

# THE OBSERVER

January 2013 Volume 23, No.1

A publication of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

## Study looks at changes in Columbia Glacier and effects on oil transportation

This year, the council is sponsoring a project to study Columbia Glacier, looking at its retreat and loss of ice. The council hopes to learn more about possible future effects of icebergs on tanker traffic in Prince William Sound.

Columbia Glacier has long been of interest to the council. The glacier has been in a state of rapid retreat since the early 1980s, the reduction in mass has been mostly in the form of calving



Columbia glacier ice floating in Prince William Sound. Photo by Bill Rome.

icebergs. These icebergs sometimes drift with the current and the wind into the vessel traffic lanes used by oil tankers in Prince William Sound. In 1989, the Exxon Valdez grounded on Bligh Reef while avoiding ice in the tanker lanes.

In the late 1990s, the council helped fund the Columbia Glacier Iceberg Monitoring Project, pioneering research first conducted by Austin Post and Wendell Tangborn. That project studied the potential for calved ice to damage oil tankers.

This year, the council is sponsoring a continuation of the original project, conducted by two well-known glaciologists, Tad Pfeffer and Shad O'Neel. Pfeffer is regarded for his work in glacial retreat and for studying tidewater glaciers worldwide. O'Neel has been extensively involved with research conducted at Columbia Glacier.

As part of this project, Pfeffer and O'Neel recently began looking at available data for

See page 4, **GLACIER**

## Updated tanker oil spill plans for Sound approved in November

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation approved the new Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan and associated response plans for individual vessels effective November 2, 2012.

These plans—usually known as contingency plans—are prepared by oil tanker operators subject to state approval. The operators specify what they will do to prevent and clean up oil spills from their vessels.

During the review period, the council called for several updates and improvements to the plans.

In 18 pages of formal comments submitted to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation on Oct. 12, the council made a number of recommendations for improving the contingency plans before they were given final approval.

One recommendation dealt with down-

See page 4, **RESPONSE PLANS**

## Long-time staff member Stan Jones to retire

Stan Jones, the council's director of administration and external affairs, will be retiring after more than 17 years of service to the council.



Stan Jones

Born in Anchorage, Jones worked in newspapers and public radio before joining the citizens' council in 1997. His stories for the Anchorage Daily News on the Exxon Valdez spill helped the paper win several regional and national awards.

See page 5, **STAN JONES**

Alyeska's fire response team took top awards in a state conference in September. Here, Alyeska Firefighter Kurtis Carnahan competes in the fire extinguisher event. For more on this award, see page 3. Photo courtesy of Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.



AK Chamber of Commerce - AK Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Assoc. - Chenega Bay - Chugach Alaska Corp. - Cordova - CDFU - Homer - Kenai Peninsula Borough - Kodiak - Kodiak Island Borough - Kodiak Village Mayors - OSREC - Port Graham Corp. - PWS Aquaculture Corp. - Seldovia - Seward - Tatitlek - Valdez - Whittier

### INSIDE THE OBSERVER

Bob Jaynes works hard to protect beloved Sound, p. 2



Highlights of recent council activities and news, p. 6

Fall drills and exercises test industry spill response plans, p. 2

Swanson: What will it take to get the best available escort and towing technology for Prince William Sound?, p. 3

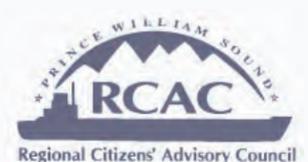


Council hires librarian to manage document collection, p. 7

Community Corner: Outreach activities help us connect with others in our region, p. 8

Alyeska: Alyeska fire brigade wins top awards at state event, p. 3

Ocean science festival held in Cordova, coming to Valdez, p. 5



NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ANCHORAGE, AK  
PERMIT NO. 836

**Volunteer Spotlight****Bob Jaynes works hard to protect beloved Sound**

In a conversation with Robert "Bob" Jaynes, his dedication to and love of Prince William Sound is immediately apparent.

Jaynes has been a member of the council's Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System since 2004, chairing that committee since 2006. He has been operating a boat on the Sound for 22 years, licensed as a captain by the Coast Guard for 18 of those years.

Originally from California, Jaynes' work first brought him to Alaska in the 1980s while working for the Air Force.

"After working several different jobs, like you do when you're in your younger years," Jaynes said, "I finally ended up working civil service at McClellan Air Force Base."

Jaynes started out working on fighter aircraft, eventually working his way into the engineering department. While at this position, he spent a total of six and a half years traveling back and forth to Vietnam to work on crashed, battle-damaged aircraft in the field.

After the Vietnam war, the Alaska Air Command, interested in his background in aircraft repair, offered him a position at Eielson Air Force Base near North Pole, Alaska. Jaynes was to set up and lead the battle damaged aircraft repair program for the A-10 aircraft. Jaynes wrote lesson plans and designed a trailer that would carry an airplane triage operation. With this trailer, a group of five trained personnel would



Robert "Bob" Jaynes

be able to repair aircraft in the field.

After the creation of the curriculum, Jaynes was asked to help write regulations for battle damage aircraft repair for the entire Air Force. Once the regulations were completed, Jaynes worked for several years as part of a five man crew specializing in hard to repair A-10 aircraft and training military personnel.

"Anytime the military had an aircraft that they were completely stumped on, they called us in."

Besides Vietnam, Jaynes' work for the Air Force allowed him to travel to Thailand, China, Guam, Japan, Korea, and Norway.

Jaynes remained at this job until the aircraft repair program in Alaska changed to a different type of aircraft. He returned to McClellan for a year and a half until it closed in 1995, when he opted for early retirement.

"I immediately told them I was going back to Alaska!"

Eighteen years from the first time he set foot in Alaska, Jaynes and his wife, Del, moved back to North Pole.

