

THE ALASKA HERITAGE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM: 1993–2006 AND BEYOND

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ABSTRACT

As a result of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, state and federal agencies developed an archaeological site stewardship program to monitor and protect prehistoric and historic sites in the spill area. The program was patterned after programs in the Lower 48 and adapted to Alaska conditions. This paper describes the development of a program for Alaska and its implementation. Site stewards on Kodiak have documented previously unknown sites, and their regular monitoring patrols have resulted in a marked decline in looting and vandalism at sites. A successful stewardship program requires a commitment of time and resources by the sponsors and active engagement with the stewards.

KEYWORDS: archaeological site protection, Kodiak archipelago, avocational archaeology

BACKGROUND

Our prehistoric past excites a powerful attraction for people of all backgrounds. Archaeology and archaeologists often evoke a sense of adventure and curiosity in the general public. We are fascinated by the people who went before us. Statistics are hard to find, but heritage tourism in the U.S. attracts millions of people to cultural and historic sites and events. One estimate is that 21 percent of domestic travel includes a heritage aspect: people visiting museums, archaeological sites, or living history programs. However, even the most optimistic observers note an “ever-increasing traveling population places more and more pressure on cultural resources. Unless we find ways of developing, managing, and sustaining our cultural heritage, we may find that we have lost the resources which originally attracted the visitors” (State of Utah 2004a).

Protecting archaeological resources is a daunting problem for land managers. Especially in Alaska, land managers are spread thin over huge, often remote areas with difficult access. In many cases little is known about the number, nature, and condition of cultural resources. At the same time visitation to remote areas is increasing, and seemingly remote areas are readily reached by locally based or nonresident commercial and sport fishermen, hunters, wildlife watchers, and other adventure tourists.

Archaeological site stewardship involves the recruitment, training, and coordination of locally based private individuals or groups to monitor and protect cultural resources. It is an invaluable tool for land managers, but just as important, it involves local people in managing and

protecting resources they consider important in their own backyards (Corbett and Reger 1994).

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS IN OTHER STATES

Currently eight states sponsor some form of archaeological site stewardship program, usually directed in some way by their state historic preservation offices (Table 1). The oldest programs began in 1984 in Texas and Arizona, but most seem to have started in the 1990s. The programs differ in organization and emphasis, but all enlist members of the public in the protection of heritage resources.

Stewardship can take a variety of forms. The most basic example is an agreement between a landowner and a state historic preservation office. This was first developed in Kentucky in 1986, and was patterned after the Nature Conservancy's Natural Areas Registry Program, designed to protect natural areas (Henderson 1989). Landowner registration is a voluntary agreement by the landowner to do no harm to a site or sites on their property. In its most basic form the agreement is made with the current landowner and expires when the property changes ownership. In Kentucky, a paid coordinator contacts landowners and works with them to develop the agreement. Sites accepted into the Kentucky program are listed on the state's Natural Areas Registry.

Florida's Bureau of Archaeological Research has three variations on the stewardship theme (State of Florida 2005). A site stewardship agreement involves a commitment by the state to provide guidance and assistance to

a landowner who agrees to notify the state if and when a property is developed. Sites enrolled in the program are listed on a stewardship registry. The Stewardship Volunteer Program coordinates volunteers to work with landowners in monitoring and maintaining sites on private lands. The Sitewatch Program enlists volunteers to visit sites and report on the condition and any maintenance or protection needs.

Virginia landowners may request their sites be designated as a state archaeological site or zone (Virginia Department of Historic Resources 2001). This provides a designated site with the same protections under the Virginia Antiquities Act as sites on state lands. Owners may also permanently protect a site by donating a preservation easement to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Programs in Washington (State of Washington 2005) and Utah (State of Utah 2004a, 2004b) are patterned after the program in Virginia. In all of these states, sites must meet the criteria for significance on the National Register of Historic Places before they can be registered in the program.

