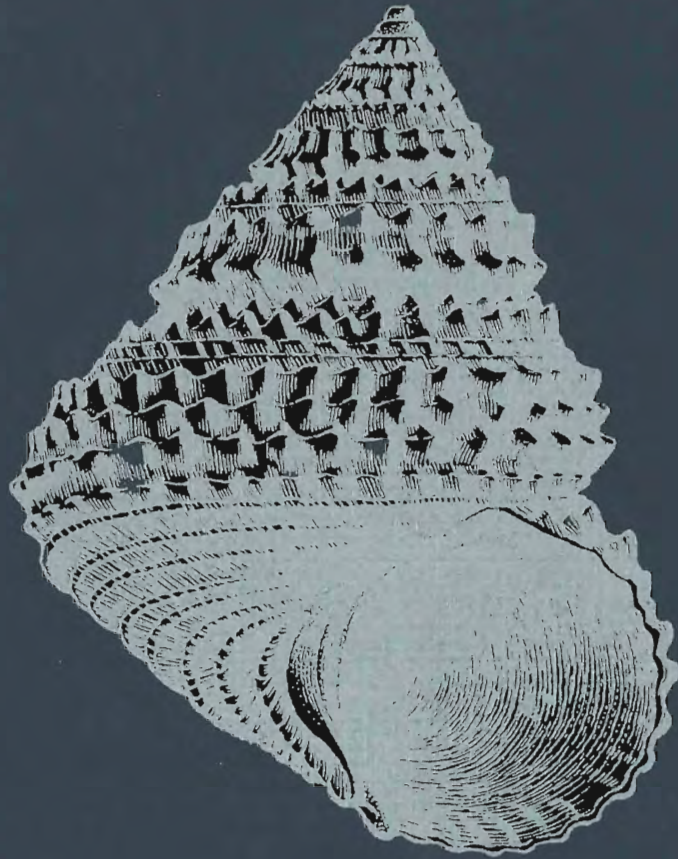


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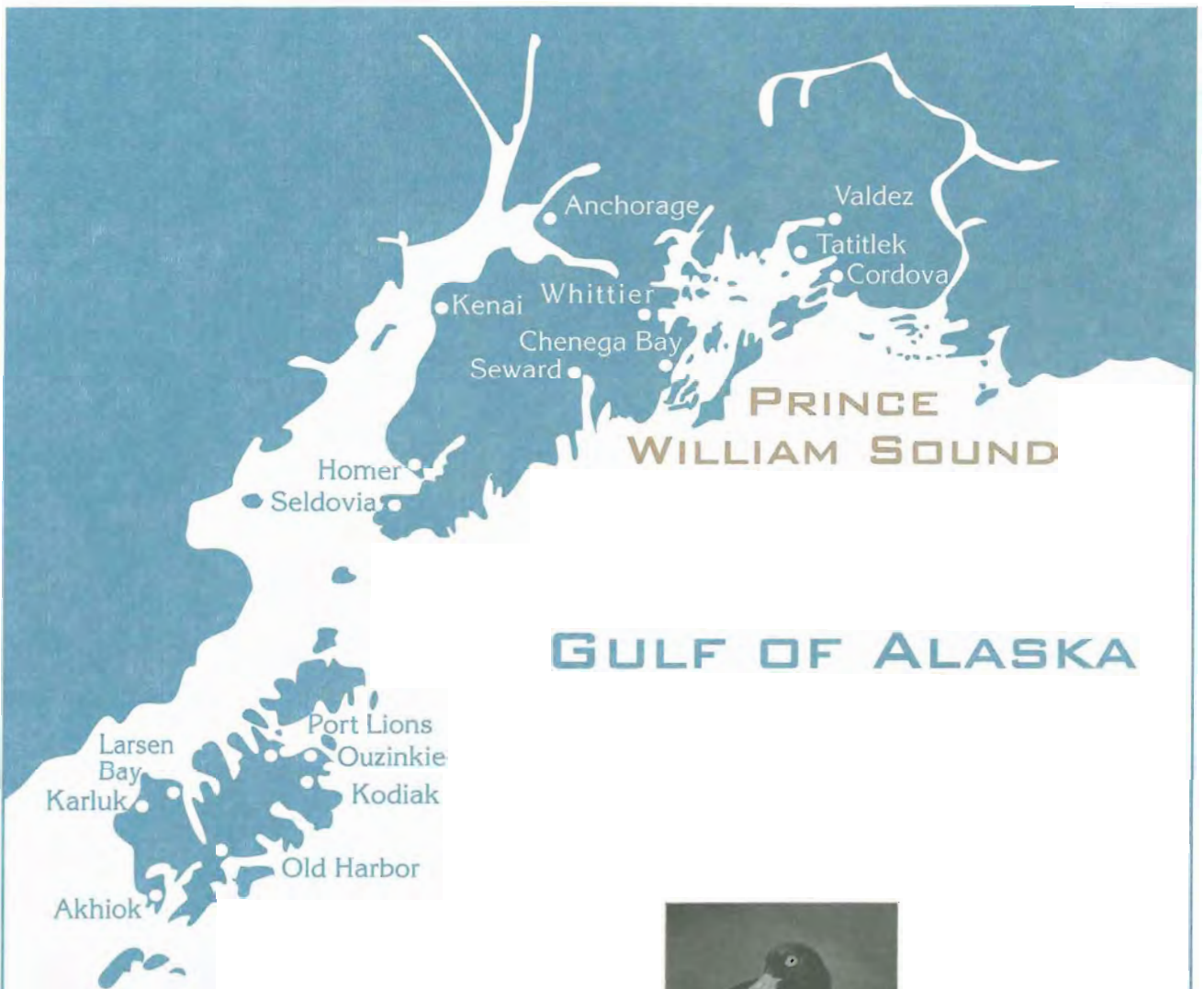


PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
REGIONAL CITIZENS'
ADVISORY COUNCIL



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(Photo: ADFG/Alaska Division of Tourism)



Kachemak Bay (Photo: Alaska Division of Tourism)



(Photo: Robert Angell)

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As you peruse these pages documenting RCAC's activities of the year, keep in mind the mission of RCAC: Citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers. As representatives of the people at risk from Prince William Sound oil transportation, we at RCAC hope you will conclude that the mission is being well-served.

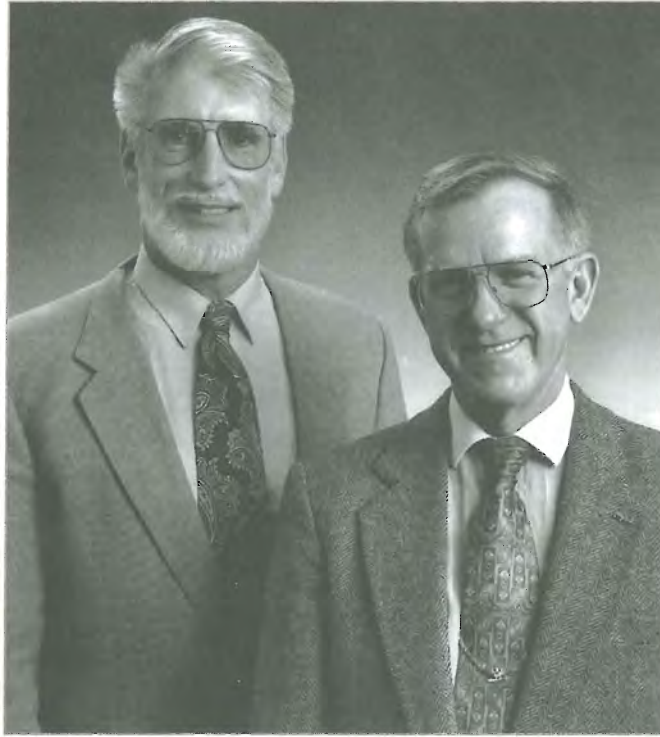
Nineteen ninety-six was marked by several significant developments in oil spill prevention, fire response and environmental issues.

The most profound from RCAC's perspective was completion of the Prince William Sound Risk Assessment, an 18-month study of crude oil transportation. This study was a truly cooperative effort of RCAC, industry and regulatory agencies. The risk assessment identified and ranked the risk of oil spills from tankers in the Sound. It also recommended specific steps to reduce those risks and prevent oil spills. Before the ink on the final report was even dry, changes were underway to make a relatively safe system even safer. In the past, major changes in equipment and procedures frequently came only after an accident or a close call. The Prince William Sound Risk Assessment paves the way for safety improvements before a problem arises.

The Prince William Sound Risk Assessment will continue to be on our plate in 1997, as we work with industry and regulators to implement specific measures to reduce the risks of tanker oil spills that still exist.

* * *

For several years, RCAC has questioned whether the planning and preparations for responding to a fire – whether at the terminal or on board a tanker – are adequate. These nagging concerns led RCAC to conduct



Louis "Tex" Edwards, President, and Stan Stanley, Executive Director

a formal review of fire response capabilities in Prince William Sound. We retained a nationally-recognized consulting firm with expertise in fire to do the study; as hoped, it both answered questions and identified areas where fire response planning and coordination could be improved. Many of the recommendations we made as a result of the study are being implemented. This particular project has been an excellent example of how a well-funded citizens' group – it takes money to hire the experts

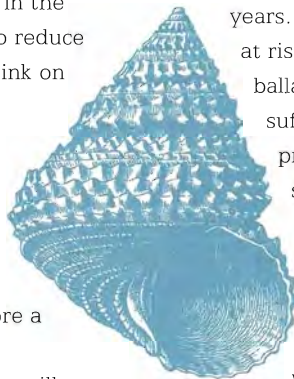
– can lead to sound recommendations and safety improvements that benefit everybody.

* * *

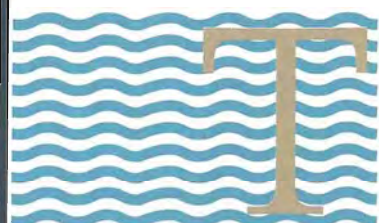
This past year, RCAC began work in earnest on an issue that may well take center stage for the next few years. The question is whether Prince William Sound is at risk from non-native aquatic species brought in with ballast water from incoming tankers. Other ports are suffering enormous biological and economic problems from these so-called "non-indigenous" species. RCAC is taking the lead in efforts to determine whether the same problems will or could surface here.

* * *

RCAC is still a relatively young organization and we find ourselves evolving, as well we should. In 1996, RCAC did some serious soul-searching, resulting in several structural changes to improve accountability and clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the council, staff and committee volunteers. We also completed a review of the lessons that RCAC has learned in its first seven years. We hope the product of this review, "RCAC Retrospective: The successes and lessons of a citizens' advisory group," will be of value to others seeking meaningful citizen participation.



