



Alaska

NOAA Works to Improve Alaska's Coastal and Marine Areas

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) acts for the Secretary of Commerce as a federal trustee under the Superfund Act to protect and restore natural resources in coastal and marine areas. NOAA trust resources in Alaska include walleye, pollock, Pacific salmon, cod, and halibut, steelhead, rockfish, Dungeness, king, and snow crab, razor clams, and dozens of other species and their supporting habitats (e.g., tidal wetlands). Of special concern are federally threatened and endangered Steller sea lions, whales, and leatherback sea turtles; and Alaska State species of special concern, which are harbor seals, bowhead whales, and beluga whales from Cook Inlet. NOAA's stewardship also safeguards our nation's waterways and coastal activities, ranging from safe navigation and marine transportation to recreational activities along navigable waters.

Cleaning up and Restoring Sites in Alaska

The Office of Response and Restoration's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (OR&R/CPRD) partners with other agencies and responsible parties to ensure that waste site cleanups not only reduce risk but also restore natural resources and improve the quality of the environment. NOAA Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) get involved early in site cleanups to:

- ensure that ecological assessments and the entire cleanup process evaluate and mitigate any risk to sensitive species and habitats;
- incorporate environmental restoration into cleanup actions;
- monitor the successful recovery of trust resources and habitats; and
- reduce the need for expensive re-evaluations.

Because CRCs help make site-cleanup and restoration decisions in coastal regions, everyone saves time and money by avoiding litigation and duplication of effort. Responsible parties benefit from



Waste Sites

1. Adak Naval Air Station
2. Dutch Harbor Sediment Site
3. Elmendorf Air Force Base
4. Standard Steel & Metal Salvage Yard (USDOT)
5. Klag Bay Site
6. Alaska Pulp Corp.
7. Ketchikan Pulp Co.
8. Metlakatla Indian Community (Brownfield Site)

Protecting and Restoring Coastal and Marine Resources

NOAA's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (CPRD) protects and restores natural resources in marine and coastal environments that are affected by hazardous waste sites. NOAA Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the State of Alaska, and other trustee agencies to identify risks to natural resources, recommend site cleanups that protect habitat and wildlife, and design projects to restore injured resources and habitats.

Our goal: healthy, productive coastal ecosystems, fisheries, and marine mammals in Alaska and the U.S.

an early resolution of liability for damage to natural resources. Best of all, we can address environmental threats sooner, increasing the chances for effective protection, recovery, and restoration of coastal and marine resources and their habitats.

Areas of Special Concern in Alaska

Cook Inlet and its surrounding rivers and creeks, provide habitat for many NOAA trust resources. Cook Inlet provides one of the world's eight recognized wintering areas for beluga whales, which are known to feed on anadromous fish at the mouth of Ship Creek. Cook Inlet is also an area frequently visited by humpback whales.

NOAA has worked with military agencies in Alaska to assess potential risks to fish from contaminants at military bases. For example, NOAA completed a Natural Resource Assessment for Elmendorf Air Force Base. The assessment listed the aquatic resources at risk, the chemicals of concern, and the places on the base where fish could be exposed to hazardous chemicals. NOAA's review helped the Air Force set priorities and prepare complete ecological risk assessments. NOAA has also worked at a Brownfields showcase community in Alaska, helping the **Metlakatla Indian Community** assess the safety of seafood potentially contaminated by past military and other industrial activities.

Other areas of concern include **Adak Island**, a residence area for Steller sea lions; the **Pribilof Islands**, a breeding area for more than 50% of the northern fur seal population, and a significant breeding area for walleye pollock; **Barrow** a residence area for bowhead whales; and **Sitka** an area frequently visited by humpback whales.

For information about NOAA's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division in **Alaska** please contact:

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