Programs in Alabama, California, Utah, Texas, and Arizona have very different emphases. The Alabama Archaeological Society (2004) has had a stewardship program since 1996. This professional society recruits members of regional archaeological societies to contact and work with landowners to protect archaeological sites on private lands. Archaeological society members work with archaeologists to protect and monitor sites. Landowners are recognized

Table 1. Summary of state stewardship programs.

	Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	California	Florida	Kentucky	Texas	Utah	Virginia
Sponsor/Coordinator	professional society	agency/private partnership	SHPO	professional society	SHPO	SHPO	SHPO	SHPO	SHPO
Paid Coordinator			Y			Y	Y		
State Listing					Y	Y			Y
Public vs. Private Lands	private	public	public/tribal	public	private	private	private	public	private
Landowner Agreements					Y	Y			Y
Landowner Assistance					Y				
Volunteers/Avocational	A	V	V	V	V		A	V	
Training Provided		Y	Y	Y					
Document Sites		Y		Y			Y	Y	
Monitor Sites	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	
Conduct Outreach			Y				Y	Y	
Stabilize/Excavate/Research	protect		Y	Y	maintain/repair		Y		

publicly in newsletters, or by listing in state registers, for preserving sites on their lands.

The Utah Division of State History is developing a network of volunteers to help land managers in site-protection activities. The state selects, trains, and links volunteers to sponsoring agencies and land managers. Program goals include documenting sites and reducing vandalism through monitoring. They also include a number of explicit outreach and educational efforts aimed at increasing public appreciation for culture and historic preservation and acceptance of historic preservation laws and regulations (State of Utah 2004b).

The Society for California Archaeology (SCA) established the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program (CASSP) in 1999 (Society for California Archaeology 2004). The SCA recruits and trains stewards to work with land manager sponsors and holds informational and training workshops, usually in response to a request for assistance by a land manager. The workshops last two days and include field trips to area sites. In 2004, over 450 people attended the workshops and there were 135 active stewards monitoring 230 sites and districts. Most of the work is focused in southern California on Bureau of Land Management lands, but the program is aggressively expanding. In addition to monitoring sites, stewards help land managers with recording sites, excavations, and laboratory work. Stewards have also cleared brush and helped stabilize sites. One group is working with the archaeologist at China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station to establish a curation facility on the base. The SCA publishes the *CASSP Newsletter* quarterly (CASSP 2004). The society also hosts workshops, on such topics as lithic or historic artifact analysis and field trips to maintain stewards' interest.

The Texas Archaeological Stewardship Network was formed in 1984 and is one of the oldest and best-established programs (Reger and Corbett 1999; Texas Historical Commission 2005). It relies on a network of locally based avocational archaeologists. Potential stewards are nominated by an advisory committee made up of professional and avocational archaeologists from universities, agencies, and amateur societies. They are selected from the membership of the many amateur societies in Texas and receive additional training to be stewards. The primary focus is to help private landowners document sites on their lands. Stewards also locate, record, and monitor sites. One major emphasis is documenting

private artifact collections. Stewards conduct a number of outreach activities and help organize Texas Archaeology Month. They also help state archaeologists with surveys and excavations and carry out emergency excavations of threatened sites. Very recently a focused group of marine stewards formed to help protect Texas' underwater resources. All the steward volunteers are encouraged to publish their work in regional and statewide journals.

Stewards in Texas are an integral part of the state's cultural and historic resources management efforts. Until the early 1990s, the program was small and very loosely organized. By 1993 the number of stewards had grown, and a restructuring of the program using information from Arizona was anticipated. The 10 archaeologists employed by the Texas Historical Commission were getting more involved in coordination and direction, but as of 2003 state budget cuts caused the Historical Commission to suspend recruitment of stewards because the department could not provide the necessary support to the volunteers (Reger and Corbett 1999; Texas Historical Commission 2005).

The Arizona Site Steward Program was established in 1985. It is a highly structured program and has a hierarchical organization with a statewide coordinator in the State Historic Preservation Office (Arizona State Parks 2005). This coordinator works with a network of regional coordinators who supervise the individual stewards. The stewards primarily operate on public lands managed by federal, state, county, and municipal governments. In 1993, the Hopi Tribe also participated and efforts were underway to include private landowners as well (Corbett and Reger 1994; Reger and Corbett 1999).

