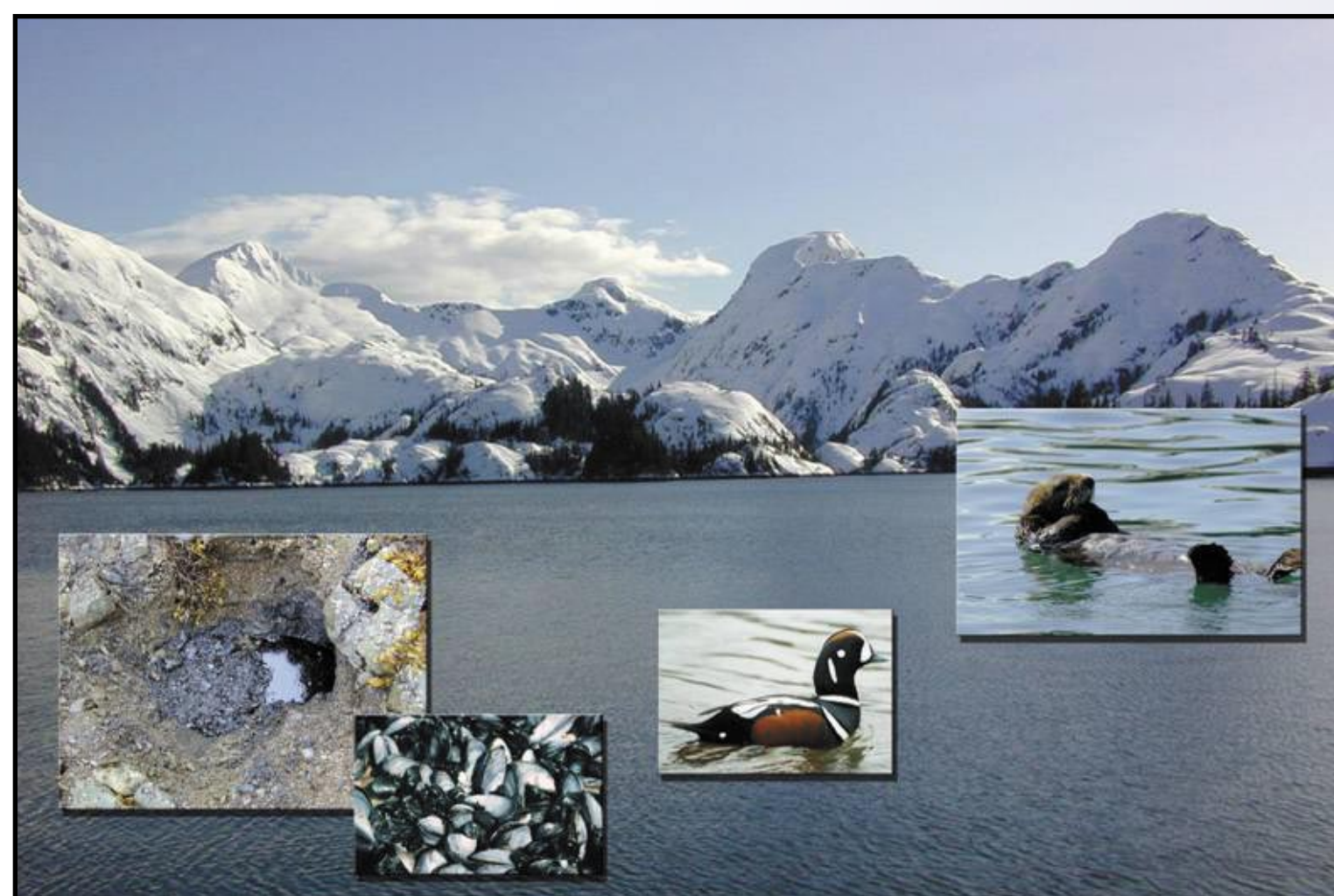# The *Exxon Valdez* Trustee Hydrocarbon Database A Successful Long-term Data Management System

