

RESTORATION

U P D A T E

January-February 1999

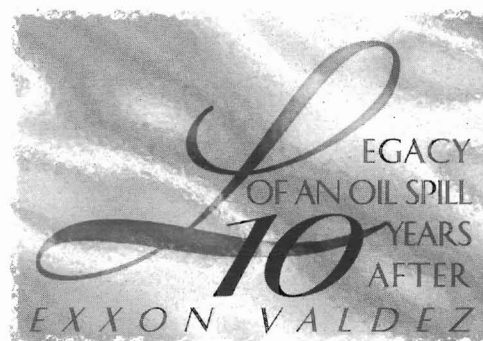
Volume 6 Number 1

10-year event looks back at lessons learned

There is no celebrating this anniversary. Believe it or not, it has been almost 10 years since the *Exxon Valdez* shocked Alaska, spoiling one of the world's most impressive marine environments with the nation's largest oil spill. For Alaskans and for many around the world, it was a tragedy that cannot be forgotten.

As we gather to look back on the last 10 years and to remember the tragedy, it will not be a memorial or a commemoration. It will be a learning event. It will be time to report to the nation about the long-term consequences of a major oil spill, efforts underway to restore the environment, and precautions undertaken to prevent something of *Exxon-Valdez* magnitude from ever happening again.

Legacy of an Oil Spill: 10 Years After Exxon Valdez is a four-day scientific symposium preceded by a one-day



public-oriented event. The entire event will be held March 23-27 at the William Egan Convention and Civic Center in Anchorage.

The first day will be dedicated to providing a general overview of the spill and the decade that followed. "We want to focus on the lessons we have learned in the last 10 years," said Molly McCammon, executive director of the

See Legacy of An Oil Spill, Page 4

Afognak I. protected

Gov. Knowles steps in to finalize protection of the most valuable habitat in the spill region

The old-growth forest, estuaries, and salmon streams of northern Afognak Island was protected in November when Governor Tony Knowles authorized use of Trustee Council funds.

In a survey of available land in the spill region, from eastern Prince William Sound to the Alaska Peninsula, the habitat on northern Afognak Island ranked as the most valuable for restoration of species injured in the 1989 oil spill. Lands included in the package are adjacent to Afognak Island State Park and the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and are across the strait from Shuyak Island State Park.

The Trustee Council in April agreed to purchase 41,750 acres from Afognak Joint Venture, a partnership of several Native corporations with interests on Afognak Island, for a total of \$70.5 million.

In addition to the Afognak protection package, Gov. Knowles authorized use of Trustee Council funds to protect a 76-acre parcel along the Kenai River. The Kenai River parcel is located near the Soldotna airport and includes about one-third of a mile of river frontage. The Trustee Council made an offer