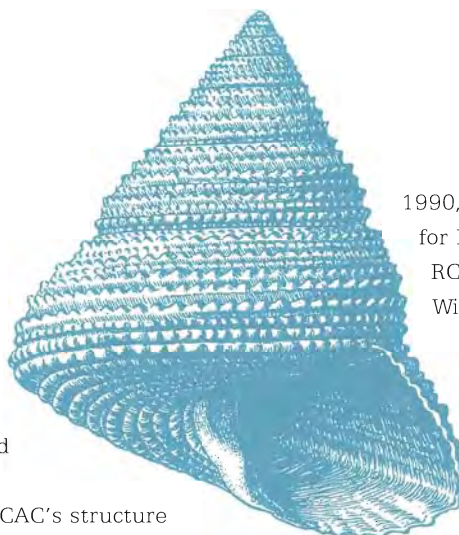
MISSION & RESPONSIBILITIES



The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council is guided by its mission: citizens

promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers.

Consistent with that mission, RCAC's structure and responsibilities stem from two documents. Under a contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, RCAC receives funding for services it provides to Alyeska and the public. The second guiding document, enacted after RCAC was created, is the federal Oil Pollution Act of

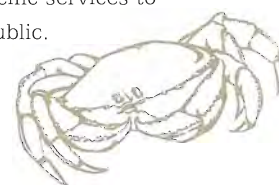


1990, which required citizen oversight councils for Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet. The RCAC is the citizen council for Prince William Sound.

CONTRACT

Under the terms of its contract, the RCAC provides specific services to Alyeska and the public.

RCAC reviews, monitors and comments on Alyeska's oil spill response and prevention plans; its prevention and response capabilities; and its environmental protection capabilities. RCAC also reviews and monitors the actual



and potential environmental impacts of terminal and tanker operations.

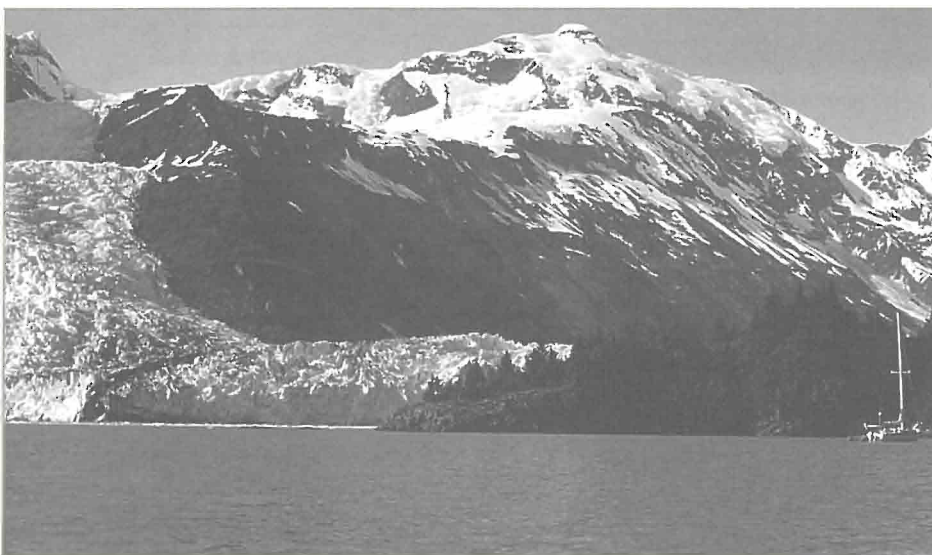
The contract also calls for RCAC to increase public awareness of Alyeska's oil spill response, spill prevention and environmental protection capabilities.

RCAC comments on and participates in monitoring and assessment of environmental, social and economic consequences of oil related accidents. It provides input on actual or potential environmental impacts in or near Prince William Sound; and comments on the design of

measures to mitigate the potential consequences of oil spills and other environmental impacts of terminal and tanker operations. RCAC participates in development and review of spill prevention and response plans, and in periodic review of operations under the plans.

The contract states that RCAC may work on other related issues not specifically identified when the contract was written.

The RCAC was initially funded at \$2 million per year. The funding is renegotiated every three years; current funding is \$2.1 million per year.



Prince William Sound



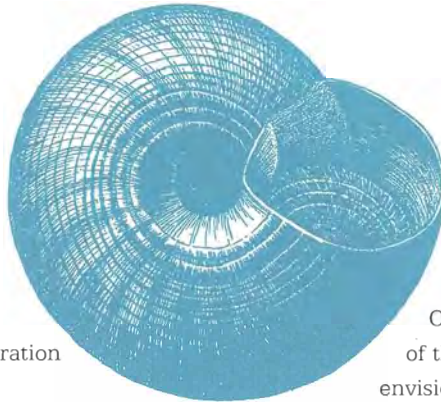
Alyeska officials (from left) Dennis Maguire, Gary Richardson, and Tom Stokes brief the RCAC Board of Directors.

"CITIZENS PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE OPERATION OF THE ALYESKA TERMINAL AND ASSOCIATED TANKERS."

