



# Not One Drop: Betrayal and Courage in the Wake of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill

*Riki Ott*

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## **Not One Drop: Betrayal and Courage in the Wake of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill** Riki Ott

Betrayed by oilmen's promises in the 1970s, the people of Prince William Sound, Alaska, awaken on March 14, 1989, to the nation's largest oil spill. *Not One Drop* is an extraordinary tale of ordinary lives ripped apart by disaster and of community healing through building relationships of trust. This story offers critical lessons for a society traumatized by political divides and facing the looming catastrophe of global climate change.

Author Riki Ott, a rare combination of commercial salmon "fisherm'am" and PhD marine biologist, describes firsthand the impacts of oil companies' broken promises when the Exxon Valdez spills most of its cargo and despoils thousands of miles of shore. Ott illustrates in stirring fashion the oil industry's 20-year trail of pollution and deception that predated the tragic 1989 spill and delves deep into the disruption to the fishing community of Cordova over the following 19 years. In vivid detail, she describes the human trauma coupled inextricably with that of the sound's wildlife and its long road to recovery.

Ott critically examines shifts in scientific understanding of oil-spill effects on ecosystems and communities, exposes fundamental flaws in governance and the legal system, and contrasts hard won spill-prevention and spill-response measures in the sound to dangerous conditions on the Alaska pipeline. Her human story, varied background, professional training, and activist heart lead readers to the root of the problem: a clash of human rights and corporate power embedded in law and small-town life.

*Not One Drop* is as much an example of how too many corporate owners and political leaders betray everyday citizens as it is one of the universal struggle to maintain heart, to find the courage to overcome disaster, and to forge a new path from despair to hope.

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