

THE OBSERVER

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Corrosion found in piping at terminal; Alyeska plans fix

By **AUSTIN LOVE**

Council Project Manager

In 2012, Alyeska identified a 6 inch wide area of external corrosion on crude oil piping near the end of one of their oil-loading berths, known as Berth 5, at the Valdez Marine Terminal. Corrosion in the 48 inch diameter pipe is of particular concern, as it is located over water.

This corrosion was caused because this section of pipe was not covered with an anti-corrosion coating during construction of the terminal. When the area of corrosion was originally discovered, it was not deemed substantial enough for significant repair and was covered with an anti-corrosion coating to prevent further deterioration. However, re-analysis in October found that the corrosion was more severe than

initially determined. At one approximately 1.5 inch diameter spot, Alyeska concluded that about 80 percent of the metal had been lost due to corrosion. Wall loss of 80 percent is a typical threshold, used by regulators and industry, at which mandatory repair is needed even if engineering analysis deems conditions to be safe for operations to continue. Upon this discovery of significant corrosion Alyeska alerted the council and regulators.

This segment of piping routinely has 100,000 barrels of crude oil flowing through it per hour when tanker ships are being loaded at the Valdez Marine Terminal. If a leak developed at this location, it is estimated that about 6,000 barrels

See page 7, **CORROSION**

Oil spill drills teach lesson in prevention

By **ROY ROBERTSON**

Drill Monitor

Two large oil spill drills were conducted in Prince William Sound this past September and October. Both exercises proved challenging for the organizations participating in them.

SeaRiver Maritime held a three-day exercise in the middle of September. For this annual drill, the role of the "spiller" alternates among the shipping companies that move oil through Prince William Sound.

This year, the oil spill scenario was a collision between a SeaRiver Maritime tanker and a fish-processing vessel in the middle of Prince William Sound near Naked Island, about 40 miles from the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Unlike last year's drill, this exercise did not include any field equipment deployments.

See page 6, **FALL DRILLS**

Alaska tourism and recreation organization closes its doors

The Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association closed at the end of December. The association represented the interests of the recreation and tourism industry on the board for over 20 years.



Cathy Hart

The association was active after the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, providing a voice for the wilderness dependent businesses in Prince William Sound who were gravely affected by the spill.

"We always wanted to have a voice in places where our businesses

See page 7, **RECREATION AND TOURISM**

Revised curriculum educates about oil spill prevention and response



The new Alaska Oil Spill Curriculum, with lessons tailored for kindergartners through high school students, is now available. Hear more about the new curriculum from Lisa Matlock, our outreach coordinator on page 8.

Above: Curriculum creator Katie Gavenus (green hat at left) shows Whittier students how oiled water affects bird feathers. Photo by Lisa Matlock.

Eisemann and Selanoff pass the torch

Two board members resigned in recent months, passing the torch of stakeholder representation to new board members. Jane Eisemann



Jane Eisemann



Diane Selanoff

See page 6, **EISEMANN AND SELANOFF**

AK Chamber of Commerce - Chenega Bay - Chugach Alaska Corp. - Cordova - Cordova District Fishermen United - Homer - Kenai Peninsula Borough - Kodiak - Kodiak Island Borough - Kodiak Village Mayors - Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition - Port Graham Corp. - Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp. - Seldovia - Seward - Tatitlek - Valdez - Whittier

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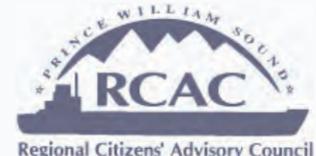
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Volunteer Spotlight

Oil spill response lessons from fighting wildfires

During his summer vacations from college, council volunteer John LeClair got his start in the field that he would come to love. He went to Idaho each summer to work for the Forest Service as a lookout, which evolved into a full time job as a “smokejumper,” or a firefighter who parachutes in to fight forest fires.

LeClair moved to Alaska in 1981 to work as smokejumper firefighter for the Bureau of Land Management.

“Of course, all the old-timers said, ‘you can only do this for so long.’”

LeClair’s experience led him into management positions coordinating logistics for large fires. That’s what he was doing when the Exxon Valdez ran aground in 1989.

“I was running the coordination center for logistics here in Southcentral Alaska at Anchorage,” LeClair said.

LeClair and other fire responders who knew the “Incident Command System” were called in to help coordinate response to the spill.

The Incident Command System is a standardized organizational management structure developed in the early 1970’s to manage rapidly moving wildfires. This system is now a standardized structure that has been adopted to manage all types of emergencies and incidents, including large oil spills.

“The use of the Incident Command System helps facilitate a better response,” LeClair said, “It gets everyone speaking the same language.”

LeClair ended up working in Valdez for a month after the spill, managing logistics and assisting emergency services, getting subsistence foods to Tatitlek and other villages, rescuing a sailboat from Columbia Glacier, and setting up sorely-needed lodging at the Bear Paw Campground for spill responders.

