

## Protecting and Restoring Natural Resources in Alaska

### Issues

- Alaska contains nearly 34,000 miles of tidal shoreline, more than in all of the contiguous U.S.
- Alaska has the most valuable commercial fishery in the US with over 90% of all U.S. salmon landings.
- Approximately 30 million gallons of crude oil per day are transported via tank ship from Valdez, AK through Prince William Sound. Some 3,600 large commercial ships transit Unimak Pass in the Aleutian Islands each year.
- For the past 25 years, the Aleutian Islands alone have averaged nearly one oil spill of 1,000 gallons or more per year.

### What we do

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) acts as a trustee for natural resources on behalf of the public. DARRP collaborates with federal, state, and tribal entities and also works with cleanup agencies (such as EPA), local organizations, the public, and those responsible for the incident to:

- protect coastal and marine natural resources;
- respond to discharges of oil and hazardous substances;
- assess risks and injuries to natural resources; and
- restore injured natural resources and related socioeconomic benefits.

### How we do it

DARRP acts as a trustee for natural resources to:

- work cooperatively with those responsible for the incident;
- develop innovative approaches and techniques for remediation and restoration;
- work with the public to select restoration options to compensate for injuries to natural resources; and
- design and implement or oversee natural resource restoration projects and monitor their success.



*Kuroshima, Unalaska, AK - see case highlights.*

### DARRP Accomplishments

- Restoration and/or protection of 28 acres of freshwater and terrestrial habitats in Alaska (completed and planned activities).
- Settlement has resulted in 1 protection and restoration project in Alaska.
- Cleanup actions promote recovery of coastal resources and communities at 6 hazardous waste sites.



*Metlakatla Indian Community - see case highlights.*

#### 2007 DARRP Activities & Associated Restoration Sites

- ▲ Hazardous Waste Site
- Spill Case
- Restoration Sites



### Historic and ongoing case highlights

- Exxon Valdez, Prince William Sound – Conducted the natural resource damage assessment (NRDA) with co-trustees that led to settlement of the case. DARRP continues to work with the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to plan implementation of restoration projects for injured resources.
- Kuroshima, Unalaska – Reestablished subsistence use of seafood resources injured by the oil spill; enhanced sockeye salmon spawning habitat; shoreline/marine debris cleanup (*top photo on page 1*); and planted shoreline vegetation to reduce sedimentation of fish habitat.
- Elmendorf Air Force Base, Anchorage – Worked with military agencies in Alaska to assess the potential for injuries to natural resources from base operations. An assessment of the risks to marine resources documented potentially affected aquatic species, potential chemicals of concern and places where aquatic resources could be exposed to hazardous chemicals.
- Metlakatla Indian Community – Worked at a “Brownfields Showcase Community” in Sitka helping the Metlakatla Indian Community assess the safety of seafood potentially contaminated by past military and other industrial activities (*bottom photo on page 1*).
- Selendang Ayu, Unalaska Island – Conducting an NRDA with co-trustees and those responsible for this 2004 spill that oiled portions of 70 miles of coastline impacted valuable commercial fish habitat and subsistence hunting/gathering/fishing areas, and killed substantial numbers of seabirds.

For further information about DARRP, please visit  
<http://www.darrp.noaa.gov>

