

# THE OBSERVER

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## Council follows changes in crude oil storage tank inspections at terminal

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has made two recent decisions regarding inspection intervals of crude oil storage tanks at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The department revoked a waiver issued in February 2012 to extend the inspection interval on storage tank 5, meaning it is scheduled for inspection this year, and extended the inspection due date of tank 10 from 2012 until 2014.

### Storage Tank 5

In early May, the Observer reported that the department had approved an extended internal inspection interval for one of the tanks, known as Tank 5, until 2014. On May 23, however, the department revoked that waiver.

The waiver revocation does not preclude Alyeska from applying for another extension.

In a letter to Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., the department noted that the February waiver was based primarily on the proper functioning of the tank's cathodic protection system for the tank bottom.

Cathodic protection systems help manage the electrical currents flowing through the tanks. Uncontrolled currents can cause corrosion.

As a condition of the February extension,

Alyeska was required to submit bi-monthly cathodic protection monitoring logs to the department for review. The logs submitted before the extension was granted showed the system working correctly for the previous three years. This indicated the system had been maintained and operated properly until that time.

However, logs submitted in March by Alyeska for readings taken in December 2011 and February 2012 indicated the system had not been working as expected. When contacted by the department about the unusual readings, Alyeska explained the electric current controller malfunctioned and that the problem had since been repaired.

In April, the department requested more information about the controller outage. Alyeska's response said that they did not believe the outage had adversely affected the integrity of the storage tank.

In a May 23 letter to the company, the department countered that "a belief that the system was not detrimental to the tank floor integrity," was not adequate, and faulted the company for the

See page 6, **TANK INSPECTIONS**



In June, students attending the Marine Stewardship Expedition, a Chugach Children's Forest program, dug up oil left from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. During the weeklong expedition, the seventh- and eighth-graders also learned about the council and Prince William Sound wildlife, kayaked, and collected plastic trash out of the Sound. Photo by Kate Alexander.

For more on recent youth education programs, see page 5.

## Construction has begun on new Exxon tankers

One of two new double-hull tankers slated for service in Prince William Sound is now under construction.

This past spring, Aker Philadelphia Shipyard began building the 820 foot vessel for SeaRiver Maritime, the shipping arm of Exxon Mobil.

The tankers, Liberty Bay and Eagle Bay, will each be capable of carrying 730,000 barrels of oil, which is about 12 percent less than the vessels they will be replacing, the Kodiak and Sierra,

See page 6, **NEW CONSTRUCTION**



Oil storage tanks at the terminal hold North Slope crude oil until it can be loaded onto tankers for shipment to refineries. Each tank can hold approximately 20 million gallons of oil. Photo by Tom Kuckertz.

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

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**Volunteer Spotlight**

# Influx of new committee volunteers joins council

Over the past few months, several council committees have seen an increase in new volunteers with a wide variety of knowledge and experience.

The Information and Education committee received four new members. Mary Katzke of Anchorage, Allen Marquette of Cordova, Lanette Oliver of Valdez, and Mary Wasche of Eagle River have all joined this year.

Katzke is the director of Affinityfilms, Inc., a nonprofit educational media production company based in Anchorage. The company raises awareness on social issues such as sexual assault, women's health awareness, child development and literacy, mental health, special needs and breast cancer support.

Katzke has produced over 35 documentaries, including "Sea of Oil," a 1990 production about the Exxon Valdez spill.

"I was on the front lines when the spill happened," Katzke said of her decision to volunteer and share her historical perspective, "I can see an entirely new generation taking the reins with energy, spirit and perhaps not so much recall as we might need."

Marquette worked from 2001 until this year as science educator for the Prince William Sound Science Center. He also organized groups of citizen scientists to monitor for invasive species such as green crabs and tunicates in the Cordova area. He currently serves on the board of directors for several Cordova organizations: the electric cooperative, the public library and the historical society.

His interest in joining the council comes from

his passion for educating new generations and spreading awareness of the potential hazards of oil spills to the environment, people and wildlife of Alaska.

"I really enjoy working with young people to get them excited about the environment and science in general," Marquette said, "I believe all of the projects we work on have the potential to make people more aware of how they use their natural resources and how important it is to use them wisely."

"I want to get kids excited about the world around them and to discover the "wow" factor in science!"