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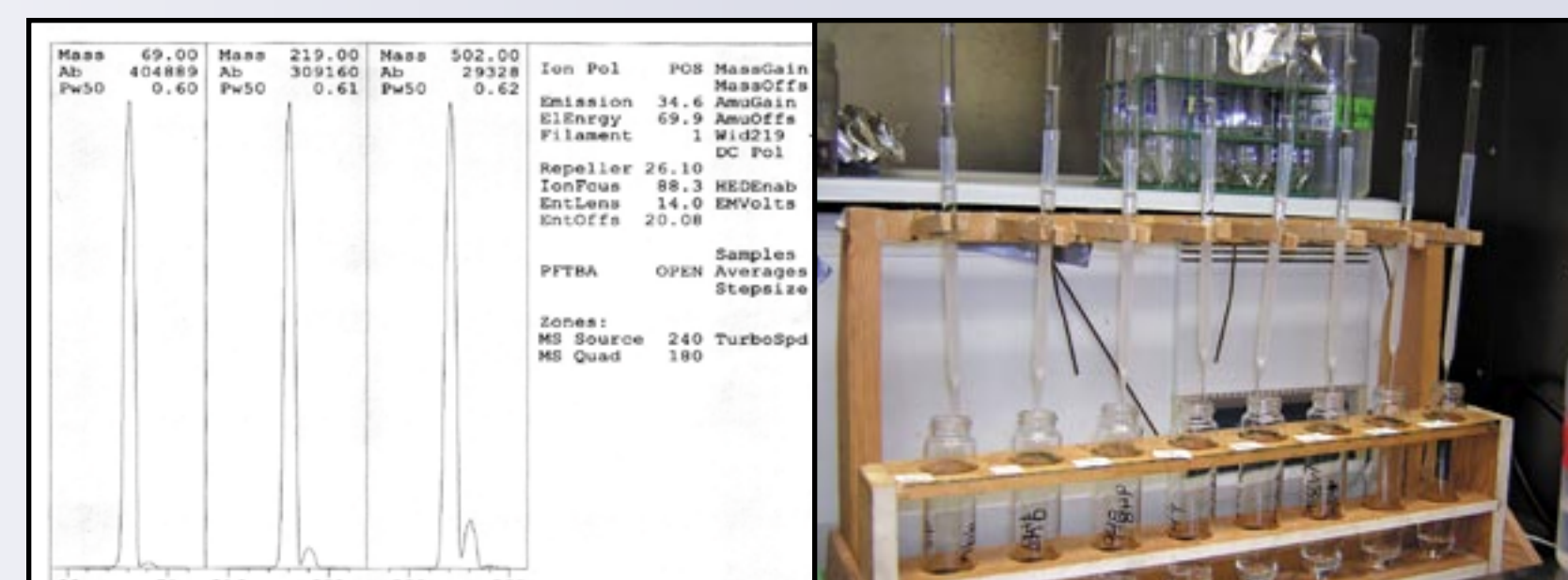bonita.nelson@noaa.gov

This Dataset Contains:

50,000 Samples Collected

500 Locations

50 Projects

100 PIs From Trustee Agencies & Contractors

17,000 Samples Analyzed for **63** Hydrocarbons


18 Sampling Seasons

Long-term Dataset Dilemma
Staying the same as the times change

This database is the complete record of samples collected for hydrocarbon analysis for Trustee funded projects. It was initiated within days of the spill and is updated annually.

The structure is based on an inflexible core system of data collection and tracking consisting of a paper chain of custody documentation process.

This has allowed us to easily access and maintain data throughout the past 18 years despite changes in: software, storage media, database managers, PIs, project terminations and in Trustee focus from Response to NRDA to Restoration to GEM.