"I spent the biggest share of a \$25,000 bonus so that I could come back."

Jaynes and his wife opened up Delsbrat Fishing Charters in Valdez. They have been in the charter fishing business since then. Jaynes spends most of his summers on the water, Del joining him when she's not busy at her bed and breakfast, Del's Bunk and Chow.

He and Del will be celebrating 25 years of marriage in 2013. Jaynes talks proudly about his and Del's six children, 13 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. Many live in North Pole and Fairbanks.

Jaynes was elected in 2012 to chair a new council group made up of chairs and co-chairs of the council's standing committees. This new group works mostly on joint committee projects. Jaynes said that this new group has already helped improve communication among committee members.

"We are still in a planning stage, but eventually I believe it will be very beneficial to the council."

Jaynes spoke about a recently successful council project, the Marine Fire Symposium. This class teaches land-based firefighters from

Alaska's coastal communities how to respond to a fire on board a vessel.

"I expect that we are probably going to end up having the biggest turnout for the next symposium that we've ever had," Jaynes said about this October's upcoming symposium.

"It's an absolute necessity," Jaynes added, "they have to have that training to move around a ship and know what to do."

"If you don't have trained people, you're in trouble."

The committee also has several projects dealing with ice calving from Columbia Glacier.

The council owns a radar signal processing system which monitors the tanker lanes for ice. The processor takes data from Coast Guard radar and is housed in an Alyeska-owned building. Jaynes says this has been a successful partnership.

The committee is also working on a project to determine how much longer Columbia Glacier will be calving icebergs into Prince William Sound. (See article on page 1)

"A lot of our projects have to do with the amount of ice that's out there," Jaynes said, "We need to know how many years we are going to be looking at ice [in the tanker lanes], how many years the tugs are going to have to go out on iceberg watch, how long the Coast Guard is going to have to monitor that system."

Jaynes also believes that more people need to know about the work of the council.

"For some reason, people throughout the U.S., even Alaska, even downtown Valdez, have never heard of us," Jaynes said.

Jaynes believes that any body of water that has big shipping on it could benefit from a citizens' council.

"I believe that eventually it's going to happen," Jaynes said about the spread of such councils, "I hope that it doesn't happen due to a catastrophe."

Jaynes appreciates the turnout that the Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System committee gets from industry and agencies, such as Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System, Crowley and the Coast Guard.

"We get tremendous turnout from the ex-officios, every meeting," Jaynes said, "they have things to say that really need to be listened to."

**Fall drills and exercises test industry spill response plans**

By **ROY ROBERTSON**

Council Project Manager

This past October 3 and 4, Tesoro conducted the annual large-scale oil spill response exercise to test the Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan.

The scenario imagined that, during inclement weather, an outbound partially loaded tanker struck an unknown object near Glacier Island and suffered a breached hull. The tanker instantaneously released a simulated 20,000 barrels of North Slope crude oil. The vessel sustained no further damage and the bad weather eased as the response continued with no further release of oil.

The first 12 hours of the exercise was led by Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System, or SERVS, as would happen in the case of a real spill.

After 12 hours, Tesoro's response team took command of the response efforts, with continued help from SERVS.

The main focus of this year's exercise was to test the following objectives:

- Communications between the command center in Valdez and the field regarding equipment staging and protection of shorelines, near-shore areas, and wildlife

- Logistical support for tracking the operation and resources

- Use of the fishing vessel oil spill response fleet

- Management, staffing, and set-up of equipment staging areas

The drill was a table-top exercise. No equipment or vessels were deployed except for equipment staging areas in Cordova and Whittier.

Council staff participated in various roles and helped evaluate the responders.

Some lessons were noted by the council evaluators:

- Communications between the equipment staging areas and the command post could be improved.

- An actual incident would require more Internet connections and phone lines at the

command center.

- The coordination of the wildlife efforts could be improved to insure a more efficient response to the oiled wildlife.

This exercise provided a very good interaction between the industry and agencies' response teams.

**Terminal exercise conducted in November**

On November 8, Alyeska conducted an exercise at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

This exercise imagined a 90,000-barrel crude oil spill into the Port of Valdez due to ruptured piping at one of the terminal's loading berths. The spilled oil moved toward the city of Valdez, so city officials participated as part of the spill response leadership team, known as the Unified Command. Council staff members served as evaluators or as part of the drill team.

This exercise was a precursor to next summer's National Preparedness for Response

See page 4, **DRILLS AND EXERCISES**

**From the Executive Director**

# What will it take to get the best available escort and towing technology for Prince William Sound?

Alaska law requires the use of best available technology in certain areas of state-approved spill prevention and response plans, also known as contingency plans.

Theoretically, these requirements should help us keep abreast of advances in technology. In reality, this provision of Alaska law is difficult to enforce and is achieved only infrequently.

In our view, the recent incident with Shell Oil's Kulluk offshore drill rig is an object lesson in the need for best available technology in towing operations and equipment, a lesson that should be applied in Prince William Sound.

The citizens' council, working with the internationally respected naval architecture firm of Robert Allan Limited, completed a major study last fall that recommended, among other things, the installation of best available technology in the context of towing equipment on the tugs that escort loaded oil tankers through Prince William Sound.



Alyeska's SERVS' escort tug The Alert assisted response operations during the drill rig Kulluk grounding.

Specifically, the study spotlighted the need for more modern tow and escort winches that can render and recover (that is, pay out and reel in) a tow line under full load. The winches now on the Sound's tugs represent 15-year-old technology and they don't reel in or pay out well under load.

The more modern winches recommended by the Robert Allan study help preserve the ability to apply full towing force while reducing or eliminating the huge tow line surges that come from vessels getting thrown around in big seas. This newer type of tow winch is designed to help prevent tow line failure by reducing shock loading on the system.