Wasche is a retired banker, small business owner, dental hygienist, newspaper reporter and aspiring romance novelist. She has written for the Alaska Star newspaper and several

national magazines and regional newspapers. Wasche also serves on the board of the Chugiak Eagle River Historical Society and as a member at large of the Romance Writers of America.

Wasche co-owns a 38-foot fishing and pleasure boat docked in Whittier. She is a frequent visitor to the communities of Seward, Kodiak and Cordova as well as Esther, Hinchinbrook and Montague islands.

She says she is a believer in the council's mission statement and thinks individuals who love Alaska should contribute to preserving and protecting our state's environmental health.

Wasche wants to help the council increase public awareness, "especially of the younger population who will have to live with what

See page 7, **COMMITTEES**



Many committee members are able to join the council for board meetings, such as the May meeting in Valdez. Back row, left to right: Scientific Advisory Committee member Debasmitta Misra; Mary Katzke; Orson Smith; board members Thane Miller, Pat Duffy, Cathy Hart, Blake Johnson, Roy Totemoff, and Marilyn Heddell; Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System committee members Kari Anderson and Pete Heddell; Mary Wasche; Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System committee member Bill Conley; Oil Spill Prevention and Response committee member Jerry Brookman; board member John French; and Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System committee members Bob Jaynes and Cliff Chambers. Front row: left to right: Board members Amanda Bauer, Diane Selanoff, Iver Malutin, Dorothy Moore, Steve Lewis and Walt Parker. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

# Citizens' council elects new executive committee

By **STAN JONES**

Director of Administration and External Affairs

The council's board of directors elected its seven-member executive committee May 3 and 4 during a meeting in Valdez.

Dorothy Moore, who represents the city of Valdez on the board, was re-elected president.

"I look forward to carrying on the council's work as an advocate for the safe transportation of crude oil through Prince William Sound," Moore said. "I think having the council serve as an extra set of eyes helps make sure problems are addressed before they become crises, and that benefits everyone in and around the Sound - citizens, industry, and regulators alike."

Besides Moore, the executive committee, which will serve until the board's May 2013 meeting, is as follows:

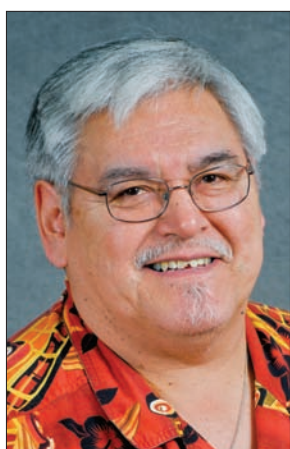
Pat Duffy, representing the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce, will continue as vice president and Thane Miller of the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation will continue as secretary. Marilyn Heddell of Whittier was elected treasurer. The members at large are Amanda Bauer of Valdez; Diane Selanoff of Port Graham Corporation; and Steve Lewis of Seldovia.

The council also seated three new board members at the Valdez meeting. James Kacsh will represent the city of Cordova, replacing Rochelle van den

Broek. Amanda Bauer will represent the city of Valdez, replacing Stan Stephens. And David Totemoff Sr. will represent Chugach Alaska Corporation, replacing Sheri Buretta.



James Kacsh



David Totemoff Sr.



The council's Executive Committee for 2012-2013 poses for a photo during the May 2012 board of directors' meeting in Valdez. Back row, left to right: Pat Duffy, Thane Miller, Steve Lewis and Marilyn Heddell. Front row, left to right: Amanda Bauer, Diane Selanoff, and Dorothy Moore. Photo by Amanda Johnson.



**From the Executive Director**

# New and changing conditions call for new strategies

This past year we've heard a lot about changing conditions affecting the oil industry, particularly the trans-Alaska pipeline and tankers carrying crude oil from Alaska to refineries in the Lower 48. We need to monitor how these changes affect the safety of oil transportation.

Thankfully, industry and regulators are well aware of these changing conditions and risks and are working to manage them. To the citizens living in the backyard of Alyeska Pipeline's Valdez Marine Terminal, these changes and their potential effects on the safety of our world-class marine oil transportation system are important to understand.