“We moved every motor home we could get out of Anchorage over there for housing.”

“Because of my incident command background, I was exposed to a lot of great opportunities,” LeClair said.

LeClair retired in 2012 from the Alaska Chadux Corporation, a nonprofit oil spill response organization. While he was there, the business grew, tripling staff and increasing its oil spill response capabilities.

In addition to being a stay-at-home dad and volunteering for his daughter’s school, LeClair still serves on a National Area Command Team, coordinating area command logistics for very large

fires involving extensive land or property and 3000-5000 fire response personnel. LeClair coordinates resources such as heavy-lift helicopters, smoke jumpers, hot shot crews, air tankers, and other large items in states such as Arizona, California, and Idaho.

LeClair joined the council’s Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee nearly 10 years ago, and now serves as its chair. The committee works to minimize the risks and impacts associated with oil transportation. They review oil spill response plans, monitor laws and regulations, monitor oil spill drills, and investigate new technology in prevention and response.

“John’s expertise is invaluable to the issues that the committee addresses,” said council project manager Linda Swiss. “His enthusiasm and commitment make him a role model for other committee members.”

His enthusiasm has kept him optimistic when sometimes changes happen slower than he’d like.

“What I have learned is that it’s a slow process and you have to accept what you can and keep working at some of the things you can’t change, but that you’d like to see changed. Maybe you find a new tactic in the way that you present it.”

LeClair says that is where the council has value.

“The council has valid position in the scheme of things,” LeClair said. “There has to be someone paying attention to foster a better relationship the relationship between regulators, industry, and the public.”

“Prince William Sound is one of the most beautiful places on the planet, and it’s really important that with the amount of resource extraction and transportation that goes through there... you know, we are the richest country on the planet, so we should be taking care of our resources better than anywhere else in the world.”



LeClair and his family enjoy traveling and spending as much time as possible adventuring outdoors. Photo courtesy of John LeClair.

Single-hulled tankers now outlawed in U.S. waters

Starting this year, single-hulled oil tankers are now illegal in all U.S. waters.

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990, passed after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, required that all new oil tankers be constructed with double hulls. Single-hulled tankers were allowed to continue operating, but were to be gradually phased out.

The Act set a deadline for this phase-out, requiring all single-hulled tankers to be removed from service by January 1, 2015.

Double hulls are basically two steel skins, separated by several feet of space, providing a buffer between the oil and the environment. Double hulls have reduced or eliminated spills resulting from groundings or collisions.

The deadline is not a major change, since the implementation of double hull requirements were required internationally between 2007 and 2012, and phased in under the Act between 2010 and 2015. As a result, most tankers in U.S. waters, and all oil tankers in Prince William Sound, have had double hulls for several years.

Liberty Bay enters service in Prince William Sound

The first of two new SeaRiver oil tankers made its first visit to the terminal in Prince William Sound this past September. The Liberty Bay was built by Aker Philadelphia Shipyard.

One unique feature of the Liberty Bay is

that it will be able to treat ballast water aboard to help prevent the spread of invasive species.

More details about this vessel can be found in the July 2014 issue of The Observer: www.bit.ly/LibertyBay



A tug helps the Liberty Bay dock at the Valdez Marine Terminal. Photo by Alan Sorum.

From the Executive Director

To prevent oil spills, we must focus on the right risks

Only in hindsight can we perfectly zero in on the most important details. We'd like to be able to say we can see what's coming and prepare for the best possible outcome. Often, however, the details that matter only appear obvious after the dust has settled. We complacently assume that if nothing changes what worked yesterday should work tomorrow. We are suspicious of change, assuming that change increases risk for undesired outcomes. Perhaps.

While we have worked for 25 years to prevent a re-occurrence of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the next accident will likely come from an unexpected cause. Getting incrementally better at preventing the causes of that historical spill may not be as important as predicting the most likely cause of the next accident. To do this, we have to critically examine our near misses. We may also need to examine operations outside Prince William Sound to see what risks could apply to our local operations, and how others have prevented bad outcomes.

Some recent lessons learned from near misses

There is a sobering history of safety and oil spill near misses, as well as an impressive history of the oil industry investing in infrastructure and upgrading risk management practices in response to those near misses and other operational changes. For instance, Alyeska added back pressure control valves at the terminal and conducted extensive inspection and repairs to sections of the pipeline near Thompson Pass in response to turbulence related problems,

successfully managing the risks of a spill into the Lowe River and Port Valdez.

Reduced oil through the pipeline means slower flow speeds, lower crude oil temperatures, and increased wax building up inside the pipeline. Cleaning "pigs" must run through the pipeline more often to clean out that buildup. Numerous near-misses have been associated with these developments, including the misrouting and destruction of several pigs causing, in one instance, safety pressure relief valves to be disabled. Alyeska responded to those risks by reducing water content in the crude oil, heating the oil slightly at pump stations, more tightly monitoring the pig positions and managing removal of the pigs from the pipeline.