Most towing and tethering exercises in Prince William Sound are conducted in relatively calm weather. The vulnerabilities of the old winches and the advantages of the new winches do not become apparent until the weather gets rough. With so many successful escorts and exercises, industry and the regulators have grown comfortable with the old-style winches on the Sound's tugs. Confident we have a great escort system, Alyeska, and the state declined to act on any of our towing equipment study recommendations. Similar recommendations arising from an escort tug study by the international ship classification society Det Norske Veritas or DNV a year earlier were also dismissed by industry and the state.

Now, however, we have the example of a real-world heavy-weather emergency towing effort before us and the results are not reassuring. The Kulluk incident, which saw loss of tow no fewer than five times before the rig

grounded on a small island near Kodiak, demonstrated just how difficult it is to make towing vessels and equipment work in severe Alaskan weather.

With its recent approval of the tanker contingency plan prepared by the oil industry, the state has signed off on the notion that the Prince William Sound tugs and their towing gear can prevent serious incidents involving loaded oil tankers in Prince William Sound and offshore out to about 17 miles. We regard this proposition as unproven.

Bad storms just outside of the Hinchinbrook entrance are definitely well within the realm of possibility. Storms of the magnitude encountered by the Kulluk are actually somewhat more frequent where the tankers travel than in the western Gulf of Alaska where the Shell rig ran into trouble, causing meteorologists over the past four decades to give the northeast corner of the Gulf of Alaska the nickname "Coffin Corner".

Tankers are not allowed to leave the Sound if weather exceeds 15-foot seas and 45-knot winds, but that is no guarantee they will avoid extreme conditions. The well-known coastal



Mark Swanson

See page 6, **BEST AVAILABLE**

**From Alyeska Pipeline**

# Alyeska fire brigade wins top awards at state event

Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's Fire/Rescue Brigade won the overall skills competition at this year's Alaska Fire Conference. This is the 13th consecutive year the brigade was named overall winner. The competition took place September 22 in Sitka.

The Alaska Fire Conference is an annual meeting of agencies such as the Alaska State Firefighters Association, the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association, the Alaska Fire Standards Council and the Alaska Arson Investigators Association. This year marked the conference's 50th anniversary. Taught by local and national instructors, conference attendees received more than 280 hours of hands-on fire training.

"This annual event offers a unique training opportunity for our team as it allows them to interact and train with other state-wide departments," said Valdez Terminal Director Scott Hicks. "This event also provides an opportunity to demonstrate and share how to prepare and respond to an event, as well as learn new strategies and techniques for emergency response."

For more than 20 years, members of the Alyeska brigade have attended the conference. The conference is not mandatory for Alyeska employees, but is supported by the company and benefits Alyeska as a whole.

"Here at Alyeska, we are very fortunate and extremely grateful to have this dedicated team on the terminal," Hicks said. "Our team has done an exceptional job of utilizing operational

discipline tools for their task identification, procedure development and then training to those standards."

Alyeska's competition team is comprised of both Alyeska technicians and Doyon Universal Services fire team employees who serve on the brigade at the Valdez Marine Terminal. This year, brigade members in attendance were Chief Sean Wisner; Captain Jennifer Stubblefield; Captain Chris Steeves; Lieutenant Justin Major; Lieutenant Kurtis Carnahan; Firefighter Brandon Reese and Firefighter Greg Matthieu.

Alyeska had 100 percent participation in all conference training exercises and competition

events. Several Alyeska brigade members took first place in categories such as ladder raise, make and break, bunker gear and self-contained breathing apparatus. As a result of teamwork and dedication, Alyeska's team was named overall winner.

"Each brigade member who attended the conference and participated in the competition represented Alyeska in the highest regard," Wisner said. "These individuals showed a level of camaraderie that is unprecedented in the fire service."

• Submitted by Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. Communications



Conference attendees from fire departments all over the state attended the Sitka event. Photo courtesy of Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

# GLACIER: Less ice could affect oil spill response in Sound

Continued from page 1

Columbia Glacier, summarizing the current knowledge concerning the retreat of Columbia Glacier, especially in the interval since the original iceberg project. The two researchers were given access to Columbia Glacier observations since the 1970s and data acquired by Post and Tangborn.

Pfeffer and O'Neel will then attempt to document the current rate of iceberg calving and drift trajectories. They intend to reevaluate the concept of calculating glacier retreat rates using photographic records of daily changes in the terminus, or end of the glacier. They will also reevaluate the "mass balance," or the difference between accumulation and melting of the glacier, and the iceberg production model developed by Post and Tangborn in the 1990s.

The researchers hope to determine the best estimate of glacial retreat and volume loss, evaluate how the icebergs move into the Sound and describe the passage constraints of icebergs over the submerged portion of the Columbia Glacier moraine.

Ultimately, over the next year, Pfeffer and O'Neel hope to develop a forecast for iceberg production by Columbia for the next ten years.

