federal funding freezes affecting the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) award to The Eyak Corporation (TEC), coordinated actions were taken to mitigate setbacks and move the project forward.

In February and March, CRWP staff worked closely with TEC, USFWS, DOT, and the City of Cordova to plan the contract structure that would allow procurement of critical materials while awaiting the federal funding release. Options were considered for the steel sheet pile procurement, ultimately leading to a preferred approach in which the contractor (Granite Construction) will procure and store materials with flexibility for resale or reuse. This will help manage risk and retain contractor engagement despite funding uncertainty.

In response to the ongoing federal funding freeze threatening the Eyak Lake Weir Replacement Project, the Copper River Watershed Project launched a public donation appeal in early 2025 to



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mobilize community support and private contributions. The campaign highlighted the urgent ecological and economic consequences of inaction, including the loss of salmon spawning habitat, threats to Cordova's drinking water supply, and the broader impact on commercial and subsistence fisheries. Through social media, CRWP's website, and a dedicated donation page, the appeal invited Alaskans and supporters nationwide to help bridge the funding gap and ensure this critical infrastructure project stays on track.

On April 29, 2025, CRWP executed a limited notice-to-proceed contract with Granite for the procurement of sheet pile. Engineering consultants DOWL supported contract negotiations. A full contract award is pending and will be finalized once federal funds are available.

CRWP also issued a formal Notice of Intent to Negotiate in April and expects to issue a Notice of Contract Award in early May.

CRWP submitted public comments in March 2025 on the DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), after discovering the Eyak Lake Weir was listed. This unexpected inclusion became a strategic opportunity: public pressure was encouraged to urge FHWA to finalize its agreement with TEC. CRWP also engaged directly with Commissioner Anderson at DOT, requesting state assistance in advocating for swift federal action. In April 2025, Representative Stutes' office sent a letter to Senator Murkowski urging support and funding for the weir replacement project.

This week (May 15th), confirmation was received that TEC's FHWA grant agreement is scheduled for signature on May 21, 2025. This is expected to release approximately \$3.5 million in construction funds and allow full project mobilization. Due to the increase of construction costs (materials costs) since the initial project estimates and to ensure healthy contingency to keep the project on track, CRWP is still actively pursuing additional funding sources and during this reporting period submitted a grant for BIL funding through NOAA, a proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and is waiting on funding decisions.



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Outreach and Education:

Outreach efforts continued robustly during this quarter, with the Copper River Watershed Project (CRWP) engaging the public and decision-makers to sustain visibility and support for the Eyak Lake Weir Replacement Project. Public education and partner communication remained central, particularly as the project navigated uncertainty due to frozen federal funding.

In March 2025, CRWP issued a call to action urging public comment on including the Eyak Lake Weir project in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). This unexpected listing provided a strategic opportunity to elevate the project's profile and generate pressure to release stalled Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding. Partners and residents were encouraged to submit comments via the DOT portal, and many adopted provided talking points drafted by CRWP.

Additionally, CRWP, in partnership with The Eyak Corporation, worked closely with Alaska State Representative Louise Stutes and Senator Gary Stevens to secure state-level advocacy. On April 22, 2025, Rep. Stutes and Sen. Stevens submitted a joint letter to Alaska's congressional delegation (Sen. Murkowski, Sen. Sullivan, and Rep. Begich) outlining the critical infrastructure role of the Eyak Lake Weir. The letter emphasized the economic, ecological, and public health impacts of the project's delay and urged federal agencies to unfreeze allocated funds. This outreach was a pivotal step in elevating the project's urgency on a national stage.

These efforts complemented ongoing local outreach. CRWP continued regular communication through e-newsletters, social media, and stakeholder engagement. CRWP STFF dedicated substantial time to explaining the weir's history and importance to prospective contractors and community members. The project remains a top priority in CRWP's external communications strategy.

In addition to direct outreach, CRWP benefited from some local earned media regarding the project. On February 14, 2025, *The Cordova Times* published an article titled "*Copper River Watershed's Eyak Lake Weir: Federal Funding Freeze Threatens Critical Infrastructure*" that detailed the risks of delayed funding and the project's regional importance. The article featured statements from CRWP, The Eyak Corporation, and other project partners, helping amplify public awareness about the ecological, cultural, and economic stakes of the weir replacement. This coverage played a key role in galvanizing community support and reinforcing the need for swift action from federal agencies. During the time CRWP also launched a funding campaign to support the weir project. Links to the campaign are below:

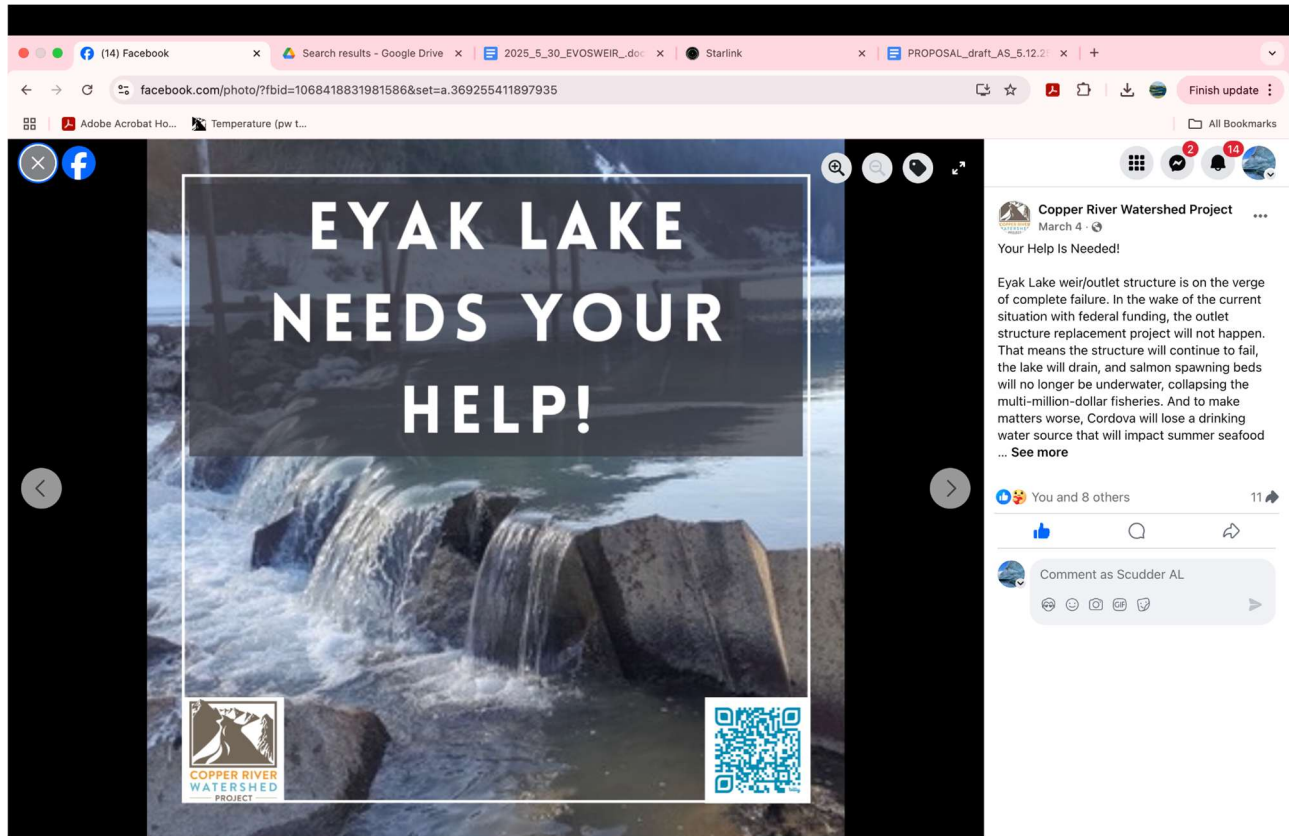
<https://copperriver.networkforgood.com/.../146365-copper...>



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<https://copperiver.org/.../fis.../eyak-lake/eyak-lake-weir/>



Facebook appeal for Eyak Lake Weir (March 4, 2025)

Project Design:

Design is complete, RFP process complete, negotiations and limited contract for procurement of sheet-pile completed.



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2. Abstract:

From February through April 2025, the Copper River Watershed Project (CRWP) focused on securing contracts, navigating delayed federal funding, and preparing for phased construction of the Eyak Lake Weir. CRWP executed a limited notice-to-proceed contract for sheet pile procurement on April 29, supported by DOWL, and initiated negotiations with the top-ranked bidder, Granite Construction. Concurrently, CRWP submitted public comments on the DOT STIP to advocate for FHWA's stalled funding agreement with The Eyak Corporation. By the end of the reporting period, TEC's FHWA grant signature was scheduled for May 21, ensuring the project can advance. CRWP remains on schedule through adaptive contracting and partner collaboration.



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3. Coordination and Collaboration:

This quarter involved high-level collaboration among key project partners to address complex funding and contracting challenges. CRWP, The Eyak Corporation (TEC), DOWL, USFWS, USFS, DOT, and the City of Cordova evaluated contracting strategies that would keep the project viable despite the federal funding freeze.