Sections of the aging crude oil piping have historically been insufficiently inspected because they are hard to access. This has resulted in several near-misses of pipeline-threatening levels of advanced corrosion. Alyeska has repaired the known corroded areas and is proceeding with plans to render the remaining buried and other difficult to access sections of terminal piping and along the pipeline inspectable. This is a welcome focus on perhaps the most immediately pressing and troubling oil spill risk.

Focusing on the right risks for the future

Older oil tankers typically experience some degree of fatigue-related cracks or other load related minor structural failures as they age. Frequent and thorough inspections and design

redundancies help detect these structural near-misses before they escalate to more serious problems. Rather than simply repairing on failure, ship operators systematically analyze the compromised structure, redesign to reduce stresses, and then implement those fixes to other ships with the same design vulnerabilities. However, even with increased resistance to fatigue required in newer ship designs, significant cracks and failures are still occurring. This is clearly one of the right risks to be focusing on.

Maximizing the effectiveness of a large fleet of fishing vessels engaged in oil spill response without exceeding their safe operating parameters in Alaska's challenging climate is tough and risky. Spill drills have been called off or curtailed in typical seasonal weather due to safety concerns. Mechanical problems, communications issues, weather limitations, and even sinking vessels have seriously impacted oil spill exercises. These types of issues are often the harbinger of more serious failures that were



Mark Swanson

See page 6, **SWANSON**

From Alyeska

SERVS' tugs help tankers dock safely at terminal

On a recent morning, the tug Stalwart pulled away from the SERVS dock, headed out to meet the tanker Alaska Legend as it entered Port Valdez. A dense fog hung over the port and every few minutes, fog horns called out in the distance.

Looking out at the pea-soup, Captain David Sweeney remarked that he'd take his time crossing the bay.

"We're not in a rush, and it's a good idea to slow down in the fog."

Much has been written about the five world-

class and purpose-built escort tugs in Prince William Sound, owned by Crowley and under contract to SERVS. With 10,192 horsepower engines and rapid response capabilities, these vessels are the show horses of SERVS' fleet, and rightfully so. Introduced in 1999 and 2000, the three Prevention and Response Tugs (PRTs) and the two Enhanced Tractor Tugs (ETTs) have revolutionized tanker escorts in the Sound.

But there are other tugs in Valdez, like the Invader-class Stalwart, that support SERVS' mission as well. They are also owned by Crowley and move response barges and personnel as needed. And, like today, they help tankers safely dock at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Docking a tanker is a routine job for one of these tugs. "Pretty simple if you know how to do it," said Sweeney, as he pulled up alongside the Legend. "A little challenging for a new captain."

Two or three tugs move into position alongside a tanker, as directed by a pilot on the bridge of the larger vessel. The number of tugs and their position

can depend on the size of the tanker, the weather and the preferences of the pilot.

For this docking, the Stalwart is located near the starboard bow of the Legend. The fog has already burned off, and we can see the tug Bulwark at mid-ship and the Alert aft. Crews from the tanker throw messenger lines from above, eventually leading larger working lines - the circumference of a baseball - through the bullring on the bow before it is made up on deck. The Legend is going to berth on its port side, requiring a U-Turn up Port Valdez. The tugs are along for the ride as the tanker glides past the Terminal, but as the vessel begins to make its right-hand turn, the tugs' engines engage.

"Right now, the engines aren't really pulling or pushing, they're kind of twisting the tanker into place," explains Sweeney.

Soon enough, the tanker nears the berth. Over the radio, a calm voice offers a slew of directions for each tug. "Bulwark, touch down," (get ready to push) "Alert, push," "Stalwart, stretch" (get ready to pull) "Stalwart, back" (pull). Slowly and noisily, the tanker gets nudged and tugged into place.

Captain Sweeney directs the Stalwart's line boats, the Gus-E and Roger to tie up the lines to the mooring dolphins at the berth. Soon, a SERVS boom boat will appear to encircle the tanker with boom before it can load crude oil.

"Thanks, gentlemen," a voice comes through on the radio. It's the pilot. "That was fun."

• Submitted by Alyeska Communications.



Looking out from the tug Stalwart's wheelhouse at the Gus-E, a Crowley lineboat. Photo courtesy of Alyeska.

A look back at the early years of the Prince William

One of the most radical innovations to come out of the Exxon Valdez spill was the establishment of permanent, industry-funded citizen oversight to promote the environmentally safe operation of the oil industry. It's been 25 years since the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council was formed, and to mark that anniversary, The Observer begins a four-part series documenting the founding and early development of the council.