See Afognak/Kenai, Page 3

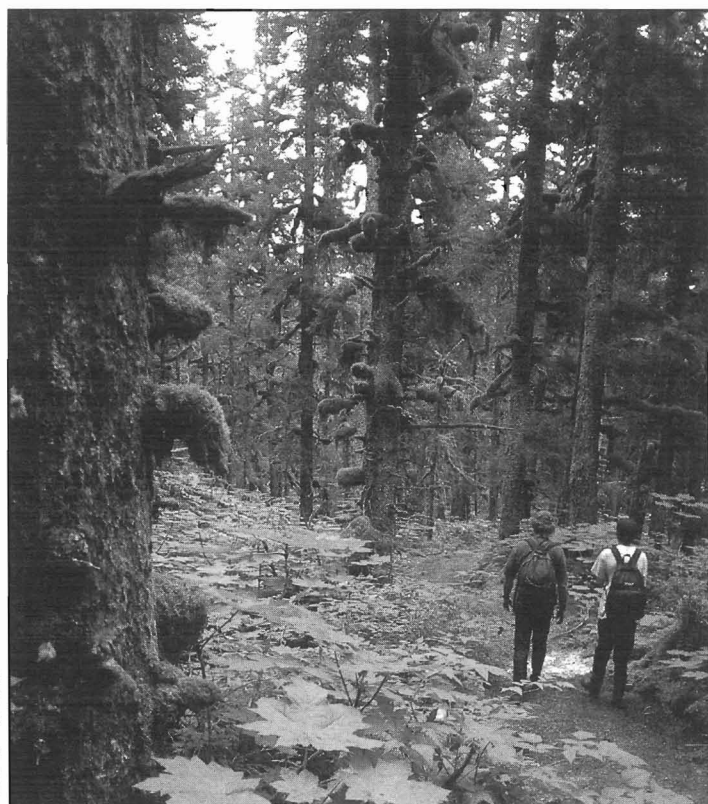


Photo by Roy Corral

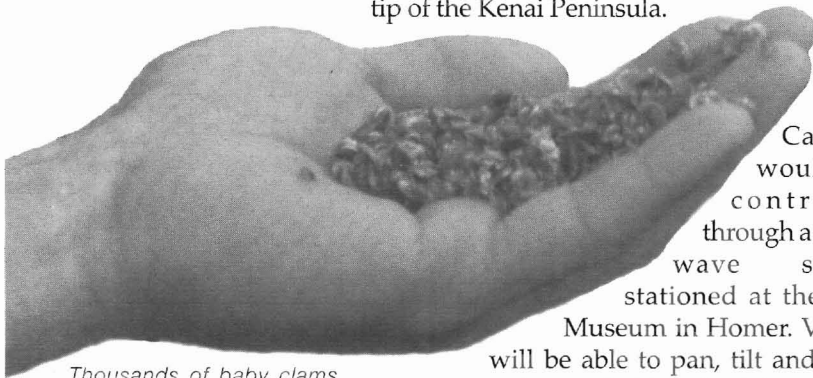
The lush forests and rich bays of Afognak Island is home to a number of injured species and provides tremendous recreational and subsistence opportunities.

Trustees finalize FY 99 Work Plan

The Trustee Council, in December, approved funding of several projects to finalize its Fiscal Year 1999 Work Plan. Trustees approved and additional \$1.3 million for scientific studies, subsistence enhancements, and other projects, bringing the total FY 99 Work Plan budget to \$11.5 million.

In addition to finalizing the Work Plan, the Trustee Council approved \$781,300 to help rebuild the Port Graham hatchery, which burned down last winter. (See story below)

Additions to the work plan include \$75,800 to establish two remote cameras to study seabird colonies on East Amatuli Island, part of the Barren Islands in the Gulf of Alaska off the tip of the Kenai Peninsula.



Thousands of baby clams can be held in one hand. Clams are planted like seeds on some beaches in hopes of renewing populations for subsistence uses.

Cameras would be controlled through a microwave system stationed at the Pratt

Museum in Homer. Visitors will be able to pan, tilt and zoom cameras to observe habits of nesting murres and kittiwakes. Researchers will be able to take advantage of the system to monitor nesting success and other seabird breeding parameters. The museum successfully tested a

similar remote camera system on Gull Island in Kachemak Bay.

Another newly funded project will evaluate the spot shrimp population of western Prince William Sound to determine whether the population is returning to levels large enough to support subsistence harvests. Trustees provided \$38,300 for the first year of the study.

The Trustees provided \$124,900 for researchers to return to sites on the Kenai and Alaska peninsulas where oily mousse was known to exist in 1994. They will sample cobble beach sites to determine whether the oily patches are deteriorating and if oil continues to impact mussel beds.

A multi-year project to produce littleneck clams and plant them on beaches in Prince William Sound and lower Cook Inlet received an additional \$222,800. The Quteckak Hatchery in Seward grows the tiny clam spat in an experimental effort to create a subsistence clamming harvest near the villages of Tatitlek, Chenega and Port Graham.

Altogether, the FY 99 Work Plan funds more than 80 research, monitoring and general restoration projects for the Kodiak Island, Alaska Peninsula, Kenai Peninsula and Prince William Sound regions. The Work Plan is the document that sets the Trustee Council budget and identifies restoration projects and scientific studies for the fiscal year that began October 1.