Although RCAC works closely with and is funded by Alyeska, RCAC is an independent advisory group. The contract is explicit about RCAC's independence: "Alyeska shall have no right . . . to have any degree of control over the formation or operation of the corporation. . ."

OIL POLLUTION ACT OF 1990

RCAC's contract with Alyeska predates the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90), but the similarities are not



and RCAC has done so since 1991. Each year, the Coast Guard assesses whether the RCAC fosters the general goals and purposes of OPA 90 and is broadly representative of the communities and interests, as envisioned under OPA 90.

As the council for Prince William Sound pursuant to OPA 90, RCAC advises and makes recommendations on policies, permits, and site-specific regulations relating to the oil terminal and tankers. It monitors the environmental impacts of the terminal and tankers, as well as terminal and tanker operations that affect or may affect the environment in the vicinity of the terminal. RCAC reviews the adequacy of oil spill

prevention and contingency plans for crude oil tankers operating in Prince William Sound, and advises and makes recommendations on port operations, policies and practices. RCAC

also recommends standards and modifications for terminal and tanker operations to minimize the risk of oil spills and other environmental impacts, and enhance prevention and response.



Prince William Sound (Photo: Alaska Division of Tourism)

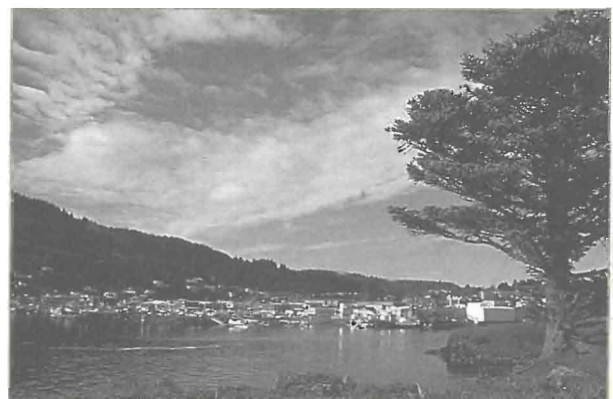


(Photo: Robert Angell)

coincidental. Many of the people involved in the establishment of the RCAC also actively promoted citizen involvement provisions in the federal law.

OPA 90 established two demonstration projects in Alaska – one in Prince William Sound, the other in Cook Inlet – designed to promote partnership and cooperation between local citizens, industry and government; and to build trust and provide citizen oversight of environmental compliance by oil terminal facilities and tankers.

The law specifically allows an alternative, existing organization to fulfill the requirement for a citizen group



Kodiak (Photo: Alaska Division of Tourism)

1996 ACTIVITIES

OIL SPILL PREVENTION

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND TANKER RISK ASSESSMENT

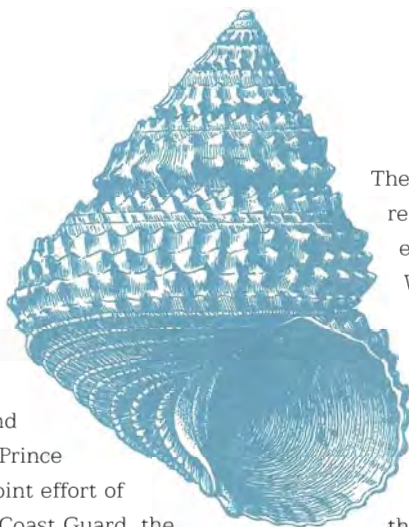
An 18-month study of the risks of oil transportation in Prince William Sound was completed in December 1996. The Prince William Sound Risk Assessment was a joint effort of RCAC, oil shipping companies, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. RCAC, the shipping companies and the U.S. Coast Guard funded the \$2 million project.



A tug is tethered to the tanker Overseas Boston. Close tethering ensures the tug can quickly assist the tanker if it experiences power or steering problems.

The study used an innovative combination of models to analyze and rank the risks of tanker casualties from the time a laden tanker leaves the terminal to a position 20 miles past Hinchinbrook Entrance. A list of measures to mitigate these risks was developed, and the mitigation measures, themselves, were ranked to determine the most effective.

The study was conducted by a team composed of experts from two universities and an international maritime consulting company. Their work was guided by a steering committee composed of representatives of the sponsoring groups.



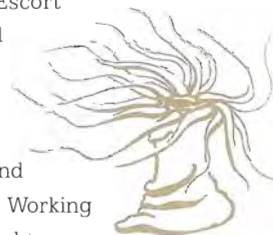
The risk assessment was significant for several reasons: it represented the first system-wide examination of oil transportation in Prince William Sound; it was a truly cooperative effort among industry, citizens and regulators; and it used a combination of methodologies. The final report recommended eight measures to further enhance the safety of oil transportation. The recommendations included changes to the systems and vessels used to escort laden tankers, improved vessel traffic management, and systems to reduce the risk of human error. By the end of the year, some of the recommendations were being implemented.

ESCORT VESSEL OPERATIONS

Laden tankers leaving the Valdez Marine Terminal are accompanied by escort vessels through Prince William Sound. These escorts include both tugs - to assist the tanker if it loses power or steering - and specially-outfitted response vessels designed to respond should a spill occur. Escort tugs were the focus of several projects RCAC worked on in 1996.

- RCAC is a member of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Escort Vessel Working Group. The group was organized to develop an ASTM standard for escort vessel selection criteria and the methodology to be followed in escort selection. In 1996, RCAC attended meetings and reviewed various drafts of the guidelines for selection of escort vessels.