Agency personnel identify sites warranting stewardship monitoring and provide the regional coordinator with documentation, including maps, photographs, and even excavation reports. The regional coordinator prepares a site kit for the stewards. The kits include information about the site as well as instructions on specific site-monitoring tasks. The packets even include detailed information on how to find and approach a site. The regional coordinators recruit stewards, provide the necessary training, and coordinate stewards' activities in their regions. Elaborate precautions are taken to protect stewards from sometimes dangerous looters and to protect sensitive information about the sites.

The most basic steward activity is to periodically visit and monitor site conditions and report to the coordinator and land manager (Arizona State Parks 2005). Stewards

also work with archaeologists on excavations and restoration projects. They may assist in active preservation activities such as installing signs or stabilizing walls. Stewards also participate in public education and outreach.

In return for their time and effort, the stewardship program offers stewards training in site identification, artifact analysis, survey, regional and statewide prehistory, history, and Native cultures.

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM FOR ALASKA

In March 1989, the oil tanker *Exxon Valdez* ran aground on Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound. The tanker ruptured, spilling 11 million gallons (41.6 million liters) of oil into the waters of the sound. Eventually, the slick extended 740 linear km from Prince William Sound along the Alaska Peninsula past Kodiak to Chignik Bay. More than 2,100 km of coastline were oiled.

The oiled coastline had been occupied by a variety of prehistoric peoples and cultures for at least 7,000 years. The prehistoric inhabitants of this area oriented their lives to the sea and its abundant resources. Historic use also focused on the coast. Hundreds of archaeological and historic sites occur in the spill area. Rich as the known resources were, much of the area was unsurveyed and virtually unknown due to remoteness and inaccessibility.

As the Exxon company began responding to the disaster, officials were alerted to the presence and importance of cultural resources in the spill area. To comply with state and federal laws protecting cultural resources, Exxon created the *Exxon Valdez* Cultural Resource Program (Mobley et al. 1990:1). A total of 28 archaeologists plus laboratory staff were hired for cleanup work. The archaeologists comprised one of the core members of the three-person shoreline cleanup assessment teams (SCAT), along with an oil specialist and a biologist. The teams assessed the damage to each segment of shoreline and established cleanup protocols. They also monitored cleanup on sensitive segments and conducted post-cleanup damage assessments (Mobley et al. 1990:9, 95–96).

The Exxon program evaluated a number of potential direct and indirect impacts to cultural resources from the spill and associated cleanup (Mobley et al. 1990:101–114). Most of the potential threats were avoided or mitigated by the SCAT teams' recommendations for treatment and by monitoring of sensitive areas (Mobley et al. 1990:121–123). During the first summer of cleanup, condition assessments were made on 204 sites. They found recent vandalism at

16 sites (8 percent) and inadvertent human impacts on 21 or 10 percent (Mobley et al. 1990:131). The following summer, 132 sites were inspected and/or monitored. There were 28 reported incidents but none were ultimately attributed to recent human actions (Haggarty et al. 1991:155).

The cultural resource program for the *Exxon Valdez* spill highlighted the vulnerability of cultural resources to both direct and indirect human impacts. The impacts come from increased access to sites and to increased awareness of their presence. Extensive and determined efforts by the cultural resource program effectively contained the impacts. However, the cleanup itself made the extent and nature of cultural resources known to thousands of people who were previously unaware of their existence. A stewardship program to monitor sites placed at increased risk by oil spill cleanup was proposed as one of several restoration projects to be funded by the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill (EVOS) restoration trust. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) took the lead on developing the program in cooperation with the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) (Corbett and Reger 1994). The Arizona and Texas programs were contacted, and they provided information and materials. Arizona provided the model but their guidelines were revamped for Alaska. In general the Alaska program was less formally structured and involved federal agencies to a greater extent as coordinators and trainers.

