



Prince William Sound Framework

Measuring Human Use and Understanding “Sound Stories”



Issue and Scope

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Framework is the Chugach National Forest’s comprehensive effort to:

- Evaluate and improve the forest’s current management framework in the Sound along with associated tools for implementation.
- Provide for the continued recovery, restoration, protection and enhancement of Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS) injured natural resources and human services.
- Identify strategies and partnerships with communities and stakeholders to manage for and support sustainable human use into the future.

Background/Current Situation

In the twenty years since EVOS, Prince William Sound has experienced numerous changes. The spill itself impacted and disrupted resources and human services in the Sound, but over the past decade the Sound has experienced changing, and in some cases increasing, human use activity, as well. With the opening of the Whittier Tunnel and the introduction of high speed ferry service, access to the Sound by independent and commercial users has increased. There is growing concern that increased competition and rapid growth in users may be threatening resources and services, particularly those injured and still recovering from EVOS.

Phase I (2009-2010)

Key Objective: Compile an accurate picture of PWS human use levels and distribution—particularly related to recreation, tourism and subsistence activities—and potential overlap with and impacts to EVOS-recovering resources.

Phase I of the Framework consists of five projects that will shed light on the recovery of the recreation/tourism and subsistence human services in Prince William Sound and highlight areas where resources and services may still be vulnerable to the lingering effects of the oil spill and/or increasing human use. The projects cover a wide-range of information synthesis and original research, including:

- Delineation of human use “hot spots”
- Description of subsistence use patterns
- Assessment of PWS users’ experiences and perceptions
- Mapping of sensitive cultural and biological resources.

Phase II (2010-2011)

Key Objective: Develop a consistent, Sound-wide approach to planning for, managing and permitting human use into the future.



The improved knowledge gained in Phase I will expand information on the Sound and improve data quality for the public, landowners, local communities, land management agencies and the EVOS research community. This additional insight will improve and inform the Chugach's own management efforts, including the development of a Sound-wide approach to planning for, managing and permitting human use.

“Sound Stories”

Key Objective: Convene partners and communities to share experiences of the Sound, build common ground, and address the future of the Sound. Complete the first round of community meetings and story collection by April-June 2009. Hold second round of meetings and story review in Spring 2010.

The communities of the Sound share a common desire to honor strong ties to their natural setting and resources and to strengthen the unique qualities that make the Sound a phenomenal place. The Chugach National Forest initiated the Sound Stories project to work with communities and stakeholders to collect and share their stories in a web-based and hard-copy map that convey this shared vision, in order to:

- Educate a broad, diverse audience about the region
- Foster conservation of the Sound's rich resources
- Guide people to enjoy the Sound in a sustainable way
- Work toward continued recovery of the Sound since the oil spill.

More Information

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Visit the website at: <http://www.pwsoundstories.org>.

