



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Region 10
Chugach National Forest
Cordova Ranger District

612 Second Street
P.O. Box 280
Cordova, Alaska 99574

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File Code: 2700

Date: December 6, 2004

To: Rhonda Williams
PWSRCAC Project Manager
PO Box 3089
Valdez, AK. 99686

VDZ received
12/7/04

Re: Potential Places of Refuge

Dear Rhonda,

The Cordova Ranger District would like to provide comment and input on the Potential Places of Refuge (PPOR) proposal being considered by the USCG for Prince William Sound. In particular, we would like to focus on Jack Bay. We have been contacted by Jon Miller, a landowner in Jack Bay concerning upland resource issues regarding locating a PPOR in that location. The USFS shares several of the same concerns.

We understand that in an emergency situation that the captain of a leaking oil tanker or other marine vessel will need to make decisions on where to find a place of refuge for their vessel. We realize that due to the severity of the emergency, Jack Bay may need to become a Place of Refuge, but we feel that Jack Bay as a Place of Refuge should be a last resort, and not a first choice. If at all possible, the Forest Service would like to see vessels in distress transported back to Valdez, where they can be effectively and efficiently repaired, and potentially not affect the valuable upland resources and marine habitats.

The primary reasons the Forest Service like to see Jack Bay as a "last resort" are:

1. The high level of marine and upland recreational use Jack Bay receives from nearby Valdez would be heavily impacted by a leaking tanker being placed there.
2. The Forest Service recently acquired fee simple title to lands located in the southwest corner of Jack Bay using *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council allocated funds. The purpose of this purchase is to protect "a natural area that provides significant habitat for migratory birds and other fish and wildlife or plant species that were injured as a result of the Exxon Valdez oil spill". A "Conservation Easement" was granted in perpetuity over the 942 acres of protected property of the lands contained within this purchase. The Conservation Easement calls on the USDA Forest Service to "preserve and protect in perpetuity in order to restore, enhance, and rehabilitate natural resources injured by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the services, including recreation, tourism, and sport hunting and fishing provided by these natural resources".
3. Infrastructures that may be needed to support the "Port of Refuge" concept are generally not allowed under the covenants contained within the Conservation Easement.



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From-

To-PWS RCAC VALDEZ

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4. A Forest Service Public Recreation cabin is located in the head of Jack Bay, a State Marine Park is located in the center, and private lands and landowners would also be affected.

I am sorry about not getting this letter to you sooner, but due to a constricted timeframe for comments, and our finding out about this late in the process, this is the earliest we were able to comment. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact myself (424-4728) or Bob Behrends at (424-4729).

Thank you for your consideration of the above comments.

Sincerely,



Rebecca S. Nourse
District Ranger

cc: Steve Zemke...SO
Jon Miller...Fairbanks



"Land of a Million Heartbeats"

Cordova Ranger District



Chugach National Forest

To: Rhonda Williams

Fax #: 835-5926

Dep't.: _____

Phone #: _____

From: Bob Behrends

Fax #: 424-7214

Dep't.: _____

Phone #: 424-4729

Remarks: Rhonda - Attached is the two page
USFS - PPR input regarding Jack Bay. Please
call if you have any questions.

I hope you are feeling better soon.

Bob Behrends

Total number of pages (excluding cover): 2

Date sent: 12/7/04

Time: 8:35 am

Cordova Ranger District, P.O. Box 280, Cordova, AK 99574 (907) 424-7661, Fax 424-7214