- RCAC participated in three working groups organized to address different aspects of tanker escorts. One group, the Interim Escort Study Task Force, investigated different tugs for possible short-term service in Prince William Sound, to satisfy a state requirement for escort enhancements on an interim basis. Another group worked on proposed regulations to define and clarify the state requirement that escorts be the best available technology. Yet another group traveled to Finland, Scotland, Germany and the Netherlands to study different escort tugs in use or under construction in Europe.



1996 ACTIVITIES

COLUMBIA GLACIER STUDY

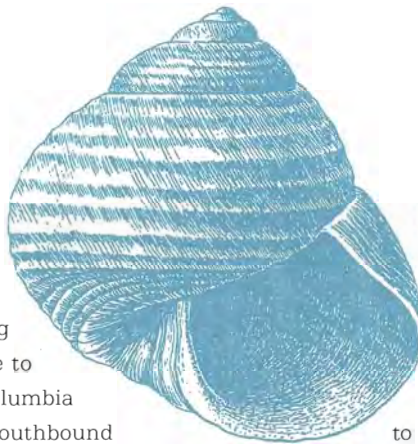
RCAC began a study of the Columbia Glacier to determine calving rates and the potential for floating ice to impact tanker transportation. The Columbia Glacier, situated 25 km west of the southbound shipping lanes in Valdez Arm, is the largest glacier in Prince William Sound. It calves thousands of icebergs into Columbia Bay each year. Some of these icebergs drift into the shipping lanes and occasionally present serious hazards to vessels. Time lapse cameras, hydrographic surveys of the moraine, and aerial photography are used to better understand the advance and retreat of the glacier, and the flow rates of floating ice.



Icebergs break away from an ice jam in Columbia Bay. Ice from Columbia Glacier can drift into the shipping lanes, posing significant hazards to tankers and other vessels.
(Photo: Austin Post)

TANKER INTEGRITY

RCAC continued to maintain a data file, begun in 1995, of each of the vessels calling at Valdez. The file includes information on vessel particulars including size, cargo-carrying capacity, year built, vessel owner and operator, double hull replacement date, and any reported damage to the vessel. This document is updated regularly as new information is obtained.



BRIDGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The State of Alaska invited RCAC to participate in development of a bridge resources management system, using computer simulation. The system is intended to improve training and certification programs for marine pilots, improve communication among mariners and vessels in the trans-Alaska pipeline trade, and give mariners the opportunity to test decision-making and ship-handling skills under simulated conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

BALLAST WATER INFLUENT SAMPLING

At the end of 1996, RCAC was preparing to resume monitoring ballast water discharged by tankers into the ballast water treatment facility at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The primary objective of the program is to determine whether ballast water arriving at the terminal contains compounds not anticipated for treatment. Because samplings are not announced in advance, the program may also serve as a deterrent against the discharge of unauthorized substances. Most of 1996 was spent negotiating with Alyeska over a sampling protocol, revising the program's quality assurance plan, and contracting with companies to collect and analyze the samples, and provide quality assurance review of the analysis. An earlier monitoring program, conducted jointly by RCAC and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, ended in 1995.



Cormorants. (Photo: Alaska Division of Tourism)

1996 ACTIVITIES

LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING PROJECT

The fourth year of monitoring was completed in a program that collects baseline data on hydrocarbon concentrations at specific sites in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. Intertidal mussels were sampled in March and July for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Shallow sediments at most stations were monitored twice for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Deep sediments at most stations were monitored once during the year, as the numbers have been stable.



Crew checks a mussel collection site at Sleepy Bay, on the north end of Latouche Island in southern Prince William Sound. Sleepy Bay is one of nine sites where sediment and mussels are taken as part of the Long Term Environmental Monitoring Program. (Photo: Lisa Ka'aihue)

The study also identifies the source of any hydrocarbons present. The data provide a benchmark for assessing the impacts of oil transportation and future oil spills. Results are presented in a year-end annual report.

HATCHERY SAMPLING

RCAC provided funding to support the Solomon Gulch Hatchery Sediment Sampling program. The hatchery is located close to the Valdez Marine Terminal and conducts annual sampling to determine the presence of polyaromatic hydrocarbons and other contaminants in the sediment around the hatchery, water, fish tissue and plankton. RCAC funds are being used to pay for laboratory analysis of the samples.



BALLAST WATER TREATMENT FACILITY/FEDERAL DISCHARGE PERMIT

RCAC continued to work with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company and regulatory agencies on issues related to the Ballast Water Treatment Facility at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The treatment facility discharges an average of almost 16 million gallons of treated effluent into Port Valdez per day. RCAC is a member of the Ballast Water Treatment Facility Working Group, which addresses issues related to the environmental impacts of the treatment facility. In 1996, most of RCAC's work in this area was devoted to review and discussion of Alyeska's new federal discharge permit. The permit regulates the quality and quantity of effluent discharged from the facility, and sets monitoring and reporting requirements. The old permit expired in June 1994 but it remains in effect until the EPA issues a new permit. The new permit is expected to be issued in 1997.