Port Graham to rebuild hatchery and cannery destroyed by fire

A vital salmon hatchery in Port Graham, destroyed by fire in January 1998, will be rebuilt with partial funding from the Trustee Council.

The Port Graham Village Council is planning to rebuild the \$2.2 million hatchery to help enhance subsistence fishing of coho, pink, and sockeye salmon as well as improve local commercial harvests. The Trustee Council has agreed to provide about one-third of the funds as long as the Village Council can successfully raise the remaining funds needed to complete the job. So far, all but \$500,000 has been guaranteed through grants and insurance settlements.

The value of the Port Graham hatchery to the village would be a lot less without the existence of a processing plant to provide employment and business opportunities. The Port Graham Corporation, a for-profit

village corporation, is planning to spend \$3.2 million to rebuild the community's only fish processing plant, which was also destroyed in the fire.

Residents of Port Graham and nearby Nanwalek have been concerned about poor returns of salmon to the Port Graham and English Bay rivers for several years.

The Port Graham hatchery started in 1992 to raise pink salmon for the Port Graham River. A second program was started in 1993 to improve sockeye production in the English Bay River near Nanwalek. Production of coho fry for the Port Graham River started in 1995. Each of these projects was aided by funding from either the criminal or civil settlements with Exxon.

The coho production facility was not damaged in the fire and it has since been converted using oil spill funds into a temporary pink and sockeye incubation facility.

in June to acquire the property for \$450,000.

Altogether, the Trustee Council has protected about nine miles of Kenai River bank at a cost of about \$8.7 million. The lands are being managed for both conservation and recreational opportunities. The Trustee Council has dedicated about \$2 million for restoration of publicly-owned riverbank that has eroded due to sportfishing pressure. This effort includes installation of light-penetrating gratewalks and stairs to enter the river.

"These natural treasures constitute Alaska's other permanent fund," Knowles said. "Protection of these rich habitat areas benefit all Alaskans by helping maintain strong fish and wildlife populations while at the same time supporting recreational uses and traditional subsistence activities."

Knowles called Afognak Island "one of Alaska's treasures." The acquisition has received wide support from the Kodiak Island Borough, area legislators, the Alaska Outdoor Council and a variety of sport hunting and commercial fishing organizations.

Howard Valley, chairman of the Afognak Joint Venture (AJV) board of directors, said the sale of the Afognak land will allow AJV members more flexibility to make investments. Valley, who was raised at his father's Afognak Island logging camp, said he's happy to see the northern area of the island protected.

The area was slated to be logged and, in fact, parts of it still will be. Federal and state biologist and forestry experts were closely in-



Afognak/Kenai habitats protected

Continued from Page 1

The value of timber on northern Afognak Island made protection of this area the most expensive and one of the most difficult ever concluded by the Trustee Council. About 41,750 acres, most of that going to the state and about 5,500 acres going to the federal refuge system were protected through the Trustee's action.

Photo by Daniel Zatz

involved in negotiations to minimize habitat loss while still allowing harvest in selected areas.

The northern unit of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, a 50,000-acre tract on Afognak Island, grew by about 10 percent through the acquisition. The federal government received 5,308 acres and another 212 acres of timber easements. The State of Alaska will receive the remaining 36,230 acres, most of it adjacent to Afognak Island State Park.

The high value of timber on Afognak island made it impossible to protect all the valuable habitat in the northern part of the island, said Molly McCammon, executive director of the Trustee Council. The package protects the resources while allowing limited timber harvest. The popular Paul's and Laura lakes will have buffer zones, larger than those required by state law, she said.

No state funds will be used for the acquisition, but because oil spill settlement funds are passed through the state, legislative review of the package is required. The governor has the authority under state law to approve the expenditure if the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee fails to concur with the request.

Large parcels within the spill region were ranked for their importance as habitat to injured species. The Paul's and Laura lakes region ranked highest and Shuyak Strait came in eighth. In the ranking system, habitats were ranked high (H), moderate (M), Low (L) for their importance to each species. The symbol (-) means the species is not found in the area.