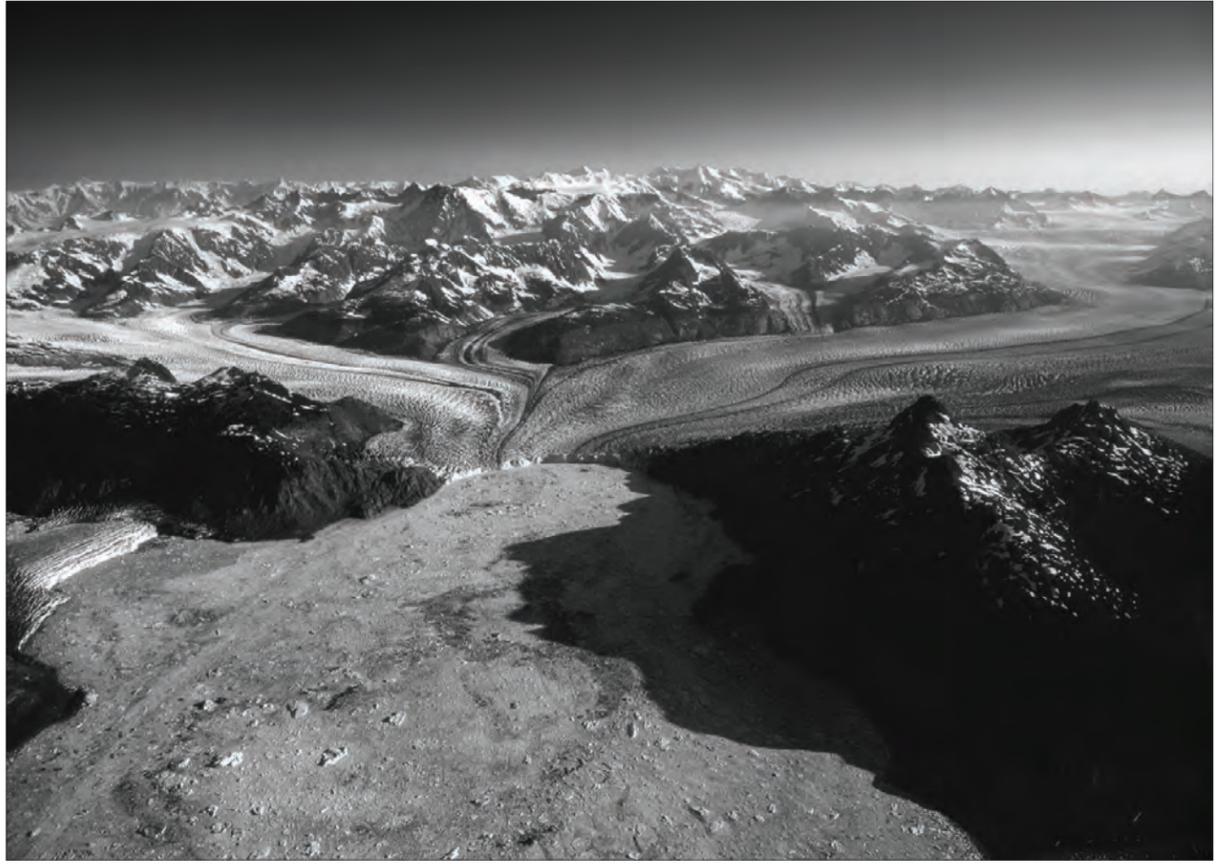


Photo by W.T. Pfeffer, 2007, from *The Opening of a New Landscape: Columbia Glacier at Mid-Retreat*, published by American Geophysical Union.

## Columbia Glacier facts from Pfeffer and O'Neel:

- Columbia Glacier is calving about 3.4 million tons of ice per day.
- The distance from the glacier's terminus to the Heather Island Moraine is about 13.7 miles and from the moraine to the tanker traffic lanes is approximately 12 miles.
- The height of the glacier's terminus ranges from 33 to 92 feet.
- Constrained by water depth at the moraine, the largest icebergs

that can reach the traffic lanes are 328 feet (at their largest dimension).

- The main branch of the Columbia Glacier is now about 29.8 miles in length, down from the onset of the current retreat in the early 1980s of 43 miles.
- The water depth at the terminus ranges from 26 to 260 feet, much less than in late 1980s when it was more than 1,600 feet deep.
- The entire width of the terminus is about ten miles across, with the area of active calving at approximately 1.8 miles in width.

## UPDATED PLANS: Response plans approved

Continued from page 1

stream response, meaning oil-spill clean-up in communities outside Prince William Sound.

While much of the news coverage of the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill focused on effects inside the Sound, the spilled oil was carried out of the Sound by tidal and coastal currents within a week of the grounding on Bligh Reef. Ultimately it spread to Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and even the village of Chignik, some 460 miles southwest of the spill site. While state regulations require clean-up of oil that escapes the Sound, those requirements are much less specific than for oil still within the Sound.

In its comments, the council encouraged the state and the tanker operators "to set a timetable for the implementation of drills and exercises to ensure that all parties are prepared to mount an effective response in downstream communities."

Another focus of council comments was the plan for using commercial fishing vessels in the clean-up of oil spills in the Sound, including spills that spread outside it. Under state requirements, tanker operators must be prepared to clean up 300,000 barrels of oil within three days. The plan drafted by the operators claims that having 275 fishing vessels under contract will meet that standard.

The council disagreed.

Historically, the operators and the state have agreed that, on any given day, only about 75 percent of vessels on contract can be counted upon to be available and ready to respond in the required time frame. By the council's estimate,

371 vessels would have to be under contract to make sure enough were ready to respond when actually needed. The council recommended such a requirement be incorporated in the new contingency plan.

The council's other recommendations dealt with such issues as:

- protection of sensitive areas before spilled oil arrives
- on-water recovery of spilled oil
- incorporation of Best Available Technology
- the incident command system for managing oil-spill cleanups
- availability of tankers and barges of opportunity that can be pressed into service for hauling away oil recovered during a cleanup
- operating in darkness
- Realistic Maximum Response Operating Limitations, meaning the most severe weather and sea conditions in which it is realistically possible to conduct cleanup operations.

The department attempted to address some of the council's concerns in their final approval document. Their statement noted that some areas of the plan will need to be verified by oil spill drills and exercises, such as:

- nearshore and open water response
- sensitive area protection
- availability, access and training of certain fishing vessels
- tankers and barges of opportunity
- operating in darkness
- availability of specialty vessels

The council is hopeful future exercises will verify the effectiveness of the plan.