NON-INDIGENOUS SPECIES

In 1996, RCAC took the lead in a new effort to determine whether Prince William Sound is at risk of invasion by aquatic nuisances introduced through tanker ballast water. Some waterways, including the Great Lakes and San Francisco Bay, have been invaded by species not indigenous to the area. The so-called "non-



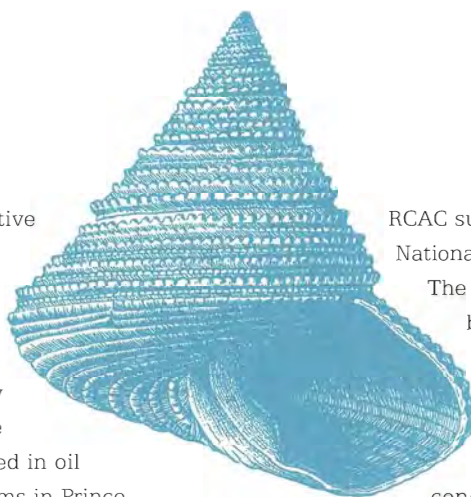
Deep water sediment samples are collected and analyzed for markers that would indicate hydrocarbons.

1996 ACTIVITIES

indigenous species” can take over native species and cause severe ecological and economic damage. A common mode of transport of these invading species is the ballast water carried in tankers from one waterway to another. There is concern that the millions of tons of ballast water carried in oil tankers could result in similar problems in Prince William Sound.

RCAC began working on the issue while examining the possible impacts of lifting the ban on export of Alaska North Slope crude. One of the concerns raised by RCAC was that oil exports could result in importation of non-indigenous species via ballast water picked up in other areas.

When the U.S. Department of Commerce conducted public hearings on removal of the oil export ban, RCAC submitted comments and recommendations. Some of RCAC’s recommendations pertaining to non-indigenous species were included in the President’s special conditions for lifting the ban. Most important, one of the conditions requires tankers exporting Alaska North Slope crude to exchange segregated ballast water in deep ocean prior to entering Prince William Sound.



RCAC submitted comments in support of the National Invasive Species Act (NISA) of 1996.

The main purpose of the act is to manage ballast water to prevent the introduction and spread of non-indigenous species into all waters of the United States.

RCAC retained the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center to conduct a pilot study to begin assessing the risk to Prince William Sound of invasion by aquatic nuisances, through discharge of oil tanker ballast. RCAC also established a Non-indigenous Species Working Group, and began organizing a workshop on aquatic nuisance species, to be conducted in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CAGED BIVALVE PILOT STUDY

RCAC prepared to conduct a pilot test to determine the usefulness of employing caged mussels to monitor environmental impacts from the ballast water treatment facility. The pilot test involves placing mussels in cages at a significant depth at different locations relative to the outflow site from the ballast water treatment facility. The actual pilot test will be conducted in 1997.



Valdez Marine Terminal. (Photo: Randy Brandon)

1996 ACTIVITIES

ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT IN PORT VALDEZ

Scientists representing RCAC and Alyeska have been working on a comparative study of the environmental impacts, from all sources, on Port Valdez. The Ecological Risk Assessment will provide a more definitive picture of the extent of



problems, if any, in the port's marine ecosystem, and the source or sources of those problems. The project will be an important step in identifying what effect the ballast water treatment facility has on the marine environment of Port Valdez.



VAPOR CONTROL SYSTEM

RCAC continued to monitor leaks in the piping of the tank farm vapor control system, as well as progress in replacement of the piping. RCAC had proposed formation of a working group to address the leaks and other age-related issues at the terminal. However, the work group was never formed because of disagreement about the scope and duration. At the end of the year, RCAC retained a technical consultant to advise on terminal issues, including the vapor control system and construction of new vapor controls at the loading berths.

CONTROL OF TANKER LOADING VAPORS

RCAC monitored progress on construction of vapor controls being installed at the terminal's loading berths to capture hydrocarbon vapors released when tankers are loaded with crude oil. The vapor control system is expected to be in place early in 1998.

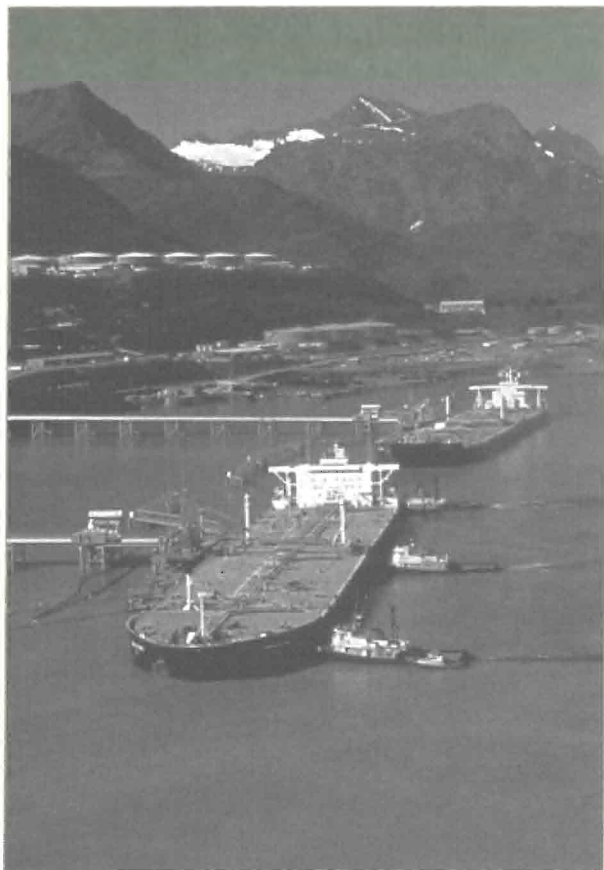
OIL SPILL PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY PLANS