In 2012, a series of interviews were conducted to capture the hopes and intentions of some of those who were most closely involved with the formation and early days of the council. These stories are in oral history format.

Oral history is the practice of telling, recording, and preserving personal testi-

monies about the human experience. These stories are intended to help us understand the impact of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and how citizens rallied together to create an oversight group to protect Prince William Sound from future oil spills. Subjectivity is both the greatest strength and weakness of oral history; it can convey feelings and emotions linked to a specific time period, but the information may not be as accurate as other historical methods. As stated by Mark Hutton in his interview, "sometimes memories are colored by the hope of what you thought you were trying to do and not necessarily exactly the way it happened. Twenty years ago was a long time ago, and this is my best recollection." The council is releasing these stories this year to commemorate 25 years of citizen oversight. As

a preview, Observer readers will see a selection of quotes highlighted in the next few issues:

- January: Council founders share their memories about efforts to form a council before the spill and immediately after
- May: Founders describe the emotional turbulence of the first few years after the council was formed and how they learned to channel that emotion into a professional, effective organization
- July: Founders share their thoughts on the positives and negatives of the way the council was organized
- September: Founders evaluate the lessons learned about the value of citizen oversight

"In February of 1989 we had just gone through quite a bad spill at the terminal on one of the tankers. A lot of people thought they had done a great job at cleaning it up. Others, myself included, thought they hadn't. We knew then that if we had a big spill we were in trouble because they didn't have the equipment here."

– Stan Stephens

Stephens represented the Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Association on the council's board of directors from March 1992 to January 2008 and the City of Valdez from January 2009 to February 2012.

"About a year before the spill, as mayor of Valdez, I formed an ad hoc committee on what to do in case of a major oil spill, because we knew that the oil industry had broken many of the promises they made to us. They didn't have the equipment they promised and they didn't have the crack response team any more. They had reassigned those people to other duties, so we knew there was a problem."

– John S. Devens, Sr

Devens was the mayor of the City of Valdez, Alaska at the time of the spill. He helped form the Oiled Mayors Group, a coalition of leaders from communities impacted by the spill. He also served as executive director from 1997-2009.

"Once I became aware of the Shetland Oil Terminal Environment Advisory Group I knew it was a great idea and I thought we should set one up here for the terminal and the tankers.

I took the idea immediately to George Nelson, then president of Alyeska. He basically told me to get lost, that he didn't want citizens breathing down his neck. There was absolutely no political necessity for him to respond favorably to the request at the time.

I then took the idea to our state senator of the region, Mike Szymanski. He liked it, so we broadened the concept and in 1987, we began looking seriously around the nation for other potential models. I was proposing these citizens' advisory councils for all large-scale extractive-industry projects in Alaska, such as large mines and certainly the Prince William Sound oil terminal. As a first step for Alaska, the senator's office drafted a bill to establish an "Environmental and Industrial Dispute Resolution Task Force" to study the concept of industry/public advisory groups as we had originally proposed.

But that bill was killed right away. The policy folks in the Cowper administration didn't see the need for it and the oil lobby essentially killed it before it moved very far. That was two years prior to the Exxon Valdez. And I've always felt that if we had been successful at establishing the RCAC then, the Exxon Valdez oil spill may never have happened because they would have identified the holes in the tanker safety system."

– Rick Steiner

Steiner was a marine conservation professor, stationed in Cordova, Alaska in 1989.

Steiner was actively promoting the idea of a citizens' council before the spill, and continues to advocate for citizen oversight of extraction industries worldwide.

"We can blame the spill on Exxon, but the fact of the matter is that the blame actually goes to everyone. And to me that was the direction we needed to push for, to have a citizen say-so. We had to begin doing things differently."

– Stan Stephens

"At that point we formed what was called the oiled mayors group, which was for village leaders and mayors. I was a key component of that group and was often referred to as its spiritual leader because I had a tendency to

be the most outrageous and the most outspoken. We met with Alyeska every week in Anchorage in an effort to iron out some of our differences and to insist that the system of the squeaky wheel getting all the attention was not the best way to go about getting things done. We wanted a system that was fair and even.

We frequently called press conferences and I was often the spokesperson. We were the darlings of the press; they treated us very well. Industry was very sensitive to the press, to litigation, and to legislation, so we played all three of those cards, and we got a lot of things done. I really think that the oiled mayors group was one of the beginnings of the RCAC."

– John S. Devens, Sr

"Various stakeholders, communities, organizations, etc. realized that something had to change in order to make sure that another oil spill didn't happen again. It was in that spirit that the Alyeska Citizens' Advisory Committee (ACAC) was formed."

– Bill Walker

Walker represented the City of Valdez on the council's board of directors from July 1989 to September 2001.