## DRILLS AND EXERCISES: Spill response readiness tested in Sound

Continued from page 2

Exercise Program, which will be led by the Coast Guard. There was good participation by the Coast Guard and the state agencies in November's exercise. One of the high points of this exercise was a change in the trajectory from the scenario in the plan that pushed oil toward the city of Valdez. This caused response actions that focused on protecting the public. Lessons noted by council evaluators included:

- Notifications need to be improved.
- Reorganization of the Valdez Emergency Operations Center made the space more efficient.
- This drill used real time as opposed to the artificial timeframes used in other drills. This made the activities more realistic.

### Whittier spill response exercise

On December 7, SERVS conducted an oil spill response exercise in Whittier.

Local fishing vessels, part of the industry's oil spill fishing vessel response program, participated in the exercise. All the fishing vessels were Tier 1. Tier 1 boats are the earliest responders in case of a spill.

Participants were able to practice tactics such as exclusion and deflection booming. These tactics would be used in case of a real spill, to direct oil away from environmentally sensitive areas.

Council staff was on hand to observe the drill activities.

# Ocean science festival held in Cordova, coming to Valdez

By **KARA JOHNSON**

Education Director, Prince William Sound Science Center

This past September, on a rainy, windblown Saturday, 215 diehard science enthusiasts braved the elements to attend the Prince William Sound Science Center's Ocean Science Festival in Cordova. The festival was an opportunity to get a behind the scenes look at ocean research being conducted in Prince William Sound.

Dr. Richard Lee of the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography in Savannah, Georgia gave the keynote presentation about oil spill dispersants. Katrina Hoffman, chief executive officer and president of the science center, shared information about Gulf Watch Alaska, the long-term monitoring program funded by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to study the effects of the Exxon Valdez oil spill on the Gulf of Alaska's ecosystem.

Researchers invited children and adults to explore and investigate their tools of the trade through hands on demonstrations, activities and informative displays.

The Oil Spill Recovery Institute showed off tools for finding oil such as an autonomous underwater vehicle and an oil spill surveillance balloon.

Science center fisheries biologists set up a demonstration to show how scientists use sonar to measure and track fish populations such as herring in Prince William Sound. Oceanographers from the science center were on hand with live plankton and nets used to collect the plankton. Science center educators demonstrated a mini Remotely Operated Vehicle and gave visitors a chance to drive the vehicle through a set of underwater challenges.

Visitors competed against each other in the H2Olympics and Plankton Races. These activi-

ties helped demonstrate water properties such as adhesion, cohesion and density, giving students a better understanding of the challenges that must be overcome when designing ocean science equipment.

Visitors learned about basic water quality monitoring and the science center's Headwaters to Oceans Monitoring Network program which collects water quality and weather data from all over Prince William Sound.

Staff from the council was on hand to talk about the ShoreZone Coastal Inventory and Mapping Project which documents the biology and geology of Alaska's coast. ShoreZone coastal mapping data is used for oil spill contingency planning, conservation planning, habitat research, site development evaluation and recreational opportunities.

The Alaska Ocean Observing System demonstrated their system of web-cameras and weather data which streams to the internet from over 3,000 stations throughout Alaska. The system provides up-to-date data such as temperature, wind speed and direction to the public.

The Coast Guard was on-hand to demonstrate navigational aids. The Herring Research and Monitoring Program had information about

their research to improve predictions of herring populations.

There were also informational booths from Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Pacific University, Alaska Sea Grant, Cordova Clean Harbors, University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Fisheries and Ocean Science, and the US Forest Service.

The science center will be bringing the festival to the Valdez Convention Center on Friday March 8, 2013 from 6pm-8pm.

For more information, please visit the science center on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PWSSC](http://www.facebook.com/PWSSC)

Funding for the festival is provided in part by the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, Alaska Ocean Observing System, Prince William Sound Science Center and Oil Spill Recovery Institute.



Students get up close and personal with the underwater vehicle while Scott Pegau of the Oil Spill Recovery Institute explains the different parts. Photo courtesy of Prince William Sound Science Center.

## STAN JONES: Long-time employee retiring from council in February

Continued from page 1

Jones spent his first nine years at the council as the public information manager and was promoted to the role of director of external affairs in 2006. In 2010, he was further promoted to the position of director of administration and external affairs.

Jones has been instrumental in ensuring that the public and the media had access to accurate information about the council and its issues. During his tenure, he wrote numerous press releases, guest opinions and other educational and promotional pieces. He also managed the yearly recertification applications to the U.S. Coast Guard.

Jones worked closely with the council's Legislative Affairs Committee to monitor developments in the Alaska Legislature and the U.S. Congress on matters related to the council's mission. He worked with elected officials such as Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Sen. Mark Begich, and Rep. Don Young to secure passage of federal legislation to permanently preserve Prince William Sound's system of double escort tugs for loaded oil tankers.

"Stan Jones is in a league all his own with his ability to articulate to the general public why oil spill prevention and response issues matter," said Mark Swanson, executive director of the council, "Stan can justifiably share a lot of credit for many advances in prevention and response

the council has seen during his tenure."

Jones co-authored an award-winning book, "The Spill: Personal Stories from the Exxon Valdez Disaster," an oral history of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The book featured personal stories about the spill from over 60 people who experienced the disaster first-hand. The book was released in 2009 to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the Exxon spill.

Outside of his work at the council, Jones has written a series of four mystery novels about a character named Nathan Active. Nathan is an Inupiat Eskimo and Alaska State Trooper who solves crimes in the fictional village of Chukchi, north of the Arctic Circle.

Jones has quite a few plans post-retirement,

including the continuation of the Nathan Active series. He has ideas for more novels, one of which has the working title of "Spenard Road." He also plans to work two days a week at a federal agency dealing with natural gas projects in Alaska.