Decreased oil flow and lower oil temperatures in the pipeline increase the amount of wax that settles out of the crude oil. Wax can clog safety valves, impede flow, cause increased corrosion, and build up in sections of piping that are hard to reach. Water in the oil is likelier to freeze at lower temperatures. To combat this build-up of wax and water, Alyeska has increased the frequency of "pigs" that are sent through the main pipeline. Pigs are devices pushed through the pipeline by the oil itself and used to clean and inspect pipes.

Pigs are the tool of choice to manage many pipeline risks but they themselves are not risk-free. Pigs sometimes go astray and end up lost or stuck in piping or valves, possibly causing serious problems.

Alyeska's engineers are working with regulators to develop ways to best manage the increased risk due to the increased use of pigs necessitated by changing conditions.

The reduced temperature of the crude oil

arriving at the terminal stemming from lower flow and longer transit times decreases temperatures in the oil storage tanks at the Valdez terminal, and increases the potential for more snow to build up on the tank roofs. With extreme winters like the one just past, terminal operators must manage those risks by, like the rest of us around Prince William Sound, clearing the roofs of any snow in excess of the amounts they were built to withstand. The terminal's storage tank roofs are each an acre in size and over 60 feet above ground, so clearing them is not entirely risk free.

Here again, Alyeska engineers are coming up with ways to safely manage the increased risk arising from changing conditions.

Because of the reduced flow, several oil storage tanks have been taken out of service. Originally, the terminal's storage capacity amounted to a week's volume at the pipeline's maximum flow. This spring, a shortage of crude oil storage space at west coast refineries coupled with dock maintenance at the Valdez terminal contributed to unusually high inventories of oil at the terminal. Some tankers were unable to discharge all their oil at the refineries and had to carry partial cargoes of North Slope crude back to Alaska.

An overfull terminal necessitates slowing down production at a time when industry and many Alaskans are calling for measures to increase oil production. Through careful management and a few trips back north with cargo still on board, the inventory problems did not become a safety issue. The council's concern is safe oil transportation. Thankfully, indus-

try, the state and the Coast Guard each ensure laden tankers get two tug escorts through Prince William Sound regardless of which direction they are traveling.

This summer, North Pacific waters along the U.S. and Canada are hosts to a lot of Japanese tsunami debris, increasing the risk ships will encounter pieces of it large enough to cause damage. The shippers, the regulators and even the National Aeronautics and Space Administration seem to have a role in quantifying and managing the risks of changing conditions due to the tsunami debris.

Each of these changes require validation of the adequacy of existing controls and risk management strategies to ensure they can successfully address the new risks arising from changing conditions we're seeing.

The council is working to better understand these risks and, where appropriate, raise concerns and offer advice to regulators and industry, as all three parties work together towards the common goal of promoting and sustaining the environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and the oil tankers that use it.

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



Mark Swanson

**From Alyeska Pipeline**

# Safely moving more oil means a healthier economy for Alaska

The unprecedented design and construction of the trans-Alaska pipeline system delivered 800 miles of engineering ingenuity – traversing the arctic, scaling mountain ranges, crossing big rivers, and navigating unpredictable seismic fault lines. It took a tie-breaking vote by the U.S. vice president to overcome strenuous opposition to the pipeline and authorize the project.

This June marks Alyeska's 35th anniversary, thirty-five years of safely moving oil through the pipeline. With this milestone, our employees celebrate a legacy of reliable and safe operation with a very strong environmental and conservation record. They have made the trans-Alaska pipeline system a pipeline of integrity.

The people who built the pipeline came from a very different Alaska – still a frontier state, with an uncertain economic future, fewer jobs and less opportunity. The pipeline changed that.

Over 70,000 pipeline employees built and have safely operated an engine that revolutionized and still powers our state's economy. Many call it "Alaska's lifeline." Today, the oil that flows through the pipeline is the base for over 35 percent of Alaska's economic activity. The oil provides support for some municipal budgets, feeds the Alaska Permanent Fund and funds nearly 90 percent of the state's operating budget.

In the near term, we have serious challenges to address due to declining throughput. We stand ready to address these challenges. Alyeska pipeline employees and contractors are problem-solvers who routinely overcome big challenges. We will apply the best engineering, sound technical solutions and strong teamwork to continue to safely operate the pipeline.