Paul's & Laura lakes considered the most important habitat in the spill region for injured species; Shuyak Strait ranked eighth

	Bald Eagle	Sockeye Salmon	Pink Salmon	Dolly Varden	Cutthroat Trout	Pacific Herring	Bl. Oyster-catcher	Common Murre	Harbor Seal	Harlequin Duck	Intertidal Subtidal	Marbled Murrelet	Pigeon Guillemot	River Otter	Sea Otter
Paul's & Laura Lk.	H	M	H	L	-	M	H	L	H	H	H	H	H	M	H
Shuyak Strait	M	L	H	H	-	H	H	L	H	H	H	H	H	M	H



10-year symposium plans underway

Continued from Page 1

Trustee Council. "The idea is to provide answers for the key questions that we all have about this spill."

Have the fish, birds and mammals injured by the spill been able to recover? Are the people of the spill region recovering from the 1989 trauma? Is there oil still on the beaches? How has the \$1 billion from the Exxon civil and criminal settlements been used? Can a major spill happen again? If so, can it be cleaned up?

The first-day public event will include a keynote luncheon speech by Dr. Jane Lubchenco, professor of marine biology and zoology at the University of Oregon. Dr. Lubchenko sits on the board of directors of the National Science Foundation and is past president of the American Association for the Advance-

Tuesday, March 23, 1999 Overview Session

7:00 am	Registration
8:45 am	Welcome and Introduction
9:00 am	Addresses by Public Officials and Trustees
10:30 am	Status of Injury and Recovery
11:00 am	Restoration Program Overview
	- Habitat Protection
	- Research, Monitoring and General Restoration
Noon	Lunch (available at Egan Center)
12:30 pm	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Jane Lubchenco
1:30 pm	Human Dimensions of the Oil Spill
3:15 pm	Oil Spill Response and Prevention
4:30 pm	Future of the Restoration Program
5:30 - 7:00 pm	Trustee Council Reception

Wednesday, March 24, 1999 Technical Session

Session 1		Session 2	
7:00 am	Registration		
8:30 am	Population and Recovery Status	8:30 am	Oceanography, Carrying Capacity, & Long-Term Monitoring
		10:20 am	Food Chain Effects
Noon	Lunch (on your own)		
1:10 pm	Population and Recovery Status (Con't.)	1:10 pm	Sound Ecosystem Assessment (SEA) Project
2:30 pm	Direct Restoration, Supplementation, and Enhancement		
5:45 - 8:00 pm	Reception and Poster Session		

Thursday, March 25, 1999 Technical Session

7:30 am	Registration	8:30 am	Fate, Transport, and Monitoring of Oil
8:30 am	Intertidal and Subtidal Effects and Recovery	11:00 am	Salmon, Herring, and Toxicity of Oil
11:00 am	Subsistence, Communities, and Human Dimensions		
Noon	Lunch (on your own)		
1:10 pm	Subsistence, Communities, & Human Dimensions (Con't.)	1:10 pm	Salmon, Herring, and Toxicity of Oil (Con't.)
		1:50 pm	Nearshore Vertebrate Predator (NVP) Project
6:30 - 9:00 pm	Alaska Wildlife Response Center Reception (off site)		

Friday, March 26, 1999 Technical Session

7:30 am	Registration	8:30 am	Nutrition, Physiology, and Disease
8:30 am	Response, Prevention, and Treatment	11:20 am	Alaska Predator Ecosystem Experiment (APEX) Project
Noon	Lunch (on your own)		
1:10 pm	Response, Prevention, & Treatment (Con't.)	1:10 pm	Alaska Predator Ecosystem Experiment (APEX) (Con't.)
4:30 pm	Summary and Concluding Remarks		

Saturday, March 27, 1999

7:30 am - 7:30 pm	Field Trip to the Alaska SeaLife Center and Gray Whale Tour, Seward
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ment of Science and the Ecological Society of America. She plans to talk about the "State of the World's Oceans."

