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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**KENAI CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL MAKES IT FOUR IN A ROW AT 20th
CARING FOR THE KENAI COMPETITION...**

Kenai, April 17, 2010– With an idea to encourage private investment in alternative energy sources, Freya Chay became the fourth KCHS student is as many years to claim top honors and a \$1,500 cash prize at the annual Caring for the Kenai (CFK) environmental awareness and disaster preparedness competition, sponsored by Chevron and Tesoro. “It was a great learning experience,” said Chay, “I basically took an idea that was passed in a Borough Resolution to the state level, spent my spring break in Juneau testifying and was successful in getting my amendment included as part of Senate Bill 220.” The amendment would allow local governments to exempt alternative energy systems from real property tax assessment.

The CFK essay prompt challenges high school students to respond to the question, “What can I do, invent, or create to better care for the environment of the Kenai Peninsula, or to improve the area’s preparedness for a natural disaster?” Taking second place and earning \$1,000 was Nikiski student Leif Olson, “I invented a natural disaster preparedness stove that you can carry with you or in your car in the event of an emergency and I built it from recycled #10 cans,” he explained.

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(Page 2 CFK winners cont.)

In third place and claiming an \$800 prize was Luke Michael of Soldotna High School(SoHi), he wrote a lesson plan for elementary school teachers that he hopes will help stop the advance of Northern Pike on the Peninsula, “My curriculum will teach fourth through eighth graders about the dangers of invasive Pike on the Peninsula,” said Michael.

Taking fourth place honors and \$650 was Madison Cunningham, a KCHS freshman from Rick Frederic’s class, “My mom told me to take some old banners in her office and throw them away and I was looking for a CFK idea when it hit me to make water proof disaster preparedness document bags from the old banner material rather than putting them in the dump,” explained Cunningham. Coming in fifth and winning \$550 was teacher Kelly Johnson’s River City Academy team of Kyle Lemmon, Levi Burns, and Ian Dukowitz, who discovered a wind generator that can be installed on city light posts. The team has secured permits and funding for the generators to be installed at the Kenai Visitors & Cultural Center this summer. In sixth place and winning \$400 was Kenny Werth from SoHi, who found a solution to keep Soldotna’s settling ponds from freezing thus preventing toxic spring run offs into the Kenai River.

In addition to the \$6,000 in cash awards for the finalists this year Tesoro, Chevron and the Kenai River Sportfishing Assoc, awarded \$15,000 to the science departments of schools that participated in CFK 2010. This year SOHI, Nikiski, Ninilchik, Kenai, and River City Academy all used CFK as part of their classroom curriculum. Each school receives \$500 for participating and the remainder of the \$15,000 will be allocated proportionately to how their students placed this year. Additionally, 35 some semi-finalist entries received special recognition awards from community sponsors.

Other CFK finalists who earned \$250 cash each for their oral presentations were Jay Ulen from SoHi who proposed replacement of street lights with energy saving LED bulbs.

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(Page 3 CFK winners cont.)

Andrew Barcus from KCHS investigated bio-fuel production on the Kenai. J.D. Ahlberg also of KCHS showed the judges how a smart sponge could work in city drains to eliminate toxic runoffs. Kaitlyn Louthan of KCHS found an eco-valve to reduce water usage and help the local environment “One toilet at a Time.” Nikiski student Cydney Spurgeon found that if we change from using salt on our highways to a substance know as CMA 40 we can reduce the potential for road kill moose. KCHS freshman Makenzi Magiera plans to replace the KCHS track buy collecting and using recycled material from running shoes.

In addition to the cash awards all finalists received a 20th CFK Anniversary hooded sweatshirt. Saturday April 24th, all finalists and guests will attend an awards banquet hosted in their honor by Chevron and Tesoro at Central Peninsula Hospital. Governor Sean Parnell will be present to honor this year’s winners. All of the more than 400 students who participated in this year’s CFK program will receive a hand knit mountain hat from Nepal.

CFK Oral Presentation Judges included Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Dave Carey, KPBSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Steve Atwater, John Zager, Chevron Alaska General Manager, Steve Hansen, Tesoro Nikiski Plant Manager, Robert Ruffner executive director Kenai Watershed Forum, Steve Russell Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Program Specialist, Richard Erkeneff Kenai River Sportfishing Association board president, and last year’s CFK 1st Place winner Olivia Pfeifer. Other CFK details are available at www.caringforthekenai.com as well as www.facebook.com/caringforthekenai and www.twitter.com/cfkenai.

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(Recorded actualities with top students & KCHS teacher Kristin Davis are available on MP3 file by request from sikorski@caringforthekenai.com)