



Soundkeeper

Ensuring a positive, lasting legacy for Prince William Sound, Ak.

January 2016

Dear Soundkeepers,

Prince William Soundkeeper (PWSK) differs from the other 138 Keeper organizations throughout the U.S. due to the sheer size of Prince William Sound – 3,800 miles of coastline, the remoteness of its 5 communities, and the transient nature of the people who live, work and play here.

We depend upon your eyes and ears to let us know about threats and incidents to the Sound’s water quality and resources. Your support enables us to provide education and outreach on water quality issues and resource conservation. Thank you!

Here are a few of the issues you are helping to support in 2016:



Lingering oil, lingering issues.

Despite our efforts the Governor, the State of Alaska and the US Department of Justice failed Alaska in their refusal to pursue the \$92 million dollar claim made in 2006 under the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Re-Opener Clause for Unknown Injury, to hear public comment, or to consult with Native Tribes. They add insult to injury by declaring that the Sound has recovered and no further reparations are needed or necessary.



Old sign warning of EVOS contamination on an Evans Island beach that underwent remediation treatment. Treatment that many scientists now question whether it did more harm than good.

While there may no longer be legal recourse, PWSK will continue outreach and education efforts to inform citizens that they have every reason to not trust the promises of Government and Industry. PWSK will work to insist that the ~78 areas containing lingering EVOS oil across Prince William Sound be clearly marked as toxic, be avoided, and to advocate for continued restoration and remediation work to be performed.

PWSK urges you to contact the Governor and Lt. Governor of Alaska to let them know how you feel about the State dropping the ball so completely on the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Re-Opener Clause for Unknown and Unanticipated Injury. Go to the PWSK website for complete information and history of the EVOS litigation and for contact links. <http://www.pwsoundkeeper.org/page-646434>

Port Gravina – This project is a precedent setting action allowing the development of EVOS surface protected lands to be developed by sub-surface resource owners. In this case the Chugach Alaska

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Corporation has begun work on a 50 year open pit gravel mine in Port Gravina. This action not only opens the potential for other such areas to be developed, but has the immediate effect of damaging the ecosystem of the area, precluding recreational users from accessing and enjoying the natural beauty and resources of the area, and damaging the overall environmental quality of Port Gravina.

The Forest Service is asking Chugach Alaska to prepare an Environmental Assessment of their activities for review. PWSK feels that a full Environmental Impact Statement would be more appropriate, but it doesn't look like the Forest Service is willing to ask for that. We will keep an eye on this project as it develops and will ask for the ability to review and comment on all activities and permits.

US Forest Service Chugach Forest Plan Review – Your voice is needed! Chugach National Forest Plan Revision is now out for 60-day public comment, comments **due by February 19, 2016**: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/chugach/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5408185>

The draft revision plan as written is inadequate and fails to address for many of the basic provisions of the National Forest Plan. If left as is, it will ensure conflict between high-impact and low-impact/sustainable user groups. The plan doesn't support the EVOS Restoration Plan mandate, and it creates conflict between ecologically important protected areas and resource development interests. PWSK urges the FS to protect the 2 million acre wilderness study area in western Prince William Sound while continuing to press Congress for its official designation as Wilderness. The Copper River/Bering River watershed should be protected from coal and other resource development, and the Chugach NF should be withdrawn from mineral and forestry activity. The Forest Service should strive to expand their protection of the Chugach and provide for the ecological sustainability of the forest as a whole.

To comment on line, go to: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?project=40816>
Any questions of the Forest Service should go to: chugachplanrevision@fs.fed.us



Thank You Liz – PWSK is deeply grateful for over a decade of service Liz Senear has given as a member, Board of Director, and Treasurer. Liz has been a resident of Cordova since 1987 where she has worked as a commercial fisherman, a lab technician, and as bookkeeper for several non-profit organizations. She also serves on the Cordova oil spill response fleet. Liz's dedication and talents will be missed.

Wear your support for PWSK! Send a tax deductible membership donation of \$50 or more to PWSK and get a PWSK ball cap or T-shirt. Shirts available in sizes M-L-XL-2X, while supplies last. Donations of \$100 or more receive a T-shirt, cap, and a complimentary subscription to the Waterkeeper Alliance magazine.



Board of Director Seat Vacancies

Are you a PWSK member and want to do more? PWSK is seeking to fill seats on our Board of Directors. Requirements: Be a current member, a resident or user of Prince William Sound, and wish to be an active advocate for Prince William Sound's water quality and ecological resources! Call 907/424-5701 or email: emailpwsk@pwsoundkeeper.org for more information about board responsibilities, and to let us know why you'd like to be a Prince William Soundkeeper Board member.

Kate McLaughlin, President & Executive Director

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