Although the first-day public event is free, tickets for the luncheon will cost \$15 and must be purchased by March 1.

Governor Tony Knowles, who oversees the three state trustees on the council, has been invited to make opening comments, along with the three federal trustees: Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt; Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman; and Secretary of Commerce William Daley.

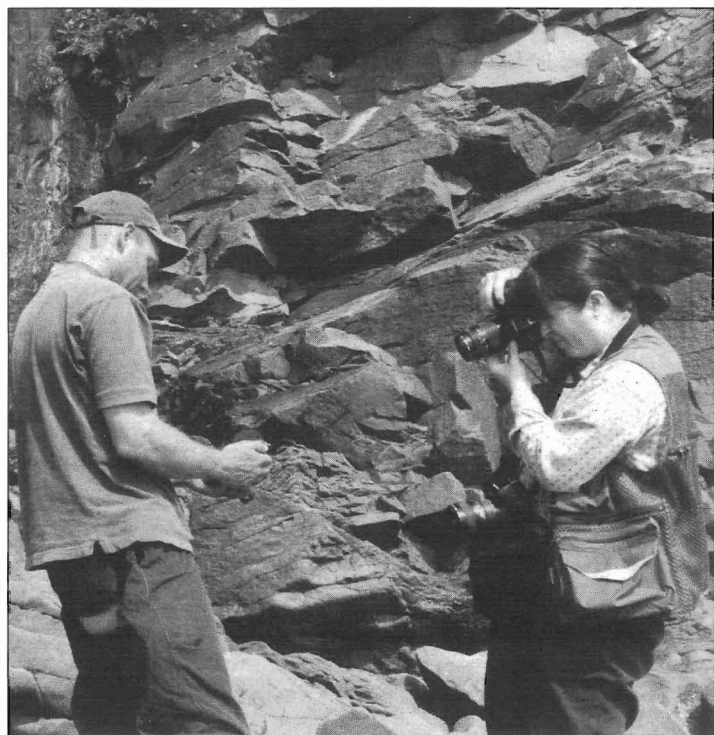
The morning program will focus on the status of injured resources and the Trustee Council's two major restoration efforts: the Habitat Protection program and the Research, Monitoring and General Restoration program. The afternoon

will focus on the human dimensions of the spill, spill prevention and response planning, and the future of restoration.

The three-day symposium is also open to the public. Technical sessions will be held covering many of the scientific projects funded by the Trustee Council. Topics will range from oceanography to subsistence to spill prevention. Following the symposium, a field trip is planned to the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward and a Gray Whale Watch cruise around Kenai Fjords National Park.

Registration for the symposium is \$70 before March 1 and \$100 after that date. It will be an additional \$122 for the SeaLife Center and Whale Watch cruise, including roundtrip transportation and lunch.

World's attention again focuses on the spill region



When the world focused on the *Exxon Valdez* spill 10 years ago, a common thread in news reports was that only time would tell whether the spill region would heal. After a decade, media from around the world are returning to Prince William Sound to see what healing has taken place and what injuries continue to linger.

A photographer with National Geographic Magazine spent most of the summer in the spill region documenting the people and restoration efforts. A 28-page spread of stories, photos, and graphics is expected to be published in March 1999.

National Geographic Television also visited the spill region for several days. A feature on the spill region is being planned for airing in late March.

Other news media groups that visited the spill region during the summer included Good Morning America, the Boston Globe, National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" and "Living on Earth" programs, the Associated Press, Alaska Magazine, Sports Afield, Outside Magazine, and The Oregonian. Alaska Geographic has announced plans to dedicate its spring 1999 issue to the oil spill legacy.

Several other television, magazine, and newspaper reporters have expressed an interest in coming to Alaska in March to cover restoration efforts and commemorative events.

Interest in the spill goes beyond America's borders. Reporters from London, Germany, Japan, Hong Kong, and Norway also have contacted the Restoration Office concerning the 10th anniversary.