But the best way to assure continued successful operations of the pipeline is to set conditions

that incentivize production of Alaskan oil and get more oil flowing down the line. Moving more oil will extend the life of the pipeline. It will enable the employees of Alyeska and its contractors to continue working the line and helping deliver a healthy economy

for our state for many years to come.  
• Thomas Barrett is president of Alyeska Pipeline Service Company.



Thomas Barrett

## Subscribe to The Observer!



Want to keep up with the news about oil tankers, oil spill prevention and response, activities of the citizens' council, and other issues related to oil transportation in Alaska waters? You can receive The Observer through your mailbox or your inbox! If you would like to sign up to receive The Observer by email, please visit our website, [www.pwsrca.org](http://www.pwsrca.org) or scan the code to the left with your smart phone's code reader!

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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)



# Highlights of recent council activities and events

The council board met in Valdez, May 3-4. Significant agenda items included:

- An update on the renewal process for oil spill contingency plans for tankers in Prince William Sound.
- A presentation from Crowley Maritime on the company's follow-up actions in response to a series of incidents involving the tugs that assist tankers carrying North Slope crude oil and support the system for responding to tanker spills.
- A presentation on the issue of storage tank inspection interval extensions at the Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. tanker terminal in Valdez.
- The board approved a budget for the upcoming fiscal year 2013.

## Oil spill contingency plan review

The council recently submitted comments during public review of the oil spill contingency plans for tankers in Prince William Sound, which expire in November 2012. The council looked at the Prince William Sound Tanker Contingency Plan, the Ship/Escort Response Vessel System's Technical Manual, and the individual shippers' plans (Alaska Tanker, BP Oil Shipping, Polar Tankers, SeaRiver Maritime, and Tesoro Alaska).

Particular attention is being paid to the areas earlier deemed insufficient for review by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. These areas include:

- Nearshore response
- Whether there are sufficient personnel to carry out an open water response
- Protection of sensitive areas
- Fishing vessel program
- Ability to contain and control a spill

The Valdez Marine Terminal Contingency Plan expires in May 2013. The council will submit comments during that review process.

## Interoperability of local and remote control of the Valdez Marine Terminal

The council has started a project to assess both local and remote control of Valdez Marine Terminal operations from an operations control center in Anchorage.

A final report will describe the interoperability and assess the extent to which these operations control processes comport with applicable regulations, codes, industry standards, and industry best practices.

## Tatitlek Cultural Heritage Festival

The annual Tatitlek Cultural Heritage Festival took place Friday, May 11. The festival is an annual celebration held at the conclusion of the Cultural Heritage Week. During the event, students learn traditional songs, dances, crafts, and language from elders and teachers. Residents from all over Prince William Sound and visitors gather for a huge feast of traditional Native foods and an art auction.

Board members Patience Andersen Faulkner and Dorothy Moore and staff Mark Swanson attended the culmination ceremony. Closing activities included a pot-latch and live auction to support the expenses of bringing regional youth to Tatitlek for the festival.

Several current and past council board members, Roy Totemoff, David Totemoff, Diane Selanoff and Sheri Buretta, as well as Commander Ben Hawkins, leader of the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Safety Unit in Valdez, were in Tatitlek teaching and working with regional youth.

## Spring fishing vessel training

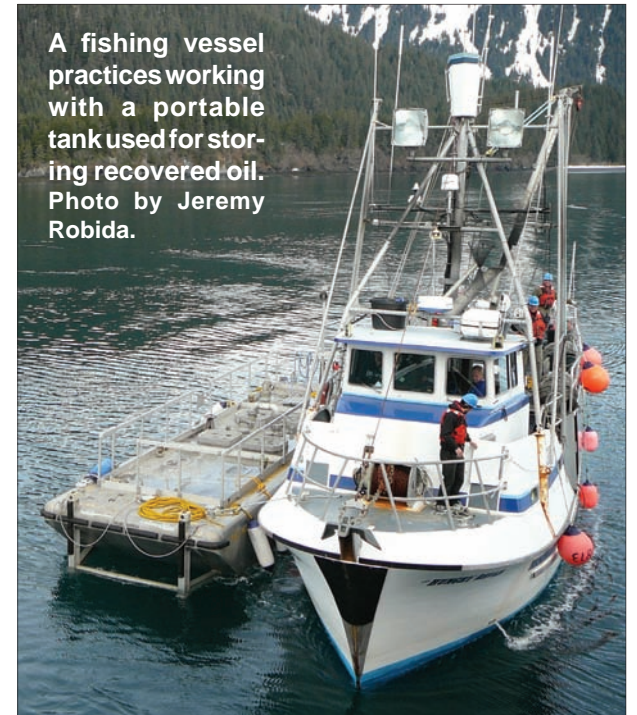
Annual spring fishing vessel training took place this year in Valdez, Cordova, Whittier, Kodiak, Seward, Homer and Kenai. Approximately 325 vessels and over 1000 crewmembers participated in the training across the region.