Among RCAC's core responsibilities, under both its contract with Alyeska and the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, is to provide local and regional input, and review the adequacy of oil spill contingency plans. RCAC seeks to insure that planning and response action take place as required under law and as needed to protect the waters and livelihoods of citizens in the region impacted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

STATE TANKER CONTINGENCY PLANS

The tanker plans approved conditionally in November 1995 are the subject of petitions, appeals, and lawsuits. Early in the year, RCAC hosted a meeting in hopes of resolving some of the issues under dispute. Since then, RCAC has monitored developments in the appeals and suits. RCAC has also monitored and commented on steps taken by the



Tankers at berth, Valdez Marine Terminal.
(Photo: Randy Brandon)

1996 ACTIVITIES

plan holders to comply with the conditions that were part of the state's approvals. In addition, RCAC commissioned a report on one of the outstanding issues, out-of-region response.

FEDERAL CONTINGENCY PLANS

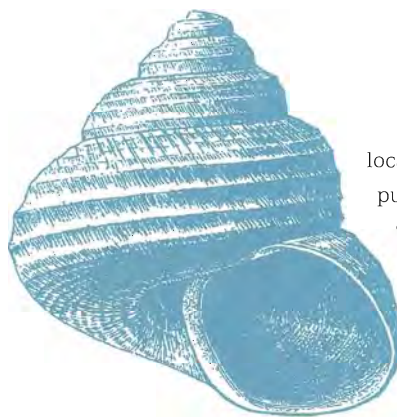
RCAC reviews and comments on federal spill prevention and response contingency plans for the Valdez Marine Terminal, tankers transporting North Slope crude, and area plans for the RCAC region. Area plans are geographically specific response plans that contain policy guidelines for industry response and describe the response by federal agencies if the federal government manages a spill response in that area.

In 1996, RCAC worked on all three subarea plans that apply to the Exxon Valdez impact area: Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, and Kodiak. RCAC submitted formal comments on the Prince William Sound Area Plan and Cook Inlet Area Plan. Toward the end of the year, RCAC began working with the Kodiak Island Borough and regulatory agencies to review the Kodiak Sub-Area Plan, and began a project to facilitate local involvement in the Kodiak planning process.

NEARSHORE RESPONSE

Nearshore response is the effort to contain spilled oil that has escaped initial containment and threatens shoreline. Local fishing vessels, other vessels of opportunity, and training of coastal residents, are essential to effective nearshore response. The State of Alaska requires crude oil shippers have nearshore response plans as part of their overall oil spill contingency plans.

- In 1996, RCAC worked on several projects pertaining to nearshore response. A manual on how to set up community response centers, designed for



local coastal communities, was finalized and published by RCAC and Cook Inlet RCAC.

- RCAC reviewed and commented on a document submitted to the state by shippers to address deficiencies in their nearshore response plan.
- RCAC urged state officials to reverse their decision to stop funding operations, maintenance and training for the state's

nearshore systems spill response program.

- RCAC worked with the City of Seldovia and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation in an ongoing effort to keep a small spill response barge in lower Cook Inlet.

- RCAC commissioned a report on use of the state's oil spill prevention and response fund (the "470" fund) and the history of the nearshore systems program.



MONITORING FIELD IMPLEMENTATION

RCAC developed a system to monitor and verify that oil spill response equipment outside the region has been organized and obtained, in accordance with state and federal requirements.



Fishing vessels are integral to nearshore response. (Photo: Lisa Ka'aihue)

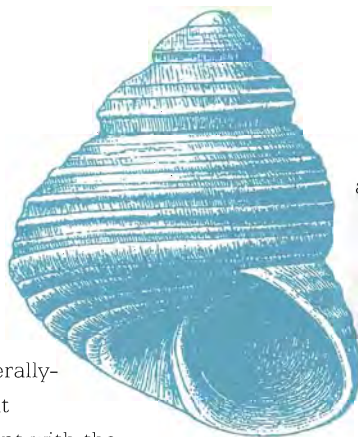
1996 ACTIVITIES

ALASKA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Oil spill contingency plans are reviewed through the Alaska Coastal Management Program. The ACMP is a federally-mandated program designed to ensure that development projects or plans are consistent with the plans and priorities of coastal communities. As such, it is an important avenue for ensuring local input. For the purposes of oil spill contingency plans, the ACMP process provides a forum for citizens and local governments to comment on, or appeal proposed response plans. In 1996, changes were proposed to the ACMP appeals process that could hinder local access. RCAC monitored and submitted comments on the proposed changes.

VALDEZ MARINE TERMINAL PLAN

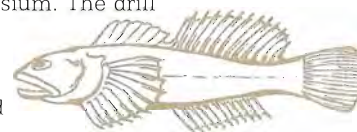
RCAC continued to review and comment on the oil spill contingency plan for the Valdez Marine Terminal. The process was lengthened and complicated by several factors, including ongoing revisions to the plan, correction of deficiencies at the terminal identified in several audits, reorganization at ADEC and Alyeska, and public concerns raised in review of the tanker plans that



also apply to the terminal plan. RCAC's final round of comments on the plan highlighted three issues: fire, secondary containment, and slope stability and seismic re-engineering. RCAC's comments also addressed the review process itself.