Karen Kasmauski, National Geographic photographer, spent about 10 weeks in the spill region. She joined researcher Jim Hammond as he captured pigeon guillemot chicks for research at the Alaska SeaLife Center. A National Geographic feature on the 10th anniversary of the spill is being planned for the March 1999 issue.

Registration Information

To register for the symposium or the lunch with the keynote address by Dr. Jane Lubchenco, contact: Tami Yockey at the Restoration Office: 907-278-8012; toll free 800-478-7745 (within Alaska) or 800-283-7745 (outside Alaska); fax 970-276-7178; e-mail restoration@oilspill.state.ak.us.

Williams leaves Council after 5 yrs; Wolfe announces early retirement

It seems appropriate that Deborah Williams, a highly active Trustee for more than five years, spent her final day on the Council planning for the long-term future of restoration in the oil spill region. Williams left her position as Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior for Alaska on December 7, one week after a November 30 Trustee Council meeting dedicated to planning for the Restoration Reserve.

After a 5-year tenure in one of the most visible and important public jobs in Alaska, Williams said she considers her role on the Trustee Council as a highlight. The Trustee Council's ability to get things done is due to the willingness of Trustees to work together, despite their differences, she said.

"When I first took this job and found out that there was a consensus requirement, I thought to myself, that's the first thing we have to change," Williams said. "I thought, this is unthinkable, you can't possibly have a process where unanimity of six diverse people is required to achieve any action. But it only took me a little while to realize that instead of being a detriment, it was, because of the quality of people we had on the Trustee Council, an asset."

Steve Pennoyer, Alaska Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service and an original member of the Trustee Council, credited Williams for bringing to the Council insights into conservation and public and agency processes. "You have been an outspoken advocate for conservation in our state," Pennoyer wrote.



Deborah L. Williams

"And while we had some differences in direction at times, we have always worked those out because our basic goals are remarkably similar."

Trustee Craig Tillery, Alaska Assistant Attorney General, thanked Williams for her willingness to get

things done. "People have come and gone from this Council with varying degrees of interest and energy," he said. "I think when all is said and done there's going to be a few people who will be known for putting all their energy into it and I think you're one of them and that's very much appreciated."

Two weeks later, at the December 15 Trustee Council meeting, Trustee Jim Wolfe surprised everyone by announcing his retirement. Wolfe has served as a Trustee for the U.S. Department of Agriculture ever since former Alaska Regional Forester Phil Janik left his position in early 1998.

Wolfe has long been active with the Trustee Council, often sitting in for Janik when he was unable to attend meetings. He was instrumental in negotiating habitat protection packages with Eyak, Tatitlek, and Chenega corporations. His leadership in negotiations helped protect 205,000 acres, most of which will be permanently managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

Cook Inlet data workshop to be held in January

A workshop for groups and individuals who would use the Cook Inlet Information Management and Monitoring System (CIIMMS) will be held January 26-27 at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage.

The goal of the two-year CIIMMS project is to create an information system framework for the Cook Inlet Basin that is easy for all users to access and understand. The idea is that the framework would be used to create a statewide information system, watershed by watershed. The database will be composed of habitat, environmental monitoring, water quality, and other relevant environmental and geographic information. Users will access the system via the internet.

The workshop is designed to identify solutions to the information management needs of groups that depend on Cook Inlet data. Topics will include a review of an extensive user needs survey (see the website for a copy of the questionnaire), current data management capabilities, and alternatives for the future.

The CIIMMS project is partly funded by the Trustee Council and coordinated by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

To register for the workshop, call Vikki Jeffery at (907) 269-8432. For more information, call Kelly Zeiner at (907) 269-8856 or send email to: kellyz@dnr.state.ak.us. The project website can be found at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/ciimms>.

The Trustee Council and Public Advisory Group will meet jointly on January 22 to discuss possible uses for the Restoration Reserve and receive recommendations on updates to the Injured Resources List.

A public hearing will be held the previous evening (January 21) at 7 p.m. to accept testimony on both of those topics. The hearing will be continued at 8:30 a.m. January 22, if needed.