Pilot programs were planned for three areas: Homer (Kachemak Bay), Prince William Sound, and Kodiak. Unfortunately, the pilot program was not funded by the EVOS trustees, and the effort stalled for several years. Meanwhile, archaeologists from OHA, FWS, and the USDA Forest Service made contacts and attempted to establish programs as resources and opportunity allowed.

In Prince William Sound, the village of Tatitlek, the Chenega Village Corporation, and Chenega Bay IRA Council sought funding for a program that would involve members not only in monitoring but in damage assessment and restoration. The Chugach Alaska Corporation, an Alaska Native regional corporation, developed a similar small-scale effort. The Forest Service, while interested in the stewardship concept, was convinced that without paying stewards the program would not work. For a number of years stewards were provided with a daily stipend while performing monitoring. When funding priorities changed the program faded as well.

The FWS archaeologist met several times with interested people in Chignik Bay on the Alaska Peninsula. A

small-scale excavation in Chignik Bay in 1993 involved a few local people (Corbett 2002). Stronger interest in sites and artifacts was evident in Chignik Lake. One artifact collection was cataloged, and in 1995 the Chignik Lake School sponsored a small project involving children from fourth grade through high school excavating three pits in the schoolyard. The project artifacts remained in the community and the teachers incorporated the dig, analysis of the artifacts, and development of a display in the school lobby into their curricula. In both communities stewardship and archaeology were seen as potential social and economic assets to the communities (Corbett and Reger 1994). The Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge staff is interested in fostering a community archaeology effort in the Chignik area.

However, local economies in coastal Alaska are heavily reliant on commercial fishing. The years following the development work in 1995–96 were disastrous fishing seasons, and interest in stewardship plummeted as people saw their livelihoods evaporate. Several interested people left the area for work elsewhere. The main obstacle to reinvigorating the effort is the lack of a locally focused archaeologist to guide the effort and mentor stewards and students. The potential for developing a dynamic program in the Chignik Bay region is very strong.

In Kachemak Bay, at the mouth of Cook Inlet in southcentral Alaska, contact was made with several individuals who hoped to form a local amateur group that would incorporate stewardship as one of their activities. A list of potential stewards was drawn up and several sites were selected for possible monitoring (Reger and Corbett 1999). Archaeologists from OHA and FWS made several trips to meet potential stewards and visit sites. The OHA contact for this region retired in 2000, and the local coordinators were unable to devote as much time to the project as they had hoped. Sites were monitored through the 1990s but the effort seems to have lapsed.

Not originally selected for the pilot program, the Kenai area was incorporated when a steward coordinator stepped forward in 1993. Several stewards were recruited from the anthropology club at the Kenai Peninsula College. The stewards monitored several vandalized sites and reported a dramatic drop in damage. Their most successful effort was in monitoring the historic Kasilof Cannery Watchman's Cabin (KEN-00352) at the mouth of the Kasilof River. Considered the oldest standing building on the Kenai Peninsula, it was deteriorating through a combination of natural factors associated

with age and vandalism. Located at a popular spot for weekend partying, the structure was in serious danger of being destroyed. Stewards made regular monitoring patrols. They cleared vegetation and soil away from the foundation and regularly cleaned up trash and fire pits. Broken windows and doors were boarded up to slow the deterioration. Due to steward interest, OHA lobbied the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to transfer the cabin to the Alaska state park system, and the site became a part of the park system in 1999. Kenai area stewards also helped to test the Moose Creek and Slikok Creek sites when development or restoration projects posed threats to buried resources (Reger and Corbett 1999). As an outgrowth of the EVOS-supported program, the FWS became partners with Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI, another Alaska Native regional corporation) to recruit and train stewards to record and monitor sites on the upper Kenai River as part of the public use planning process for the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. For two years the stewards monitored the sites, recorded their conditions, and cleaned up trash. Eventually the contact at CIRI moved on and this effort too lapsed.