Notably, Kate Morse (CRWP), Amy Scudder (CRWP), Kirsten Valentine (USFWS), Kevin Johnson (City of Cordova), and engineers from DOWL convened in early April to develop a two-phase contracting strategy. CRWP coordinated communication with Granite and issued an Intent to Negotiate based on this guidance. Regular coordination with TEC and DOT ensured alignment in communications with FHWA. Additionally, CRWP leveraged public engagement by encouraging partners to comment on the STIP, supporting advocacy for FHWA's grant release.

These actions built on previous outreach and design work, maintaining momentum and stakeholder alignment.



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Brittany Blain/ADFG	Ben Wagner/DNR	Robert Mattson/DOT	Christy Mog/USFS
Jay Baumer/ADFG	Cliff Larson/DNR	Ryan Anderson/DOT	Kim Clark/USFS
Jeremy Botz/ADFG	Kim Bustillos/DNR	Mitch Paine/FEMA	Robes Parrish/USFS
Stormy Hought/ADFG	Tom Barrett/DNR	Erika Ammann/NOAA	Steve Namitz/USFS
Kevin Keith/ADFG	AJ Wait/DNR	Johnse Ostman/NOAA	Tim Marshall/USFS
Megan Marie/ADFG	Joni Sweetman/DNR	Angela Butler/NVE	Angela Coleman/USFS
Michael Mazzacavallo/ADFG	Daniel Adamczak/DOT	Matt Piche/NVE	Marguerite Tibbles/USFWS
Doug Bonham/ Field Data Technologies	David Fischer/DOT	Aaron Prussian/ Trout Unlimited	Anna Senecal/USFWS
Kevin Johnson/City of Cordova	Douglas Kolwaite/DOT	Pete Rand/PWSSC	Nate Clifton/USFWS
Sam Greenwood/City of Cordova	Jeff Stutzke/DOT	Rob Campbell/PWSSC	Franklin Dekker/USFWS
Alexis Cooper/CRWP	Judy Chapman/DOT	Brennan Cain/TEC	Heather Hanson/USFWS
Kate Morse/CRWP	Luke Boles/DOT	Tiffany Beedle/TEC	Jacob Adams/USFWS
Kirsti Jurica/CRWP	Matt Billings/DOT	Madeline Lee/CRRC	Jeremy Karchut/USFWS
Ashley Taylor/CRWP	Robert Mattson/DOT	John Maygard/CTC	Jess Straub/USFWS
Amy Scudder/CRWP	Sarah Katherine/ CTC	Adrian Smith/CTC	Devan Fitzpatrick/USFWS



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Christianna Colles/DOT	Amber Taber/DOT	Tom Barrett/ DOT	Rachel Longacre/DOT
Melissa Valentin/2100 Consulting	Kirsten Valentine/USFWS		

4. Response to EVOSTC Review, Recommendations and Comments:

“Describe how any EVOSTC review comments or recommendations for the proposal or project were addressed during the reporting period, if applicable.”

CRWP met with EVOS during this last reporting period to provide some in person updates, and answer questions regarding the impacts of the federal funding freeze. Summary answers to the questions posed are listed below, with appropriate updates to reflect status as of report submission.

1. When did CRWP realize the funding gap existed? Was the increased cost due to changes in project design post-EVOSTC proposal?

Yes. As referenced in our June 30, 2023, quarterly report, CRWP and project partners determined that the original 15% conceptual design did not meet fish passage performance expectations identified by USFWS. Feedback from federal partners, specifically USFWS, drove a redesign to a 20% engineering level, aimed at significantly improving fish habitat outcomes while also ensuring the structure would be low to no maintenance, a critical condition for City of Cordova ownership. These upgrades led to a \$2.5M increase in estimated construction costs—raising the total project cost to approximately \$ 9 M.

2. Did CRWP originally anticipate needing additional funds outside of EVOSTC? What was the plan for the \$3.5M in FHWA funding?

Yes, the original EVOSTC proposal was based on the best available cost estimates at the time, which were derived from a conceptual design and limited field data. As designs evolved and site investigations were completed (geotechnical, hydrology & hydraulics, conceptual modeling), it became clear that more funds would be needed. The \$3.5M from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), secured by TEC through the Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) program, was always anticipated as part of the overall funding strategy to support the upgraded design. USFWS played a central role in developing this proposal and committing additional funds. This information was included in prior quarterly reports submitted to EVOS.

3. How is CRWP ensuring that construction will not begin unless sufficient funds are secured to



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complete the project?