A draft of the injured resources update was

issued January 2 and mailed to every person on the Trustee Council's mailing list. Additional copies of the update can be obtained by contacting the Restoration Office. Written comments on the draft update will be accepted no later than February 5.

The joint session between the Trustee Council and its 17-member advisory group will focus primarily on the Restoration Reserve. This \$140 million savings account is being set aside to finance restoration activities beyond the year 2001 when the last installment from Exxon is received. The Trustee Council will not take action on the updated Injured Resources List or on the Restoration Reserve at the January 22 meeting.

Public input on potential uses of this fund have been solicited for 15 months. A final deadline for all written and oral comments concerning the Restoration Reserve has been set for February 12. No comments will be accepted after that time.

Trustees, Advisory Group to host public hearing

Testimony sought on Restoration Reserve and update of Injured Resources List

Deadlines

Comments on the draft update of the Injured Resources List will be accepted no later than **February 5, 1999.**

Comments about potential uses of the Restoration Reserve will be accepted no later than **February 12, 1999.**

More than a year after the Trustee Council made an offer to Eyak Corporation, the long-sought protection of approximately 75,000 acres in eastern Prince William Sound is near completion.

A creative protection package that includes acquisition of surface rights, conservation easements, and timber easements was approved by 87 percent of Eyak shareholders in a recent vote. Closing on the package will take place pending shareholder approval of minor changes.

The Trustee Council agreed in July 1997 to spend \$45 million over a 5-year period to protect the habitat, which includes approximately 80 salmon streams, numerous lakes and lagoons, 50 miles of freshwater shoreline, and 150 miles of saltwater shoreline.

The wooded shorelines of Nelson Bay, Eyak Lake and Hawkins Island, much of it visible from the City of Cordova, are all protected. Much of Port Gravina, all of Windy Bay and all of Sheep Bay, which are considered among the most valuable parcels in Prince William Sound for recovery of species injured by the 1989 oil spill, are also included in the package deal.

Numerous bird species injured by the spill use the Eyak lands for nesting, feeding, molt-

ing and wintering. The area is important to pink salmon, sockeye salmon, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, Pacific herring, bald eagles, black oystercatchers, harbor seals, harlequin ducks, river otters and sea otters. The entire region is popular for recreational activities and subsistence food gathering.

Most of the land would be administered as part of the Chugach National Forest. One smaller tract would be managed by the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation as part of the existing Canoe Passage State Marine Park.

Eastern PWS protection package nears completion

Restoration Update is published six times each year by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council.



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RESTORATION

U P D 8 A T E

Restoration Notebook series expands

The Trustee Council's Restoration Notebook has expanded from four issues to seven with the recent publication of Black Oystercatchers, Pigeon Guillemots, and Pacific Herring.

The series tells the natural history of selected fish, seabirds and mammals as well as the story of injury and recovery from the spill. It is intended for a lay audience, written by the biologists who work in the field, and produced by the Trustee Council.

The series was introduced in 1997 with the publication of Killer Whales, Marbled Murrelets, Sea Otters, and Harbor Seals. Each issue is designed to go into three-ring binders and be used as reference material. A complete reference list of scientific studies on each of the species is included.

The new set of three issues will automatically be sent to anyone who requested the first set of four. To receive a free copy of the series, contact the Restoration Office at 907-278-8012; or 800-478-7745 (in Alaska); or 800-283-7745 (outside Alaska); or via e-mail at restoration@oilspill.state.ak.us.



Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council



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Commissioner
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Public Hearing

January 21, 1999
7:00-8:30 p.m.

(testimony will continue 8:30 a.m. January 22, if needed)

Anchorage Restoration Office
and at area Legislative Information Offices

The Trustee Council and Public Advisory Group will jointly host a public hearing to accept public testimony on 1) changes to the Injured Resources list and 2) uses of the Restoration Reserve. The two groups will meet January 22 to discuss the two topics. For a draft of the Updated Injured Resources list, contact the Restoration Office.

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