Core Rules Are Not Flexible
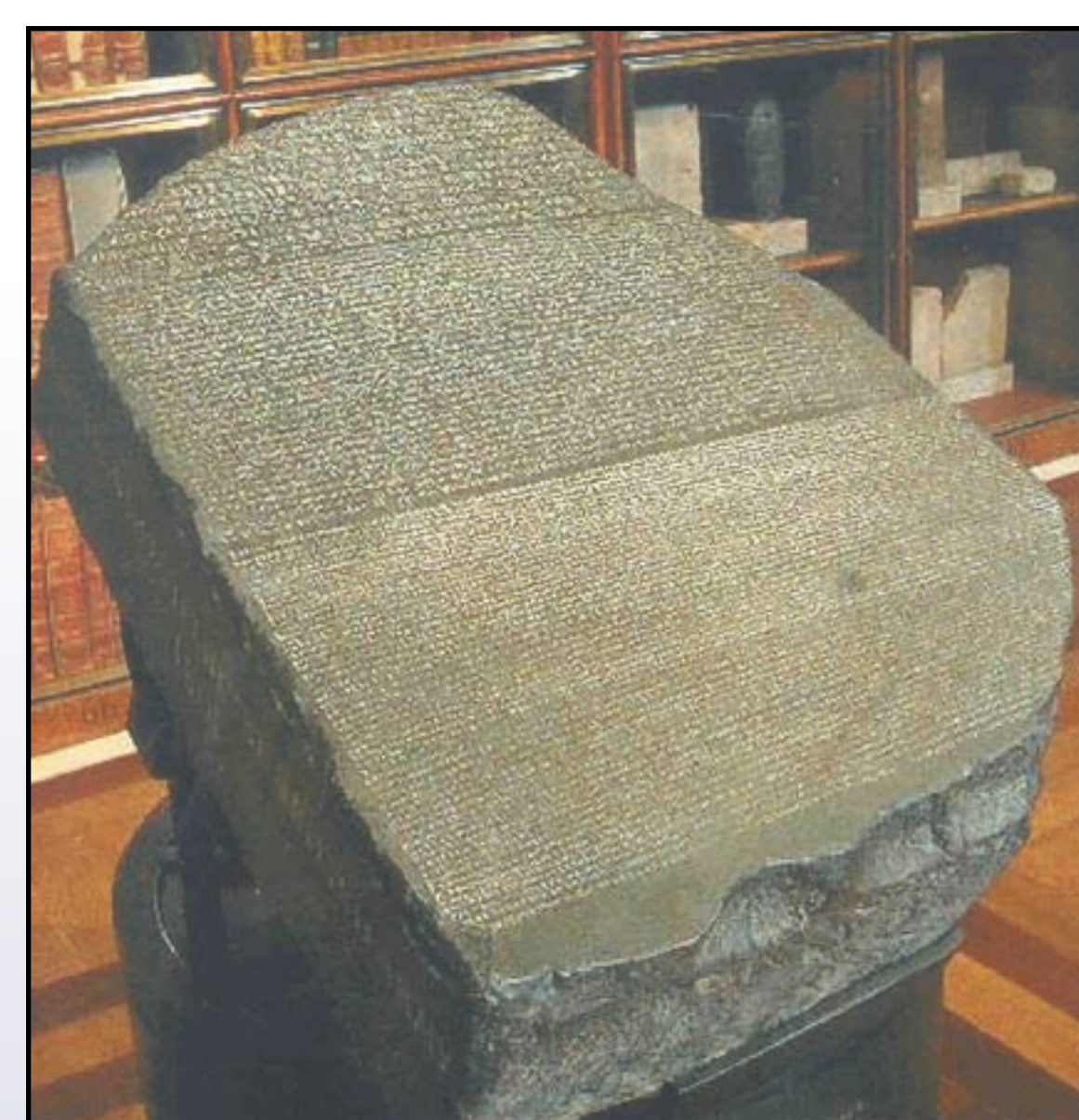
A simple paper trail is analogous to the Rosetta Stone for future interpretation

1. There must be an independent method for auditing data quality. We use a paper trail involving custody sheets and sample tracking.

2. Basic data structure must be simple and fields limited to those common to entire data set. PIs keep detailed information.

3. Basic metadata in printed handbook for easy reference for data coding.