

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Land Acquisition for Public Access on Lower Kenai River **FY2015 Request: \$580,800**
Reference No: AMD 58576

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Renewal and Replacement
Category: Natural Resources **House District:** Homer/South Kenai (HD 30)
Location: Kenai Peninsula (Homer/South Kenai) **Contact:** Jean Davis
Impact House District: Homer/South Kenai (HD 30)
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2014 - 06/30/2016 **Contact Phone:** (907)465-2422

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is pursuing acquisition of two small parcels of land that will contribute to the restoration of resources and services injured by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS). The Stewart and Beeson parcels are located on the lower Kenai River, and if acquired will allow for riverbank restoration, provide valuable public access, assist in resource management, and provide benefits to local communities. The land will be managed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. This is a new FY2015 capital project as the proposed purchase was not finalized in time for inclusion in the Governor's budget.

Funding:	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	Total
EVOSS	\$580,800						\$580,800
Total:	\$580,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$580,800

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

No prior funding history

Project Description/Justification:

Protection of habitat by acquisition has been a major component of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) restoration process since its inception. The concept of habitat protection gained strong public support during the development of the environmental impact statement and resulting restoration plan. Habitat protection is consistent with the terms of the settlement with Exxon and the memorandum of agreement that defines how the three state and three federal trustees will administer settlement funds. The EVOS Trustee Council, with congressional action, established a habitat sub-account from which funds for these acquisitions will be drawn.

This project will provide for conduct of due diligence and purchase of two small parcels of land on the Kenai River for habitat restoration efforts. The acquisition of land or partial interests in land will aid in the restoration of habitat that injured species depend on for recovery from the oil spill. It is intended to promote natural recovery of spill-injured resources and services by removing the threat of additional development impacts.

The project will ensure connectivity and a consistent management strategy between state lands that supports fishing and recreational uses in the area. In addition, this project is consistent with the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) management objective of securing lands to meet recreational and access needs of an increasing population. DNR's plan for this area is to increase recreation, sport hunting and fishing, and tourism opportunities and otherwise manage the land consistent with the purposes for which the land is acquired.

As evidenced by the loss of traditional access around the state, the public's ability to access public lands using traditional access routes diminishes as communities and populations grow and expand. Taking steps to address access issues now will likely be more cost effective as settlement funds are available and land continues to appreciate.