This year's training emphasized protection of sensitive areas and an overview of contingency



Above: Various oil spill response equipment is laid out to allow participants to become familiar with the equipment before practice starts on the water. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

planning. Participants said this overview helped them understand the process and how their vessels fit into the overall oil spill response process.



A fishing vessel practices working with a portable tank used for storing recovered oil. Photo by Jeremy Robida.



Fishing vessels practice towing oil spill boom during spring fishing vessel training in Seward. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

## Share your photos with us!

Show us what needs protection from spilled oil in your community.

We are seeking readers' photos of people, wildlife, land and bodies of water in your communities that need to be protected from spilled oil.

The best photos will be showcased in a photo essay in the September edition of The Observer and spotlighted on our website. All submissions are welcome!

Photo subjects can be anything that has been affected or has the potential to be affected by spilled crude oil. Subjects can include people, scenery, plant life, wildlife, communities, recreation activities, and cultural heritage.

Photos must have been taken in 2011 or 2012. Please include the name of the photographer, location taken and a description.

No more than three submissions per photographer, please.

Photos may be posted on our website or social media accounts. Full credit will be given to photographer, of course.

High quality photos are best. Photos must be in digital format, jpg preferred. Sorry, no printed photos or slides will be accepted.

Photographers under the age of 18 must have parental permission to enter their photos. Any person appearing in the photos must give permission to appear in a printed edition of The Observer and on our website, [www.pwsrcc.org](http://www.pwsrcc.org).

Submissions may be used in The Observer and other publications such as our annual report.

Photos must be received by August 20, 2012.

Questions? Contact Amanda Johnson: [amanda.johnson@pwsrcc.org](mailto:amanda.johnson@pwsrcc.org).



The west branch of Columbia glacier in Prince William Sound. Ice from the glacier can drift into tanker lanes and create hazards for passing tankers. Photo by Jeremy Robida.



**Youth Program Spotlight**

**Students learn importance of protecting Alaska's waters from spilled oil**

Students from all over the council region spent their spring and summer learning about environmental stewardship and the importance of protecting Alaska's waters from spilled oil.

Educational programs took place around the Sound, the Gulf of Alaska, and Cook Inlet, and taught a variety of lessons related to the mission of the council.

These programs were co-spon-

sored by the council through the Youth Involvement Program. The council provides funds of up to \$5,000 per organization to support projects and activities related to the council's mission and responsibilities. New project proposals will be accepted starting in late fall. Contact Linda Robinson, robinson@pwsrca.org or 907.277.7222, for information on the next proposal submission period.



Valdez students hold a gunnel fish. Photo by Jenny Heckathorn.

**Valdez High School students visit Kasitsna Bay**

On May 3, thirteen students from Valdez High School's Biology II class left on a trip to the Kasitsna Bay Laboratory and Research Center, located across Kachemak Bay from Homer, to take part in a three day educational program. The students learned about Alaska's coastal ecology, environmental monitoring methods, and invasive species. In Valdez, the students help monitor for invasive species such as European green crabs and tunicates.



A Valdez student holds a blood star, a red-orange species of starfish. Photo by Jenny Heckathorn.



The Kodiak Marine Stewardship Club gathers for a photo while on a marine wildlife field trip. Photo courtesy of Switgard Duesterloh.

**Kodiak students learn effects of spilled oil and marine debris**

This past year, the Kodiak Marine Stewardship Club has been studying marine debris and oil spills and the environmental effects the debris and spills could have on marine wildlife around Kodiak.

The club is part of the Ocean Science Discovery Program, an educational program trying to improve ocean literacy and stewardship in the Kodiak community. The club, open to Kodiak middle and high school students, is sponsored by the council and uses parts of the council's oil spill education curriculum.