"We are going to miss him in the work place but hope to see him around and will certainly be looking for more books from Stan's ever-fertile pen," Swanson said.

In March, Jones and his wife, Susan, plan to "try to" drive to the community of Tuktoyaktuk, located on the shore of the Arctic Ocean. The community is only accessible by car during the winter months via the Tuktoyaktuk Winter Road, featured in the History Channel's program, Ice Road Truckers.



Alaska Sen. Mark Begich, executive director Mark Swanson, board members Walt Parker and Patience Andersen Faulkner, and Jones, met in 2010 to talk about dual escort tug legislation, among other concerns. Photo courtesy of the office of Sen. Begich.

# Highlights of recent council activities and news

## Small leak in loading arm at Valdez Marine Terminal

On November 8, Alyeska informed the council that one of four loading arms on Berth 4 at the Valdez Marine Terminal had developed a small leak, characterized as a “weep.”

New loading arms on Berth 4 were installed this past summer. In response to council inquiry, Alyeska and regulators told the council that the problem appeared to be from an installation defect.

Berth 4 was able to continue operation with the three remaining arms; however, loading was restricted to a lower flow than normal. An Alyeska employee was assigned observe the operational

arms to watch for any more weeps.

An inspection of the three remaining arms showed similar wear on two of those three arms due to the defect, but not to the extent of the weeping arm.

Following a thorough inspection and correction of the installation defect, Berth 4 was placed into service with three of the four loading arms in operation.

Permanent repairs of the fourth loading arm is expected to be completed this spring or summer.

Berth 5 has a different design and does not have this problem.

No oil reached Prince William Sound waters from this leak.

## Volunteers receive prestigious state travel award

Council volunteers Marilyn and Pete Heddell were presented with the “Spirit of Alaska” award by the Alaska Travel Industry Association on Oct 11.

This annual award is presented to an individual or business that has demonstrated exceptional efforts to support a local community, charity or other organization outside the travel industry. Association members submit nominations and an awards committee selects a winner.

The association cited the Hed-

dells’ commitment to fostering a business friendly environment in Whittier, their public service for numerous organizations and councils in and around Whittier and Prince William Sound, and their mentoring of many local kids through their business.

Marilynn has represented the City of Whittier on the council’s board of directors since 1996. Pete has been a member of the council’s Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System committee since 2000.



Marilynn (far left) and Pete Heddell (far right) receive an award from a state travel association. Photo courtesy of the Alaska Travel Industry Association.

**THE OBSERVER** is published in January, May, July and September by the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council. Except where credited to others, articles are written by Amanda Johnson, public communications project manager for the council.

Questions or comments about anything in The Observer? Another topic that you want to hear about? We want your feedback. Send your comments to Amanda Johnson: [amanda.johnson@pwsrca.org](mailto:amanda.johnson@pwsrca.org)

## Whales, marine debris, waves and invasive species were topics at council’s annual Science Night event

In December, the council hosts Science Night, an annual event with presentations on topics related to marine science in Prince William Sound and Gulf of Alaska.

This year saw nearly 70 attendees at the event.

Jan Straley of the University of Alaska Southeast gave a talk titled “Weaving Through the Food Web with Whales and Fish (or, The Shenanigans of Recovering Whale Populations).”

Kate Morse of the Copper River Watershed Project spoke about their Marine Stewardship Expedition program this past summer. During the trip, youth collected and inventoried marine debris in Prince William Sound.

Tobias Schwörer, of the Institute of Social and Economic Research, spoke about work for the council studying the economic impacts of marine invasive species.

Maria Kartezhnikova talked about the effects of waves on transferring cargo at the Valdez Marine Terminal. Kartezhnikova is a student at the University of Alaska

Anchorage and did this study as part of her master’s program.

Council volunteer Roger Green and staffers Joe Banta, Anna Carey and Jeremy Robida talked about the council’s efforts to monitor Port Valdez for invasive European green crabs. After off-loading crude oil at a refinery, oil tankers take on ballast water to help stabilize the ship during travel. Invasive species such as green crabs can hitch a ride and invade Prince William Sound when that water is released before the tanker takes on more crude oil.

Next year’s Science Night event will be held in early December.



Right: Council staffer Jeremy Robida holds a green crab trap during a recent green crab monitoring expedition. Photo by Anna Carey.

## BEST AVAILABLE: Kulluk teaches lessons about escorts and towing lines technology

Continued from page 3

weather phenomenon called barrier jets often creates high winds and big waves just outside Hinchinbrook Entrance, even when the weather inside is much milder. The question raised is obvious: What if the Kulluk had been a loaded oil tanker experiencing a loss of power in similar wind and sea states or during a barrier jet event along the rugged coast just outside Hinchinbrook?

I don’t think the citizens’ council, the oil industry, or its regulators know the answer to that question, and it’s time we did.

Our group will persist in our polite requests for information on the performance of the Prince William Sound tugs, as well as the equipment and failure modes on the other vessels involved in the Kulluk incident.

This is directly within our mandate. In fact, it’s at the heart of that mandate, as it pertains to design and operation of a robust tug escort system capable of making sure there’s not another Exxon Valdez-

scale catastrophe in the Sound or along the coast.

There will likely be resistance by the oil shipping industry to sharing this knowledge. Experience has shown that procedural and secrecy issues surrounding official accident investigations delay and dilute the release of information, but it is important that we and others with shared concerns keep up our calls for transparency and accountability.

A new study commissioned by our council is just getting under way. It will look at all the roles the Prince William Sound tugs are asked to fill not only in preventing tanker accidents, but also in starting the response if prevention fails.