"Before the legislation happened, Alyeska was beginning to be open to the idea of a citizens oversight council. So here you have the city behind the idea, Alyeska buying into the idea, and the oiled mayors from all the affected communities discussing the idea of spill prevention over the long term. Between all those forces, things began to happen fairly quickly."

– Mead Treadwell

Treadwell represented the City of Cordova on the council's board of directors from August 1989 to December 1990.



Original council logo.



John S. Devens, Sr.

Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

"There are so many people who deserve credit for identifying the problem and for working so hard. My assessment is that the RCAC never would have come about if concerned residents and citizens of Prince William Sound hadn't cared enough to make it happen."

— **Scott Sterling**

Sterling represented the City of Cordova on the council's board of directors from December 1990 to March 1993.

"It was the perfect storm in terms of pending legislation, public opinion, plus a lot of anger that was directed at Alyeska that put us in the driver's seat in a lot of ways. Getting that independent funding was critical."

— **Anne Rothe**

Rothe represented the National Wildlife Federation on the council's board of directors from July 1989 to December 1993.



Anne Rothe

"From there, I worked with Mark Hutton, who was doing contract work with Alyeska, to look at who should be invited to put this group together. Alyeska was issuing invitations to people, but we were making suggestions. We wanted to make sure that we had all the interested parties involved, looking at the whole impact area, not only the cities and boroughs, but the interest groups as well."

— **Marilyn Leland**

Leland represented the Cordova District Fishermen United on the council's board of directors from July 1989 to September 1991.

"I drove Jim Hermiller to the signing of the contract, and his last question to me was, 'Are we doing the right thing?' He felt that in the end it all boils down to the quality of the people and the purity of their intention, as to whether things do or do not work out, regardless of legislation. Jim was concerned that the people we had in the beginning were all reasonable, mature people and that the process would work so long as there were reasonable and mature people. He always feared the day when you have an organization with unlimited power and virtually unlimited money and you did not have reasonable and fair people. The downside was you could never choose the quality of the people who would be in it. The upside is that it fixed in concrete an oversight that has probably eliminated complacency for all time."

— **Mark Hutton**

Hutton served as liaison between Jim Hermiller, then president of Alyeska, during and after the formation of the council.

"The first meeting was very interesting. Peoples' emotions were still pretty much right on the surface, so there were some tense moments. However, the way I saw it, especially in the earliest days, there was an enormous feeling of working together to bring this group to its full potential. There was no sense of territoriality. Alyeska was there; they were on board with it, their new president wanted them to attend the meetings."

— **Marilyn Leland**

"Importantly, government was not involved in this meeting; it was fishing-industry-to-oil-industry. At that meeting, we presented a list of demands to the oil industry regarding the oil spill and one of them was the establishment of a citizens' advisory council for the region. The oil industry, particularly Alyeska and BP, was very receptive to the citizens' advisory council idea. After we adjourned the meeting the Alyeska reps immediately called BP London and told us they got approval to establish a Prince William Sound citizens' advisory council. They weren't quite as agreeable with the other things we proposed in that meeting (double hulls, better vessel traffic systems, etc.), and we had to work things out with them over the next several years. But the June 17, 1989, meeting was when and where the agreement was made to set up the Prince William Sound council....

...Once we had the agreement from the industry at the June 1989 meeting to establish the RCAC, I circulated the concept paper to the Alaska congressional delegation. Senator Frank Murkowski liked it, and he then followed up by sending two of his staffers over to Sullom Voe, to verify and ground-truth the concept. After that, the Senator inserted the RCACs into OPA '90."

— **Rick Steiner**

"It was a small intense group, and very unique. Bob Brodie, Ann Rothe, Mead Treadwell, Marilyn Leland, Tim Robertson, myself and a few others. I think there was something about how that group came to together, in the tragedy and the turmoil of what was going on. It was very intense around here in 1989. A bunch of folks came together and everything seemed to click, and we actually carved something into stone that had never been done before and it was done under very difficult operating conditions, both politically, plus we all had other jobs. But we just took an interest in making this happen."

— **Jim Butler**

Butler represented the Kenai Peninsula Borough on the council's board of directors from July 1989 to September 1990.

"There were then many subsequent meetings. I think we met every other week for a period of time as we decided who we were and what we were going to be. In a lot of cases there was nobody from Alyeska in the room, and if we wanted to meet privately, that was fine with them. There was some angst, though. There were several people who thought that we were being co-opted and that this would not work out, and that it would eventually become so influenced by the industry that it would be ineffective."

— **Tim Robertson**

Robertson represented the City of Seldovia on the council's board of directors from July 1989 to December 1991.

"Alyeska put huge resources into the formation of RCAC and managing OPA '90. But for us, the whole premise was, can we trust that this is going to be an independent group and not a puppet of the oil industry? We were all interested in setting a precedent for how potentially impacted areas might deal with impacting entities. Not just oil spills; it was a precedent for any major facility that could impact a region. It would provide a model for the world on how to deal with potentially polluting facilities, especially huge potentially polluting facilities. And it was trying to do it in a smart way, that would allow for compensation of social and economic impacts as a result of releasing any pollutants in the future."