Kodiak was seen by the developers of the stewardship effort to be critical for the development of a viable program (Corbett and Reger 1994). Early contacts were made with the Kodiak Area Native Association, which expressed interest but also skepticism for the program. The FWS also made early contact with the Northwest Kodiak Setnetters Association in 1996. Several stewards were recruited at this meeting. The stewards were provided with information on their sites and presented with disposable cameras to record their condition. Fishing families in Uganik and Uyak bays participated informally for several years. Written reports were rare, but verbal reports and photographs of sites were submitted (Reger and Corbett 1999).

SUCCESS AT LAST

In 1998, the FWS contacted the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository in Kodiak about a partnership to foster a stewardship program in the region. The museum staff enthusiastically agreed and outlined a three-part site protection program. The cornerstone was to continue and grow the nascent stewardship program with the setnetters in Uganik Bay. A secondary goal was to work with state and federal law enforcement officials to increase their recognition and appreciation for cultural resource crimes. Finally the museum hoped to provide information to the

Kodiak-based commercial fishing fleet (Reger and Corbett 1999; Steffian and Saltonstall, this volume)

Funding provided to FWS by the EVOS trustees in 1998 supported the museum in developing their program (see Steffian and Saltonstall, this volume). The museum contacted the Uganik Bay setnetters who had been working with the Fish and Wildlife Service. A recruiting open house and lecture was advertised locally and presented at the museum. Information packets were presented to potential stewards for recording their sites. During the summer a museum archaeologist visited several sites with stewards. During this initial effort five sites in Uganik Bay were visited and monitored.

EVOS funding for cultural resources restoration work ended in 1998. From 1999 through 2001, the Fish and Wildlife Service found funding to continue its support of the Alutiiq Museum partnership. In 2002, the museum submitted a Challenge Cost-Share proposal to the Fish and Wildlife Service for funding to expand the stewardship program in conjunction with regional reconnaissance surveys in lesser-known parts of the island. The proposal was funded, and stewardship has successfully competed for Challenge Cost-Share funds through 2005. Since this is an annual competition, with funding far from certain, both partners seek to identify more secure and stable funding sources to maintain the program.

The museum program has followed a standard pattern for the last six years. The stewardship program is advertised in the museum newsletter and the local newspaper, the *Kodiak Mirror*. An open house is held with a presentation on Kodiak archaeology. Stewards sign up for service and are presented with recording materials and disposable cameras. Most now use digital cameras of their own to record site information. The museum curator, Patrick Saltonstall, makes regular visits to work with the stewards as well as to conduct regional reconnaissance surveys to identify new sites.

At the end of the season, museum staff follow up with the stewards to collect their monitoring reports and photographs. Many stewards submit written reports but some provide detailed information verbally to the museum staff. The results of the season's efforts are presented in a written report to the Fish and Wildlife Service, and articles are written for the museum newsletter (Steffian and Eufemio 2002, Steffian et al. 2003, 2004). In 2005, the program received a national write-up in a Fish and Wildlife Service newsletter.

As an adjunct to the monitoring of sites by the stewards, the museum staff has undertaken a program of site inventory in little-studied portions of Kodiak, particularly in the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. Surveys have been conducted on Ayakulik, Red, Sturgeon, and Uganik rivers, around Olga Bay, and around Red, Akalura, and Uganik lakes. In many cases local stewards have helped with transportation and with reporting on sites (Steffian et al. 2003, 2004). The Olga Bay area had long been of interest for monitoring, and in 2003 a locally based volunteer stepped forward. With assistance from the museum he has been monitoring sites, educating other area residents, and recruiting additional stewards.

RESULTS OF STEWARDSHIP MONITORING IN KODIAK, 1999–2004

In 1999, the program started with six families and individuals participating. Twenty-nine sites were monitored. By 2004, 33 stewards (families and individuals) had monitored 140 sites in six different areas of Kodiak. Multiple observations have been made at 45 sites (Table 2). Stewards have consistently collected information on site condition, including assessments of impacts due to erosion, animals, human vandalism, and modern use. They record whether the condition of a site is improving or deteriorating. In addition, stewards have helped the museum staff locate and record 76 previously unrecorded sites (Steffian et al. 2004:37–38).