We will not issue a full construction contract unless all funds necessary to complete the project are in place. On April 29, 2025, CRWP executed a *limited notice-to-proceed* contract with Granite Construction for steel procurement only, enabling price-locking while avoiding overcommitment. The contractor is ready to proceed with implementation in either 2026 or 2027, depending on the availability of federal funds. This approach ensures materials are on hand without risking partial implementation.

CRWP has also submitted two additional funding proposals during this reporting period and is pursuing a third this summer. Additionally, advocacy is ongoing with Alaska's federal delegation and state representatives to identify contingency options. Our track record of successfully completing 13 EVOSTC-funded projects with leveraged dollars supports our ability to manage complex, multi-source funding.

4. What is the timeline for construction, and what decisions still need to be made?

- May 21, 2025 – FHWA agreement with TEC is scheduled for signature (releasing ~\$3.5M).
- Summer/Fall 2025 – Pending fund release, full construction contract issued; permits finalized.
- Fall 2025 – All materials procured, contractor preparation and site planning completed.
- January–April 2026 – In-water work permitted window (ADF&G); construction may begin.
- If delayed: The contractor has committed to hold the project timeline for 2027 with a cost increase buffer.

CRWP is also monitoring additional grant awards expected in summer/fall 2025, which could supplement rising labor and materials costs.

5. What is the plan for the additional \$500,000 needed to fully fund the project, assuming state funding is secured?

Due to inflation and market volatility, material and labor costs have risen since the initial engineering estimate. We submitted proposals to NOAA (BIL program) and NFWF and are pursuing further sources to cover the remaining gap. These submissions were made during this reporting period and remain under review. We continue to seek state capital appropriations and have leveraged broad-based community and agency support, including letters from Representative



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Stutes' office and coordination with DOT and the City of Cordova. Funds also included USFWS BIL funds that were recently unfrozen (over \$400K in construction funding) as well as the ADOT allocation in the original EVOSTC proposal that they decided to return to the project for implementation, so instead of paying the State to participate in the project, we can use the funds requested on their behalf to construct the project.

6. Can you clarify how much EVOSTC funding is currently being held and how it's managed?

All EVOSTC funds are obligated through an agreement with USFWS and reside in a federal ASAP account from which CRWP draws down on a reimbursement basis. We do not hold funds directly, nor do we receive advance disbursement. Given ongoing capacity constraints at federal agencies, we are not recommending a return of funds at this time, as the process of reallocating and reobligating would add unnecessary administrative delays to an already time-sensitive project. We have been working with partners at the USFWS for amendments and have requested funds as of May 2025.

7. What outreach or public engagement occurred this quarter?

In response to the federal funding freeze, CRWP launched a public donation campaign in early 2025 to galvanize private support and raise awareness. The campaign highlighted potential impacts of inaction, including threats to Cordova's water supply, salmon spawning beds, and commercial fisheries. This quarter also included CRWP's formal comment submission on the DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), direct engagement with Commissioner Anderson, and support coordination with Alaska's federal delegation.

CRWP maintains an active partner page and public project website, and all outreach materials are shared across CRWP social platforms and email channels.



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5. Budget:

SUMMARY Q1 2025

Budget Category:	Actual	Actual	Actual	Proposed	Proposed	5-YR TOTAL	QUARTERLY	ACTUAL
	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	PROPOSED	EXPENDITURES	CUMULATIVE
Personnel	\$15,091	\$27,058	\$63,207	\$198,003	\$63,550	\$366,909	\$23,469.69	\$128,825.38
Travel	\$61	\$192	\$1,367	\$5,550	\$2,003	\$9,173	\$0.00	\$1,619.79
Contractual	\$98,140	\$266,343	\$224,168	\$2,750	\$0	\$591,402	\$8,773.00	\$597,424.93
Commodities	\$687	\$5,339	\$3,355	\$15,031	\$0	\$24,412	\$758.95	\$13,155.75
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Indirect Costs (30%)	\$14,106	\$9,892	\$25,022	\$42,787	\$0	\$91,807	\$8,371.99	\$57,391.97
SUBTOTAL	\$128,084	\$308,825	\$317,120	\$264,121	\$65,553	\$1,083,702	\$41,374	\$798,417.82
General Administration (9% of subtotal)	\$11,528	\$27,794	\$28,541	\$23,771	\$5,900	\$97,533	\$3,724	\$71,857.60
PROJECT TOTAL	\$139,612	\$336,619	\$345,660	\$287,892	\$71,453	\$1,181,235	\$45,097	\$2,407,568
Other Resources (In-Kind Funds)	\$21,180	\$16,380	\$11,580	\$0	\$0	\$49,140		