— **Chris Gates**

Gates represented the City of Seward on the council's board of directors from July 1989 to February 1993.



Cordova resident Riki Ott (facing away from camera) speaks during a board meeting in September 1991. Board members pictured (left to right): Stan Stephens, Tim Robertson, and Bill Walker.

Eisemann and Selanoff: Kodiak and Port Graham Corp representatives resign

Continued from page 1

resigned as the representative of the City of Kodiak and Diane Selanoff resigned as the representative of the Port Graham Corporation.

Eisemann was hired by Alyeska to coordinate Kodiak's fleet of fishing vessel oil spill responders. Her seat on the council's board of directors is considered a conflict of interest, so she tendered her resignation.

Eisemann, a commercial fisherman and maritime science educator, had been on the council for nearly 14 years. In her resignation letter to the board, Eisemann talked about the role given to the council by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990: to be a model organization for citizen oversight of the oil industry.

"I don't think the council is a 'noble experiment' any longer. Perhaps it should read 'noble successful experiment,'" said Eisemann. "That's not to say that there won't be another disaster – but because of the council and its work – the chances are far less and if a spill event occurs, the outcome will be less devastating."

During her tenure, Eisemann was elected to serve on the execu-

tive committee as treasurer and member-at-large multiple times. In addition, Eisemann served on a number of committees, including: Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System, Information and Education, Finance and Board Governance.

Eisemann will remain on the council's Information and Education Committee.

Selanoff resigned in November. She represented the Port Graham Corporation since the organization joined the council in early 2010.

The corporation had been part of the council's sister organization, the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, since that organization's inception, but was not previously represented on Prince William Sound's council.

Selanoff was elected to serve on the council's executive committee as member-at-large in 2012 and 2013. She was also an active volunteer on the Information and Education Committee.

The City of Kodiak has selected Wayne Donaldson to replace Eisemann, and the Port Graham Corporation has chosen Jim LaBelle to replace Selanoff. Both new directors will be seated in January.

SWANSON: Right risks for prevention?

Continued from page 3

only narrowly averted. Managing adverse weather and darkness are other examples of the right risks that require attention.

In looking at tug rescues, we only need to look at the Kulluk drilling rig that drifted aground in December 2012 to better understand what might go wrong in a heavy weather emergency tanker tow and escort rescue or tow situation. Fortunately, several risk management solutions are known and readily available. Tow and escort safety enhancing winch features, such as "render-recover" and "level wind" are now standard on modern escort vessels and would eliminate some of those risks and improve the safety and utility of the tugs we have in Prince William Sound during a rough sea rescue situation. The council is hopeful that industry and regulators will focus on these right risks and known solutions.

Looking just around the corner at tankers carrying oil to refineries in Cook Inlet, we see that almost none of the advances in navigation in Prince William Sound over the last quarter century have been implemented for that waterway. Vessel

Traffic Control, tug escorts, and U.S. Coast Guard-enforced weather and ice risk management controls all are missing. As the recent Cook Inlet risk assessment pointed out, these risk management tools have been very effective for Prince William Sound and are sorely needed to provide comparable protection to the citizens and environment placed at risk of an oil spill by Prince William Sound crude oil tanker operations in the adjoining Cook Inlet waterway.

How do we know what needs our attention?

There is an impressive history of Alaskan industry, stakeholders and regulators coming together in Alaska and focusing on the right risks in order to prevent oil spills. If we look to our history of near-misses we can see that there is still more to be done. The significant remaining risks require great focus and attention. Let's not wait until the next accident to focus on the most important details. If we pay attention, the near-misses and the casualties and experiences of similar operations tell us what we need to know, and what we need to focus on.

- Mark Swanson is the executive director of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council.

THE OBSERVER is published in January, May, July and September by the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council. Questions or comments can be emailed to: newsletter@pwsrccac.org

FALL DRILLS: Lesson in spill prevention

Continued from page 1

However, several other challenges were included to add realism:

- The first 36 hours of the exercise was conducted continuously requiring all of the organizations involved to identify and use shifts for their personnel, even overnight.
- While the drill date was known in advance, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Coast Guard did not reveal the scenario details or location of the simulated oil spill until the start of the exercise.
- This exercise also included a middle of the night transition from the Valdez Emergency Operations Center to the Valdez Civic Center to provide more room for the command post.

Alyeska conducted another large oil spill drill for the Valdez Marine Terminal in October. The scenario for this exercise was the worst-case spill as described in their oil spill prevention and response contingency plan. The plan was recently approved by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. In this scenario, Alyeska had to respond to a simulated spill of 155,000 barrels, or approximately 6.5 million gallons, of crude oil reaching the Port of Valdez after a failure in one of the oil storage tanks. Alyeska's full incident management

team participated and significant field equipment was deployed.