Nanwalek students practice a simulated oil spill response. Photo courtesy of Kachemak Bay Research Reserve.

**Oil spill education kit tours Kachemak Bay, coming to Cordova**

Thanks to the efforts of Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, students from several coastal communities learned how they can prepare for a future oil spill.

In 2011, the reserve received funds from the council to develop an oil spill education program titled "Could it Happen Here? Coastal Habitat Mapping and Oil Spill Response." The program was first presented at the Alaska Islands and Ocean Visitor Center in Homer in April of that year. It has since been modified into a traveling kit. In the first half of 2012, reserve educators Catie Bursch, Carmen Field, and Jessica Ryan, along with volunteer Katie Gavenus, traveled to Kodiak, Nanwalek, Seldovia, and Port Graham to deliver the program to students in these communities.

The reserve, located in Homer, engages in coastal research and education within Kachemak Bay, located along the south-western tip of the Kenai Peninsula.

The kit will travel to Cordova to be a part of Prince William Sound Science Center's annual Ocean Science Festival on September 15.

When not in use, the kit is kept at the council's Anchorage office and is available on loan to any school within the region affected by the Exxon Valdez spill. Contact Linda Robinson in the council's Anchorage office if you are interested.

For more information on the development of this program, see the July 2011 issue of The Observer online: <http://bit.ly/CouldItHappenHere>



# TANK INSPECTIONS: Council watching date changes

Continued from page 1

lack of a technical or engineering analysis supporting the statement.

Alyeska also responded that the monitoring logs showed the cathodic protection system was working 26 percent of the time for the previous six month period.

"Stated differently," the department noted in their May 23 response, "the cathodic protection system was not operating correctly 74 percent of the time."

The department also cited Alyeska's failure to quickly recognize and respond to the malfunctioning system, stating that Tank 5 must be internally inspected before December 31, 2012 or removed from service.

Tank 5 was last inspected in 2001. A new floor was installed in 2002 due to corrosion found during the 2001 internal inspection. Alyeska also added a cathodic protection system to help slow corrosion. According to requirements developed by the American Petroleum Institute, ten years after installation the company must determine the rate the new floor is corroding. An internal inspection of the tank will verify that rate.

The council supports the department's decision to revoke the waiver to extend the inspection interval for Tank 5.

## Storage Tank 10

On June 15, the department responded to Alyeska's request for an extension on the inspection of oil storage Tank 10. The department decided to extend that inspection for two years, with a new due date of 2014.

Tank 10 was last inspected in 2000, and was due for another cleaning and inspection in 2010. That year, Alyeska requested an extension and the department granted a delay until 2012.

Alyeska submitted a request to extend the 2012 inspection due date based on the use of risk-based inspection analyses conducted

using practices recommended by the American Petroleum Institute.

A risk based analysis weighs economic losses, safety and health of workers, and environmental damage against the probability of an accident and whether the benefits exceed the cost of the risk.

Risk based inspections are relatively new in Alaska.

A risk based analysis submitted by Alyeska to the department on August 31, 2011 recommended extending the inspection date to 2020. The department deemed this analysis incomplete and requested additional information. Alyeska submitted a revised risk based analysis on February 14, 2012. The new analysis indicated that a reduced the inspection interval was appropriate, recommending a due date of 2016.

A separate extension request for Tank 10 came in January. To support this request, Alyeska submitted a "similar service assessment."

According to the American Petroleum Institute's website, a similar service assessment is used "to establish inspection intervals for tanks for which corrosion rates have not been directly measured or adequately documented in previous records." If one tank is similar enough to another tank, the two tanks can be treated as the same when determining length of time between inspections.

The use of similar service arguments is prohibited in Alaska, however, and was not considered by the department.

Alaska regulations do allow risk based assessments, so the department considered only the revised risk-based analysis, submitted in February, in making its final decision.

In the final decision, the department noted issues such as the use of a "very conservative" estimated corrosion rate and unrealistic repair costs in Alyeska's risk based analysis when it chose a inspection interval extension shorter than requested

by Alyeska.

The department extended Tank 10's inspection deadline until 2014, two years sooner than requested by Alyeska.

The terminal has a total of 18 tanks, 14 of which are available for service. Each tank can hold up to 20 million gallons of North Slope crude oil. The tanks are used to store the oil until a tanker arrives to carry the oil to a refinery in the Lower 48.