We look forward to receiving the results of that study and combining it with what we learn from the Kulluk incident to advocate for the best available technology to reduce risks for tankers inside and outside of Prince William Sound.

• Mark Swanson is executive director of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council.

# Council hires librarian to manage document collection

The council welcomed a new staff member, Alicia Zorzetto, to the Anchorage office on January 10. Zorzetto accepted the position of Digital Collections Librarian, and will be working in the Anchorage office.

Zorzetto has a master's degree in information and library sciences from the University of Toronto and

a master's in political science from McMaster University in Ontario. Zorzetto has experience managing digital library collections, most recently serving as a systems librarian for the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering. Zorzetto also served as a reference librarian at York University's Leslie Frost Library.

Zorzetto moved to Anchorage in early January from Ontario, Canada. She coached and played basketball for many years, and hopes to resume coaching once she settles into life in Alaska.

Zorzetto will take over management of the council's document management system. The council has an ever-growing collection of approximately 25,000 digital and physical documents, images and audio-visual files related to the council's mission. Zorzetto will help improve organization of the current system and develop a plan for managing future documents.



Alicia Zorzetto

## Council Board Meetings

The citizens' council board of directors meets three times annually. The January meeting is held in Anchorage, the May meeting in Valdez, and the September meeting is rotated among the other communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Here is the tentative board meeting schedule for the coming year:

May 2-3, 2013: Valdez

\*September 19-20, 2013: Seward

January 16-17, 2014: Anchorage

Board meetings are open to the public, and an opportunity for public comments is provided at the beginning of each meeting. Agendas and other meeting materials are available on the council web site at [www.pwsrca.org/about/boardintro.html](http://www.pwsrca.org/about/boardintro.html). Or, contact either council office: Anchorage, 907-277-7222, or Valdez, 907-834-5000.

\*Please note that there has been a change in this schedule. The 2012 meeting in Seward was moved to Anchorage due to a weather-related emergency. The 2013 September meeting will be held in Seward, and the rotation of the September meeting location for all subsequent years will be pushed back one year thereafter.



Members of the council's board and committees at the May 2012 meeting at the Civic Center in Valdez. Photo by Amanda Johnson.

## ABOUT THE COUNCIL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Much of the council's work is done through permanent volunteer committees made up of board members, technical experts, and citizens with an interest in making oil transportation safer in Alaska.

These standing committees work with staff on projects, study and deliberate current oil transportation issues, and formulate their own advice and recommendations to the council's full board of directors.

Our committees provide an avenue for public participation in the council's work.

The council has five technical committees that provide advice and recommendations to the council's board of directors.

### Terminal Operations & Environmental Monitoring:

The Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring (TOEM) Committee identifies actual and potential sources of episodic and chronic pollution at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

#### Members:

- Chair: Bob Benda, Valdez
- Co-chair: Harold Blehm, Valdez
- Ken Adams, Cordova
- Amanda Bauer, City of Valdez\*
- Jo Ann Benda, Valdez
- Stephen Lewis, Seldovia\*
- George Skladal, Anchorage

### Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems:

The Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems (POVTS) Committee monitors port and tanker operations in Prince William Sound. POVTS identifies and recommends improvements in the vessel traffic navigation systems and monitors the vessel escort system.

#### Members:

- Chair: Bob Jaynes, Valdez
- Co-chair: Bill Conley, Valdez
- Kari Anderson, Seward
- Cliff Chambers, Seward
- Pat Duffy, Valdez\*
- Jane Eisemann, Kodiak\*
- Pete Heddell, Whittier
- Wes Lundberg, Valdez
- Orson Smith, Seward

### Scientific Advisory:

The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) sponsors independent scientific research and provides scientific assistance and advice to the other council committees on technical reports, scientific methodology, data interpretation, and position papers.

#### Members:

- Chair: Dr. John Kennish, Anchorage
- Co-chair: Dr. Mark Udevitz, Anchorage
- Dr. John French, Seward\*
- Dr. Roger Green, Hope
- Dorothy M. Moore, Valdez\*
- Dr. Debasmita Misra, Fairbanks
- Dr. Dave Musgrave, Palmer
- Dr. Paula Martin, Soldotna
- Walt Parker, Anchorage\*

### Oil Spill Prevention and Response:

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) Committee works to minimize the risks and impacts associated with oil transportation through strong spill prevention and response measures, adequate contingency planning, and effective regulations. The committee reviews oil spill response plans (contingency plans); monitors state and federal laws and regulations; monitors and participates in oil spill drills; and investigates developments in prevention, containment, response, and cleanup technology.

#### Members:

- Chair: John French, Seward\*
- Co-Chair: John LeClair, Anchorage
- Gerald Brookman, Kenai
- David Goldstein, Whittier
- Joe Jabas, Anchor Point
- Darryl Jenkins, Anchorage
- Walter Parker, Anchorage\*
- Gordon Scott, Girdwood
- John Velsko, Homer\*

### Information and Education:

The Information and Education Committee (IEC) supports the council's mission by fostering public awareness, responsibility, and participation through information and education.

#### Members:

- Chair: Patience Andersen
- Faulkner, Cordova\*
- Co-Chair: Kate Alexander, Cordova
- Jane Eisemann, Kodiak\*
- Cathy Hart, Anchorage\*
- Mary Katzke, Anchorage
- Ruth E. Knight, Valdez
- Savannah Lewis, Seldovia
- Allen Marquette, Cordova
- Lanette Oliver, Valdez
- Mary Wasche, Eagle River

\*council director

## Community Corner

## Outreach activities help us connect with others in our region

By **LINDA ROBINSON**  
Council Outreach Coordinator

On September 29, we participated in the Chugach Regional Education Forum. The goal of the event was to gather educators from the Chugach region to discuss projects and get a better understanding of what educational resources are available in the region.