With this information, FWS and the Alutiiq Museum can begin analyzing trends and take steps to address real issues in the management of the sites. For example, the steward information indicates that the greatest threat to archaeological sites in Kodiak is erosion. More than 55 percent of the sites monitored have been subject to some erosion. However, the stewards note that at 34 percent of the sites the erosion is proceeding at a stable rate, while at 43 percent it has slowed or stopped. Only 22 percent of

Table 2. Kodiak stewardship program results.

Year	# Stewards	Sites Monitored	Areas Monitored	New Sites Found
1999	6	29	4	12
2000	8	29	3	4
2001	10	42	3	0
2002	9	30	3	0
2003	10	73	5	47
2004	9	31	5	14

the sites show increased rates of erosion. Their information also shows geographical variation in rates of erosion as well as other kinds of damage. All of this precise and detailed information can be used to direct scarce resources to real and documented problems.

Interestingly, while the threat of vandalism and looting was the catalyst for development of the program, the stewards' information places this threat in third place after erosion (55 percent) and animal activity (27 percent), with a 17 percent sample incidence. However, their information on looting activities is providing detailed information to allow response to that threat as well. The museum has noted a positive correlation between erosion and looting (Steffian et al. 2003:15). As program developers had hoped, the presence of active site monitoring seems to have slowed the incidence of vandalism to zero in Uganik Bay, the heart of the stewardship effort. Most of the vandalism reported in 2004 was at sites that were newly located and added to the program that year.

In 2004, the Alutiiq Museum was under contract to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to excavate a Native allotment prior to its sale. During the fieldwork several stewards in Uganik Bay were able to visit and tour the site and some were able to participate in the actual excavations.

OTHER LOCAL SUCCESSES

Lands on the Aliulik Peninsula in southwestern Kodiak were purchased by FWS from the Akhiok/Kaguyak Village Corporation in 1995 as part of an EVOS habitat restoration project (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2005:Appendix H). After this acquisition Andy Runyan, a long-time hunting guide, approached FWS about monitoring sites in southeastern Kodiak. His hunting camp in Kiavak Bay is immediately adjacent to one of the most significant sites in Alaska archaeology—Old Kiavak. Since Clark's (1997) work at the site concluded in 1963, there had been no reported work at the site. Runyan drew a sketch map of the site and made a verbal report on site condition, which was followed with photographic documentation. In consultation with the FWS archaeologist he collected exposed artifacts to prevent their unauthorized collection by hunters or fishermen visiting the area. He made regular reports on site condition until his untimely death in a car accident in 2004.

In 2003, John Nichols of False Pass reported an eroding site on Unimak Island at the end of the Alaska Peninsula. During a visit to the Fish and Wildlife Service

regional office, Nichols offered to patrol the coast of the island in his private plane and report on site conditions. He signed on as a Fish and Wildlife volunteer and received a special use permit from the refuge to allow access to the sites by plane. He provided locations and descriptions of 18 previously unrecorded sites on Unimak Island. When human remains began eroding from a prehistoric site, the Fish and Wildlife Service opened consultations with the community of False Pass to develop a strategy for recovery and protection. Nichols was empowered by the community to regularly patrol the site and recover exposed remains for reburial. Nichols moved away from False Pass in early 2005 for economic reasons, an issue that will be discussed later.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR KODIAK?

The Kodiak program is well established with a solid core of dedicated and energetic stewards. The effort remains dynamic, evolving to better address local needs and conditions. Recently the museum coordinators have begun to address a new range of stewardship issues. The first is to expand the existing stewardship program into a greater number of regions with identified sites at risk. This effort began in earnest when the museum was contacted by an Olga Bay fisherman who wanted to participate in the program. In 2005, sites were monitored and the local coordinator recruited additional stewards. In 2006, a steward from Afognak Island joined the effort. Other areas needing stewards are Moser Bay and Viekada Bay, both located near population centers on Kodiak.

Another critical need is to reach out to residents of rural communities on Kodiak Island. The communities of Larson Bay and Karluk own large areas of land with abundant historic and prehistoric resources. In addition, residents of these communities own private lands along the outer coast and in Uyak Bay. Many of these parcels include archaeological sites.