Alyeska took the opportunity to install a new floor coating while Tank 13 was empty for inspection. Photo by Tom Kuckertz.



Tanks such as those at the Valdez Marine Terminal are typically inspected on a 10 year cycle for internal inspections, and a 5 year cycle for external inspections. These inspections check for corrosion and other mechanical damages. Extensions of a few years are sometimes permitted based on the extent of corrosion during previous inspections, the usage of the tank, and whether the tank floor has had cathodic protection installed.

The lengths of the inspection intervals generally follow standards of the American Petroleum Institute, an oil and gas industry association that sets such standards.

Less comprehensive external inspections using ultra-sound technology are required every five years — after each internal inspection — as an interim check on the tank's condition.

## SERVS conducts 12,000th tanker escort through Sound

On June 6, Alyeska's Ship Escort Response Vessel System, or SERVS, escorted its 12,000th tanker through Prince William Sound.

The tanker Polar Discovery left the terminal escorted by the tugs Aware and Nanuq.

"Congratulations to our employees and contractors for their dedication and personal commitment," said Alyeska President Tom Barrett. "This milestone is a great example of the work we do in safeguarding the environment and transporting oil safely — day in and day out."

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990, enacted after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, required that two escort tugs accompany each single hull oil-laden tanker through Prince William Sound. The tugs provide emergency and spill prevention services such as iceberg detection, towing assistance for disabled tankers, and immediate response to oil spills.

Twenty years later, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 extended that requirement to all double hull laden tankers traveling through the Sound.

## NEW CONSTRUCTION: Work has begun on new Exxon tankers

Continued from page 1

which were built in the 1970's.

These two tankers will have a state-of-the-art ballast water filtration and chlorination unit on board to help neutralize threats from invasive species.

A new Coast Guard rule, "Standards for Living Organisms in Ships' Ballast Water Discharged in U.S. Waters," requires new treatment technology, such as this unit, to be installed on any new oil tanker built after June 21, 2012.

With this unit, as new ballast water enters the tank, the water is filtered and then treated with low

levels of hypochlorite sufficient to eliminate non-indigenous species. SeaRiver plans to use an initial dosage of 5 to 8 parts per million of hypochlorite and they expect that level to drop to 3 to 5 parts per million during transit. The hypochlorite will be neutralized using sodium bisulfite, a common food preservative, when the ballast water is discharged.

Other new features on these tankers, such as anti-fouling coatings, structural improvements, and oil mist and gas detection systems, were described in an earlier edition of the Observer. Read more online: <http://bit.ly/NewTankers>



The Nanuq is one of the two Crowley Marine tugs that escorted the Polar Discovery on June 6. In this photo, the Nanuq is tethered to the tanker Alaskan Legend during a recent exercise in Prince William Sound. Photo by Alan Sorum.



# Committees: New volunteers add to council knowledge

Continued from page 2

does or doesn't get done to keep Prince William Sound an incredible natural resource."

Oliver has taught subjects such as English, English as a second language, biology, chemistry, physical science, zoology and space education to students in elementary, middle and high school. In 2009, she was chosen as one of seven teachers nationwide to participate in NASA's Teachers in Space program. Originally from Texas, she worked in the Anchorage school system for several years before her recent move to Valdez.

Katzke, Marquette and Wasche joined the committee in March, and Oliver joined in May.

Orson Smith joined the council's Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System Committee in March. He is a licensed engineer and professor of civil engineering at the University of Alaska Anchorage, and is currently the interim dean of the School of Engineering.

Smith holds degrees in physical oceanography, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, and port and coastal engineering. He teaches classes on water resources, arctic, port, and coastal engineering. He was a manager of coastal and harbor projects with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for twenty years before joining UAA in 1998. His university research has focused on subjects such as Cook Inlet sea ice,

coastal erosion, tidal circulation and climate change.

"I am attracted by the extraordinary precedent of success the council has established in the world and the technical challenges faced by the committee," Smith said of his interest in joining the council as a volunteer.

"The port facilities and vessel traffic management system at Valdez are sophisticated, as well as important to the economy of Alaska and to the safety of the Sound," Smith said, "I'll enjoy learning more of the details."

Ken Adams joined the council's Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee in March.

