Prince William Sound Oil Spill Recovery Institute

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PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
OIL SPILL RECOVERY INSTITUTE

On-Line Addresses
www.pws-osri.org
Or
www.pwssc.org

Our Mission

Support research, education, and demonstration projects designed to respond to and understand the effects of oil spills in the Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environments

Reference:
Oil Pollution Act of 1990, Public Law 101-380, Title V, Sec. 5001

Our Goals

Understand

Attain an interdisciplinary understanding of: the fate and effects of spilled oil in Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environments; and the recovery of those environments following a spill.

* Evaluate short and long-term effects.
* Identify chemical, biological, and physical impacts and consequences.
* Emphasize the nearshore region.
* Identify the impacts of oil spill response options.
* Profile potential impacts from oil spills on the economy, life-style and well-being of communities and resource users.

Respond

Enhance the ability of oil spill responders to mitigate impacts of spills in Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environments.

* Fill knowledge gaps on behavior of spilled oil.
* Fill knowledge gaps on use and effectiveness of specific mitigation techniques.
* Identify and evaluate new prevention and response technologies.

Inform

Disseminate information and educate the public on the issues of oil spill prevention, response, and impacts.

* Publish scientific and technical results in the open literature.
* Brief oil spill removal organizations on OSRI products.
* Facilitate the exchange of information and ideas through workshops and other forums.
* Educate future researchers and responders through K-12 programs, undergraduate internships, and graduate fellowships.
* Convey information to the general public through various media

Partner

Partner with other organizations to take advantage of shared funding, facilities, knowledge and experience.

* Collaborate with other partners in achieving a long-term coastal and ocean observing system for Alaska.
* Coordinate with other efforts related to OSRI's mission.
* Expand OSRI's involvement in Arctic research through partnership opportunities.

Our Values

Knowledge *Seeking intellectual stimulation, new ideas, truth and understanding.*

Creativity *Finding new ways to do things innovatively.*

Achievement *Successful completion of visible tasks or projects.*

Credibility *Having believable and verifiable research and information.*

Teamwork *Cooperating with others toward a common goal.*

Competence *Being good at what we do, capable and effective.*

Communication *Open dialogue; exchange of views.*

Ethics *Demonstrating and maintaining high standards of conduct.*

Our Board

Federal Representatives
Chair, John Calder, Ph.D. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Douglas Mutter, United States Department of the Interior
Capt. Michael Inman, United States Coast Guard

State Representatives
Bob Mattson, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Mark Fink, Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Carol Fries, Alaska Department of Natural Resources

Alaska Native Representatives
Glenn Ujioka, Cordova
Pete Kompkoff, Chenega Bay

Fishing Industry Representatives
Bill Lindow, Cordova
George Levasseur, Valdez

Oil & Gas Representatives
David Totemoff Sr., British Petroleum Exploration Alaska
Doug Lentsch, Cook Inlet Spill Prevention & Response, Inc

At-Large Representatives
Susan Saupe, Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council
Joe Banta, PWS Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

Non-Voting Representatives
John Goering, Ph.D. University of Alaska Fairbanks
Charles P. Meacham, PWS Science Center Board

Executive Director, Nancy Bird
Research Program Manager, W. Scott Pegau, Ph.D.

OSRI Background

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Oil Spill Recovery Institute (OSRI) was authorized in 1990 by the United States Congress to "*identify and develop the best available techniques, equipment, and materials for dealing with oil spills in the Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environments*"; and, also to "*determine, document, assess and understand the long range effects of the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill on the natural resources of Prince William Sound. . . and the environment, the economy and the lifestyle and wellbeing of the people who are dependent on them.* (Title V, Section 5001, Oil Pollution Act of 1990)" In 1996, the act was amended to expand the area of emphasis from the Exxon Valdez oil spill region to the Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environments. A 2005 amendment extends OSRI programs to continue until one year after the completion of oil exploration and development efforts in Alaska.

OPA90 identifies the PWS Science and Technology Institute (known as the PWS Science Center) in Cordova, Alaska, as administrator and home for OSRI. Between 1992 and 1995, Congress appropriated $500,000 for the OSRI program. Since 1996, when amendments instituted a funding mechanism for OSRI, the program has received annual interest earnings from a $22.5 million portion of the National Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund.

OPA90 also set up an Advisory Board to determine policies of and programs supported by OSRI. This includes oversight of the development of strategic plans, research plans, and annual work plans. The Advisory Board includes three federal, three state, two oil and gas industry, two fishing industry, two native community, and two at-large representatives. Additionally, there are non-voting members from the Institute of Marine Science/ University of Alaska Fairbanks, and the Prince William Sound Science Center.

The OSRI Advisory Board meets, at least, twice each year to set policies and review the implementation of OSRI programs. The Board's structure includes four committees - Executive, Scientific and Technical, Financial and Work Plan - each of which meet as needed throughout the year. Annual work plans are adopted by the Advisory Board in the early fall and determine continuing projects and new project solicitations to be issued in the coming year.

OSRI's first strategic plan for oil pollution research and development (1995) focused on the risks and costs of oil spills. Recognizing GLOBEC's conclusions about our weakness in making physical and biological predictions, and the consequential impact on our understanding of damages caused by oil spills, the OSRI program incorporated GLOBEC's goal and approach to improve prediction of natural changes. This approach also improves our assessment of costs, a key element in identifying the best oil spill prevention and response technologies. The mission and goal statements of the strategic plan were reviewed and modified in 2002 and 2008. The first review led to development of a five-year Science Plan that was adopted in 2005. A new five-year research plan is in development in 2009 and will guide the direction of programs from 2010 forward.

OSRI solicited its first proposals for grant projects in late 1997. Since 1998, OSRI has awarded approximately one million dollars a year to support a wide range of projects. The projects awarded funds in any given year are outlined in the annual work plan which is, in turn, based on the five-year Science Plan (originally adopted in 2005). The Science Plan is organized around four strategic goals: Understand, Respond, Inform and Partner. To address the Understand goal, OSRI has sponsored physical oceanography and meteorological programs designed to develop a Nowcast-Forecast system for the Sound. That effort led to OSRI's support of a Prince William Sound Observing System, a pilot project for the Alaska Ocean Observing System (www.aoos.org). OSRI has also contributed to research investigations of zooplankton and fish within PWS and the Copper River Delta regions. OSRI is pleased to partner with the North Pacific Research Board in support of additional ecological research.

OSRI works with a wide array of industry and agency organizations to sponsor technological improvements for oil spill response. This includes contributing to the testing of new skimmer technologies, sensitivity index maps, and sponsoring workshops to identify best practices and research needs. With the increased desire to develop in the offshore regions of the Arctic, there is increased emphasis to improve technologies for oil spill response in ice laden waters.

OSRI sponsors educational and informational programs at all levels. It supports K-12 classroom programs and has recently worked to include more technology in the education programs. It also sponsors summer activities, undergraduate scholarships, and graduate fellowships.

For more information on OSRI sponsored projects go to **www.pws-osri.org** or call the Research Program Manager at 907-424-5800 x222.

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