Participants included teachers and organizations that provide educational services for students. Presentations covered topics such as diversity in the regions' schools, how traditional knowledge is used in education, and education outreach. Participants learned about the Prince William Sound Science Center, Alaska Sealife Center, the Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission, Alaska Geographic, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve and the council. It was a very worthwhile forum and helped firm up connections and relationships among the region.

This year for the first time we had a booth at November's Alaska Federation of Natives conference, held this year in Anchorage. At this statewide meeting of Native Alaskans and others we were able to reach out to many attendees from the council's communities and beyond. Some visitors included former Alyeska-council liaison Gary Bader, former council board members Scott Sterling and Pete Kompkoff and many others. Board member Patience Andersen Faulkner and staffer Serena Lopez assisted with the council's booth.

I attended the Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management in Kodiak, October 30-November 1. This year marine invasive species were on the agenda. Topics included aquatic invasive species in Kodiak, early detection of zebra and quagga mussels in Alaska, promoting environmental stewardship in rural Alaska, potential

impacts to Alaska's fisheries from Didemnum Vexillum (a tunicate or sea squirt), and invasive species management programs in Alaska.

Staffer Anna Carey took the booth to the Society for Environmental Technology and Chemistry conference in Long Beach, California in November. Carey, board member John French, and the Scientific Advisory Committee's Debu Misra were able to attend several scientific presentations related to oil spill technology.



Linda Robinson

In early November, Mark Swanson visited Valdez Elementary School and spoke with several fifth grade science classes. The presentation was part of the Information and Education Committee's youth involvement project. Swanson talked to the students about the council and the concerns of various users of Prince William Sound. The students participated in facilitated group discussions about those concerns and looked at measures to balance everyone's common interests.

Also in November, board members John Velsko and Blake Johnson assisted me at the booth at Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle. This conference attracts fishermen and others who live and/or work in the Alaska fishing industry. It is always very well attended.

All of us here wish you a very happy 2013, and a huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers for their hard work in protecting our waters.



Council board members John Velsko and Blake Johnson help out at the booth at Pacific Marine Expo. Photo by Linda Robinson.

### Upcoming outreach events

The Alaska Marine Science Symposium will be held January 21-25 at the Egan Center. The booth will be at the symposium and at the receptions being held Monday and Tuesday evenings. For more information on the conference, visit: <http://www.alaskamarinescience.org/>

The Alaska Forum on the Environment will be held Febru-

ary 4-8 at the Dena'ina Convention Center in Anchorage. The booth will be near the registration area. For more information on that conference, visit: <http://akforum.com/>

If you attend either of these conferences be sure to stop by and visit, and pick up our new mousepad calendar with information on many of our communities.

## PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council is an independent, non-profit corporation formed after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill to minimize the environmental impacts of the trans-Alaska pipeline terminal and tanker fleet.

The council has 19 member organizations, including communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and groups representing Alaska Native, aquaculture, environmental, commercial fishing, recreation and tourism interests in the spill region.

The council is certified under the federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990 as the citizen advisory group for Prince William Sound, and operates under a contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. The contract, which is in effect as long as oil flows through the pipeline, guarantees the council's independence, provides annual funding, and ensures the council the same access to terminal facilities as state and federal regulatory agencies.

*The council's mission: Citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers.*

### Board of Directors

Pres.: Dorothy Moore - City of Valdez  
Vice Pres.: Pat Duffy - Alaska State Chamber of Commerce  
Secretary: Thane Miller - Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp.  
Treasurer: Marilyn Heddell - City of Whittier

Amanda Bauer - City of Valdez  
Al Burch - Kodiak Island Borough  
Jane Eisemann - City of Kodiak  
Larry Evanoff - Community of Chenega Bay  
Patience Andersen Faulkner - Cordova District Fishermen United  
John S. French - City of Seward  
Cathy Hart - Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association  
Blake Johnson - Kenai Peninsula Borough  
James Kacsh - City of Cordova  
Steve Lewis - City of Seldovia  
Iver Malutin - Kodiak Village Mayors Association  
Walter Parker - Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition  
Diane Selanoff - Port Graham Corporation  
David Totemoff - Chugach Alaska Corporation  
Roy Totemoff - Community of Tatitlek  
John Velsko - City of Homer

### Staff

Mark Swanson, Executive Director

### Anchorage

Joe Banta, Project Manager  
Gregory Dixon, Financial Manager  
Amanda Johnson, Project Manager  
Stan Jones, Director of Administration and External Affairs  
Tom Kuckertz, Project Manager  
Serena Lopez, Project Manager Assistant  
Barbara Penrose, Administrative Assistant  
Linda Robinson, Outreach Coordinator  
Linda Swiss, Project Manager  
Alicia Zorzetto, Digital Collection Librarian

### Valdez

Jean Cobb, Administrative Assistant  
Jennifer Fleming, Executive Assistant  
Anna Carey, Project Manager Assistant  
Roy Robertson, Project Manager  
Jeremy Robida, Project Manager  
Donna Schantz, Director of Programs  
Alan Sorum, Project Manager

3709 Spenard Road, Suite 100  
Anchorage AK 99503  
Phone: 907-277-7222  
Toll-free: 800-478-7221  
Fax: 907-277-4523

Box 3089 / 130 S. Meals, Suite 202  
Valdez AK 99686  
Phone: 907-834-5000  
Toll-free: 877-478-7221  
Fax: 907-835-5926

On the web: [www.pwsrccac.org](http://www.pwsrccac.org)  
Find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PWSRCAC](http://www.facebook.com/PWSRCAC)  
Follow us on Twitter: @PWSRCAC  
Email: [newsletter@pwsrccac.org](mailto:newsletter@pwsrccac.org)