“The Kodiak Islands may be the most important totally intact ecosystem in the United States.”

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, 1995
Archipelago structure
Location in Gulf of Alaska
Maritime climate
No permafrost
Two ecoregions present
Coastal rainforest ends at Afognak
Lush rainforest
Volcanic soil
Active volcanoes west of Afognak
Brown bear density

Brown Bear Density
Estimates of brown bear population density shown on this map were obtained between 1985 and 1992. They are based on aerial surveys, capture, marking, and resighting of individual bears, and the use of radiotelemetry to track bear movements.

Beans/100 sq mi  Beans/1,000 sq km
> 45         > 175
13 - 45     50-175
< 13         < 50

Outside of normal range
Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Land of abundance
Topography
Geographic summary

• Irregular coast amidst active currents & tides

• Temperate maritime climate, no permafrost

• Westernmost extent of coastal rainforest in N.A.

• Two ecoregions – Pacific Coast/Alaska Peninsula

• Volcanic soils

• Gentle topography
Human history
Political Land Status

• 1741 Bering expedition claims Alaska
• 1784 Shelikof bases Russian fur trade HQ at Kodiak
• 1867 Treaty of Cession, U.S. buys Alaska from Russia
• 1892 Pres. Harrison creates Afognak Forest & Fish Culture Reserve as a “Yellowstone for salmon”
• 1907 Pres. Roosevelt makes Afognak 1st unit of Chugach N.F.
• 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
• 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, 1989
Exxon Valdez oil spill map
Natural Resources Damages Act & Clean Water Act fines create $1 billion Exxon Settlement

Oil spill response was guided by a federal court consent decree.

Funds were allocated by a six member state & federal trustee council guided by the goal of "replacement of equivalent resources injured by the spill.”

$400 million directed to habitat conservation

“Link to injury & potential for benefit” criteria of NRDA made Afognak the No. 1 target for habitat funds even though it was lightly oiled. $155 million spent on Afognak.
Stakeholders were key to Exxon oil spill habitat conservation politics
Afognak Land Status Odyssey:
Afognak received 1st oil spill dollars, the most oil spill dollars ($155 million), set precedent for private inholding acquisitions within public land equal to 2.5 Yellowstones in size.
Afognak conservation earned bi-partisan support
Now comes BP Deepwater Horizon restoration
Outlook for BP environmental fines and restoration strategy

- **NRDA** fine to range from $1 billion to $10 billion
- **Clean Water Act** fine will range from $5 to $20 billion

Environmental fines could total **$30 billion**

- Pending legislation seeks 80% of the fines for environmental restoration targeted to **Gulf coastal states** including **Louisiana wetlands** and **water quality from the Mississippi** and other watersheds
Hopefully NRDA criteria will apply to spending BP environmental fines

Link to injury

&

Potential for benefit
The spill region includes Gulf, Mississippi River and major tributaries.
National forests in green, wildlife refuges in brown
Mississippi River floodplain likely to be a priority investment area
Converting flood-prone farmland to wetlands offers clean water, migratory bird and carbon storage benefits
Flood-prone farms adjacent to existing conservation areas should rank high.
High-range dollar figure for BP fine could allocate $4 billion to non-coastal areas including Weeks Act forests.

Qualified flood plain forests can be enhanced through fee purchase or conservation easements.
Restoring America’s Greatest River is a worthy goal of BP fine settlement
The BP fine offers the nation the largest forest resource benefit since the Weeks Act