To enable a focus on field activities, the drill scenario began 11 hours after the spill "occurred" and continued for approximately twelve hours. The field deployments included tactics for recovering oil in open water, nearshore, and on-land; and sensitive area protection. The exercise also involved construction of a temporary on-shore pipeline that would be used to transport recovered oil to a barge positioned at the terminal's loading berth 3. This exercise also used actual oil spill tracking buoys to indicate the location of the oil slick's leading edge. The buoys provided real-time data for the responders working in the command post at the Valdez Emergency Operations Center.

Both of these exercises stretched the number of required personnel from all of the participating organizations because of the extended hours of drill play and the variety of activities associated with them. The council's own staff was stretched trying to cover these exercises that were still significantly less demanding than a similar real incident.

While drills such as these provide practice for responding to an actual oil spill, one of the lessons learned from every major spill drill is that the primary focus should be on preventing an actual spill in the first place.

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Corrosion: Alyeska plans repair

Continued from page 1

(252,000 gallons) of oil would spill into Port Valdez before an upstream valve could stop the flow of oil.

At that time, Berth 5 was the only operating berth at the terminal while Berth 4 was down for maintenance. To mitigate the increased potential for an oil spill from this corroded piping section, Alyeska initiated a number of temporary measures. They immediately reduced the maximum loading rate from 100,000 barrels per hour to 75,000 barrels per hour. Precautionary booming and oil containment structures were setup to mitigate the possibility of leaks from the weakened piping sections. Within a few days of notifying regulators and the council, Alyeska fabricated and installed a carbon steel piping clamp that was bolted around this area of corrosion. The clamp does not provide any structural support for this piping segment, rather it was installed as extra precaution to prevent a crude leak from the weakened pipe section. This pipe clamp is not intended to be a permanent fix although it can remain in place for an indeterminate amount of time until a permanent solution is found. In December 2014 a brace

was installed just downstream of the corroded area to reduce the forces and stress associated with tanker loading on the corroded segment.

Alyeska hired a pipeline engineering firm to evaluate the operational limitations associated with this corroded piping. The firm's analysis, completed in December 2014, led to the conclusion that the pipe can be safely operated at a maximum pressure of 400 pounds per square inch (psi) and sustain momentary pressure spikes of 440 psi. Normal operating pressures of this piping are below 200 psi and the largest recorded pressure spike since 2001 was 313 psi. The firm's investigation determined that an immediate permanent repair was not warranted but that one should be completed soon.

Alyeska hired another engineering firm to comprehensively evaluate the structural integrity of the crude oil piping and provide design recommendations for permanent repair. Possible permanent repairs include a welded on metal sleeve, a specialized composite pipe wrap, or replacing the section with new pipe, which is considered by Alyeska as the last option. The second analysis with repair recommendations should be completed by February.



A temporary black carbon steel clamp was installed to prevent an oil leak from the localized corroded area. Photo courtesy of Alyeska.

RECREATION AND TOURISM:

Organization closed doors in January

Continued from page 1

need a healthy ecosystem to thrive," said Cathy Hart, president of the association and one of its founders.

Hart represented the association's interests on the council since early 2008. She was seated after long-time board member Stan Stephens retired. Stephens had held the seat since the association joined the council in 1992. Stephens later rejoined the board as the representa-

tive of the City of Valdez.

Hart served on the council's executive committee as secretary in 2009 and 2014, and as member-at-large in 2010. She chaired the council's Long Range Planning Committee from 2009 through 2014. The committee develops the council's five year strategic planning efforts.

Hart joined the council's Information and Education Committee when that group reformed in 2008. She will remain on that committee.

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:

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: Harold Blehm, Valdez	Steve Goudreau, Valdez
Vice-chair: Mikkel Foltmar, Anchorage	Tom Kuckertz, Anchorage
Amanda Bauer, 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: Amanda Bauer, Valdez*	Pete Heddell, Whittier
Vice-chair: Bill Conley, Valdez	Bob Jaynes, Valdez
Cliff Chambers, Seward	Orson Smith, Seward
Pat Duffy, Valdez*	Terry Whiteman, Anchorage

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: John Kennish, Anchorage	Dorothy M. Moore, Valdez*
Vice-chair: Paula Martin, Soldotna	Debasmita Misra, Fairbanks
Sarah Allan, Anchorage	Mark Udevitz, Anchorage
Roger Green, Hope	

Oil Spill Prevention and Response:

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) Committee works to minimize the risks and impacts associated with oil transportation by reviewing and recommending strong spill prevention and response measures, adequate contingency planning, and effective regulations.