He is a commercial fisherman from Cordova. He has a Master's degree in biology and taught high school biology classes for several years. After moving to Alaska from New Jersey in 1979, he taught at the Prince William Sound Community College for three years before returning to full-time commercial fishing for halibut, salmon, herring and cod.

Adams was a first-hand witness to the devastation of the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the effects on humans and the marine environment.

"It is not only important but essential to prevent oil spills rather than respond to events that demolish our environment and resources we depend on," Adams said.

## 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:

September 13-14, 2012: Seward

January 17-18, 2013: Anchorage

May 2-3, 2013: Valdez

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.



Members of the council's board of directors at the January 2012 meeting at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

## 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 local 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  
 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  
 Kari Anderson, Seward  
 Duane Beland, North Pole  
 Cliff Chambers, Seward  
 Bill Conley, Valdez  
 Pat Duffy, Valdez\*  
 Jane Eisemann, Kodiak\*  
 Pete Heddell, Whittier  
 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

### 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  
 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****Spring is busy time for council outreach**

By **LINDA ROBINSON**  
Council Outreach Coordinator

Students from Elmira College in New York visited Homer in May. They requested a presentation on the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the history of the council. I gave a 45 minute presentation to them and members of the public at the Islands and Oceans Center.

The talk included information on reasons we want to keep Prince William Sound free from oil. Since the students were taking this trip for a biology credit, I introduced them to many of the animals and fish that live in the Sound. We discussed the effects of the Exxon Valdez spill on wildlife, commercial fishing and tourism.

**Clean Pacific**

Board member Walt Parker joined staff members Mark Swanson, Jeremy Robida and me at the biennial Clean Pacific Conference and Exhibition, held this year in Long Beach. This year's event focused on challenges such as tsunamis, oil spills and shipwrecks. The council's information booth was set up and we had many opportunities to talk with folks from industry, agencies and the Coast Guard.

**Copper River Nouveau**

Cordova board members Patience Andersen Faulkner and James Kacsh joined staff members Donna Schantz and me at this year's Copper River Nouveau.

Originally dubbed "First Fish Celebration" when it began in 2000, this event used to coordinate with the first fish opener of the Copper River fisheries in mid-May. Now hosted in June, the annual Copper River Nouveau has expanded to become Cordova's premier celebration of ocean science and wild Copper River salmon. Attendees this year included U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, state Representative Bill Thomas, Lieutenant Governor Mead Treadwell, Alyeska President Tom Barrett and several members of his senior staff, and many council stakeholders from around our region. Sponsorships, silent and live auction proceeds, and dinner ticket sales help raise

funds for the research and education programs at the Prince William Sound Science Center. The event was very enjoyable and council representatives engaged in a lot of positive outreach for our organization.



Linda Robinson

**National Marine Educators Association Conference**

This year, the National Marine Educators Association met in Anchorage. Besides setting up the booth, I helped give a presentation on "Establishing a Regional Education Collaboration to Engage the Next Generation of Leaders" with Ann Mayo-Kiely of Alaska Geographic, and Sara Boario of the Chugach National Forest. Along with these organizations, the council has sponsored student expeditions into Prince William Sound since 2009. Students who participated in these expeditions talked about their experiences and showed videos they created about their trips. This collaboration among organizations has led to a number of very successful learning experiences for students in our region.

**Visit to Whittier**

Mark Swanson and I visited Whittier in June. We met with Marilyn Heddell, a council board member; Pete Heddell, a member of the council's Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System committee; Bob Prunella, Whittier's city manager; Scott Korbe, director of Public Works and Utilities for Whittier; Lester Luncford, mayor of Whittier; and Sue Miller, Whittier's harbormaster and coordinator of the fishing vessel program for the Ship Escort/Response Vessel System. The discussion covered a variety of topics and we updated them on council concerns such as tank inspections, corrosion, marine fire-fighting systems, and glacier study projects.

We continue to try to visit all of our communities to update them on council activities and see if they have any concerns they wish us to address. If there is an event in your community that you would like us to participate in, please contact me in our Anchorage office.



Board member Walt Parker and council staff Mark Swanson and Linda Robinson talk with a visitor to the council's booth at the Clean Pacific conference. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

## 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

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Mark Swanson, Executive Director

**Anchorage**

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Gregory Dixon, Financial Manager  
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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

**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

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