The stewardship effort on Kodiak is beginning to face issues common to every maturing volunteer effort. The first is maintaining the interest of the existing core of stewards. This dedicated group has been monitoring and documenting sites for six years. It is time for the sponsoring entities, especially the Fish and Wildlife Service, to provide additional opportunities and incentives or risk losing stewards, along with their local support.

Related to this is the need to respond to the information collected by the stewards. With the information they have provided, the Fish and Wildlife Service can

identify problem areas and take steps to address specific problems. While the gathering of the information in itself is an invaluable service, a lack of action to address identified problems could be interpreted as agency indifference. Discussions with the staff of the Alutiiq Museum in the fall of 2005 have begun to identify potential projects to stabilize sites or mitigate the impacts of erosion in the most affected areas. Mitigation and stabilization projects will make every effort to incorporate existing stewards as fully as they are willing and able to be involved. Active fieldwork could maintain stewards' interest as well as assist in recruiting new stewards or involving members of local communities in more active site-preservation efforts.

DISCUSSION

All efforts to date have readily identified energetic, interested people willing to participate in a stewardship program. The effort has attracted the interest of a number of landowning agencies. Where stewardship efforts have persisted for awhile, the benefits to the landowner and cultural resources have been obvious. Nevertheless, stewardship has not enjoyed widespread success across Alaska, for three interrelated reasons.

The fortunes of Alaska's fishing economy had an unexpected effect on stewardship in three pilot communities. When salmon runs are large and prices are high, people stay in their rural communities and have the time and resources to devote to stewardship. When runs falter or prices are low, people move away from the area to make a living. This simple fact partially accounts for the derailed effort in the Chignik area and effectively stopped it cold in False Pass. Even in Kodiak, the number of stewards has fluctuated due to the changing fortunes of the fishermen who form the backbone of the effort. Interestingly, during a couple of years when the fish runs on Kodiak were smaller than expected, the stewards who remained had more time to devote to stewardship and their activity actually intensified. Many more sites were located, documented, and monitored during poor fishing years in 2002 and 2003 than when the runs were strong and people could spend more time working.

A second limiting factor is the intense seasonality of stewardship monitoring in Alaska. Especially with setnetters in Kodiak, many participants live elsewhere for most of the year. Their active stewardship is limited to a few short

months in summer. Even where stewards remain close to the region they are monitoring, winters are not conducive to archaeological fieldwork. One challenge for coordinators and sponsors at that time of year is to recontact stewards and rekindle their interest.

However, the biggest hurdle is that participating land managers have been unable to provide the support necessary to sustain stewards' interest. The program is working in Kodiak because of strong support by the Alutiiq Museum, the locally based coordinator and mentor. The museum is a particularly strong influence because of the knowledge and experience of the staff and their dedication to protecting the cultural treasures of the archipelago. This institution enjoys strong support from a wide range of constituents on the island.

Stewardship worked well in the Kenai area when there was a reliable locally based steward coordinator or sponsor. This coordinator had good solid backup from the OHA until the contact there retired. For about five years this program enjoyed good success and posted some tangible achievements.

The two other long-term successes involved individuals in False Pass and Kodiak. Both were highly motivated and intensely interested in the history and resources of their respective areas. Their motivation and energy made it easy for the Fish and Wildlife Service archaeologist to maintain contact and sustain their interest with only a modest investment of time. This situation may work on a small scale with exceptional individuals but is clearly not sufficient to develop a statewide program.

The key to a successful stewardship program is a core of motivated, capable, interested stewards. But the stewards cannot effectively maintain a program without locally based hands-on mentoring from the benefiting agencies. They also need the encouragement and ferment of idea exchange between different locales—a newsletter to tie various efforts together and expand a community of stewards. One obvious need is for active coordination on a statewide level, based out of the Office of History and Archaeology.

The challenge is huge and the resources scarce, but these pilot efforts make it clear—stewardship works. Stewardship provides land managers with tangible, measurable benefits in resource protection and in building relationships with members of the public.

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