Members:

Chair: John LeClair, Anchorage	David Goldstein, Whittier
Vice-chair: Jerry Brookman, Kenai	Jim Herbert, Seward*
Robert Beedle, Cordova*	Gordon Scott, Girdwood

Information and Education:

The Information and Education Committee's mission is to support the council's mission by fostering public awareness, responsibility, and participation in the council's activities through information and education.

Members:

Chair: Patience Andersen Faulkner, Cordova*	Cathy Hart, Anchorage
Vice-chair: Linda Robinson, Kenai	Ruth E. Knight, Valdez
Jane Eisemann, Kodiak	Kate Morse, Cordova
	Savannah Lewis, Anchorage

*council director

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. Board meetings are open to the public, and an opportunity for public comments is provided at the beginning of each meeting.

Here is the tentative board meeting schedule for the coming year: May 7 and 8, 2015 in Valdez, September 17 and 18, 2015 in Kodiak, and January 21 and 22, 2016 in Anchorage.

Agendas and other meeting materials are available on our website:

www.pwsrccac.org

You may contact either council office for a printed copy: Anchorage, 907-277-7222, or Valdez, 907-834-5000.

Community Corner**Oil spills in the classroom**

By **LISA MATLOCK**
Outreach Coordinator

During the summer of 2012, the council hosted a workshop with environmental education professionals from all over Southcentral Alaska, pooling the best oil spill education programs in one place. Katie Gavenus, an environmental educator from Homer, was chosen by the council's Information and Education Committee to put new activity ideas and the best of the original curriculum together. The resulting 2014 K-12 Oil Spill Curriculum will help today's students understand the history and science of oil spills in Alaska.

In 1990, Beth Trowbridge, an educator at the Prince William Sound Science Center, wrote the original K-12 Oil Spill Curriculum. This curriculum was developed for students in the Exxon Valdez oil spill area to learn about, and cope with, the effects the spill had on their families and communities. Trowbridge, now executive director of the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, was instrumental in revising the curriculum over time.

Today, the average 4th grader does not know much, if anything, about the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The council, in partnership with Gavenus, wanted this new version to reflect the perspective of K-12 students with no personal experience of an oil spill. Thus, the current curriculum focuses on student understanding of our marine environment and how capable we are to prevent and respond to oil spills. Gavenus completed the new version of the curriculum this past winter, making sure it meets Alaska's state standards. The lessons follow two tracks, "Oil

Resources and Energy Cycles" and "Ecosystems and Oil Pollution."

The first test of new lessons was led by board member, Patience Andersen Faulkner, and myself for Tatitlek students last May. The kids in the school had heard stories of the Exxon Valdez oil spill from family, but for most of them this was the first time they explored how an oil spill could affect them, their community, and the wildlife in the area. Pilot lessons continued this fall with Gavenus leading lessons in Homer, Seward, Whittier, Tatitlek, and Chenega Bay. Teachers in these classrooms are being surveyed, so the curriculum can be regularly reviewed and modified to reflect best practices.

"In Homer, students took on the 'oil spill in a pan' clean up challenge with great gusto," said Gavenus. "Most were frustrated by how difficult it was to clean up the oil, recognizing the importance of preventing a spill in the first place. But amidst the frustration, great ideas were born. Perhaps, one day, they will develop a real-life technology based on the insights they gained through this experience."

Outreach for the newly revised K-12 Oil Spill Curriculum will continue this spring on Kodiak Island and beyond. In October, the council has also proposed to share the curriculum with teachers state-wide at the bi-annual Alaska Math and Science Conference in Sitka. And the council, along with its partners, will continue to share lessons of the curriculum with teachers and classrooms all over the region each year. Oil spills in the classroom help spread the message of oil spill prevention to the next generation, a goal that is very important to the council.

Oil spill activity:

The four aluminum roasting pans each contain a mock "beach" – one mudflat,

one grassy, one rocky, one pebbly. The students, working in teams, plan how they will respond to the vegetable oil and black tempura paint oil spill that is about to hit.

Cost sheets describe how much their labor and available oil spill response materials – such as pipe cleaners, cotton balls, sponges, and oil absorbent pads – will cost and what is their budget for the clean-up. Once they signal they are ready, a teaspoon of the oil mixture is spilled into their pan, and they race to respond. In a short and exciting hour, these students understand more about oil spill response, and the importance of oil spill prevention, than most adults.



This activity is one of many lessons contained in the newly revised Oil Spill Curriculum, available online at the council's website:

www.pwsrcac.org/outreach/education/

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.

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Robert Beedle - City of Cordova
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Emil Christiansen - Kodiak Village Mayors Association
Wayne Donaldson (confirmation pending) - City of Kodiak
Pat Duffy - Alaska State Chamber of Commerce
Patience Andersen Faulkner - Cordova District Fishermen United
Nick Garay - City of Homer
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