DRILL MONITORING

RCAC's drill monitoring work is supported by a contractor in Valdez who observes and reports each month on oil spill response drills, exercises and training. In 1996, the drill monitor observed and reported on 30 drills, training exercises and related industry activities. These included two major industry-led drills, transrec task force deployment exercises, nearshore strike team training and towing exercises, fishing vessel training, and an on-water response demonstration at the Valdez Oil Spill Prevention Symposium. The drill monitor also monitored a dispersant monitoring exercise, an optional tiered booming deployment exercise, and a worse-case scenario tabletop drill conducted by Tesoro. RCAC staff also monitored drills and exercises, including a demonstration of the airborne dispersant delivery system and a one-day, internal ramp-up drill conducted by BP.



The Valdez Star, with its dynamic inclined plane skimming system, is an important component of Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System (SERVS).

DRILL PARTICIPATION

RCAC staff and volunteers participated in four drills, and helped plan and evaluate two of them: a drill of land and water scenarios at the Valdez Marine Terminal in May, and a two-day tabletop drill conducted by Chevron in August. RCAC also observed a Tesoro worse-case drill in October. RCAC also assisted in an ARCO Community Response Exercise in July. Industry drills are used by RCAC as opportunities to practice its own Emergency Response Plan.

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"SENSITIVE AREAS"

RCAC encourages regulators and industry, in their oil spill response planning, to use local knowledge to identify environmentally sensitive areas, and other areas of public concern.

RCAC agreed to provide financial support for a series of maps showing environmentally sensitive areas on Kodiak Island and Shelikof Strait. The maps are being developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which will compile and incorporate local knowledge of areas that are environmentally or culturally sensitive. The four maps will identify sensitive areas by season. RCAC continued to participate in the Sensitive Areas Working Group, of the Alaska Regional Response Team. Much of the working group's 1996 efforts focused on Kodiak.



an oil spill or other incident.

In 1996, RCAC monitored a small oil spill from the ARCO Spirit, an orphan spill in Kodiak, and a spill of oily water at the Valdez Marine Terminal. RCAC also monitored environmental conditions, such as high winds, ice in the tanker lanes, and a threatened tsunami.

Unusual tanker transits and reports of actual and potential tanker problems were also monitored. In June, RCAC alerted Alyeska Pipeline and the shipping companies to an unusually heavy flow of low-floating icebergs in the shipping lanes.

SPILL RESPONSE: DISPERSANTS, BIOREMEDIATION, IN-SITU BURNING

Consultants were retained to collect information on the use of dispersants, in-situ burning and bioremediation in oil spill response. RCAC has an interim policy on dispersant use, but no policies on bioremediation and in-situ burning. The council will use the reports, to be completed in early 1997, to develop policies and recommendations for how and when these spill response tools should be used in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska.



Boom surrounds tankers at berth to contain any oil spilled during loading. (Photo: Tom Sweeney)

INCIDENT MONITORING

RCAC routinely monitors casualties, incidents, oil spills, port closures and potential problems occurring at the terminal, the port or on tankers. Information is relayed to RCAC's member organizations. When appropriate, RCAC solicits advice and suggestions from the communities and forwards them to the incident command. RCAC has its own Emergency Response Plan which governs its work during



Helicopter simulates application of dispersants during an on-water demonstration of spill response equipment.

1996 ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLANNING

COMMUNITY IMPACTS: MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Technological disasters, such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, can have significant mental health impacts on communities. Although the fishing community of



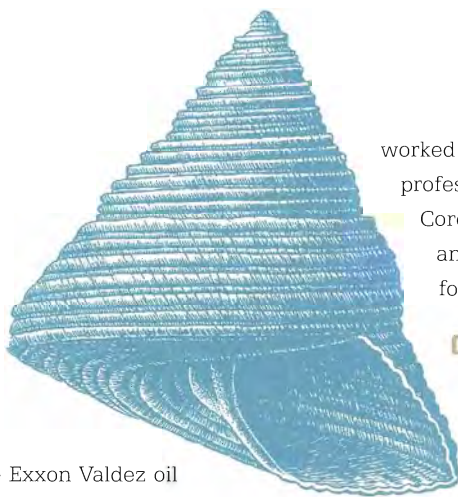
Cordova relies heavily on fishing and was severely impacted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill. (Photo: Alaska Division of Tourism)

Cordova was not itself oiled, the town and its residents were profoundly affected. In 1996, Cordova served as a demonstration project for a program to help



communities deal with mental health impacts of a major oil spill. Strategies tested in Cordova included newspaper articles and a radio series, a peer listening program, a community education component, called "Growing Together," and a Talking Circle, patterned on the traditional Native talking circle.

The strategies were developed by a team led by Dr. J. Steven Picou, University of South Alabama. They



worked closely with mental health professionals and high-risk groups in Cordova. The strategies were evaluated and a guidebook will be produced in 1997 for use by other communities.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS: TECHNICAL

RCAC is developing tools to help communities respond to an oil spill, with emphasis on community response planning and communications during an oil spill. The objective is to lessen the impacts of oil spills on humans and their communities. A model community response plan will be completed in 1997.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE CENTER MANUAL

RCAC and Cook Inlet RCAC produced a manual for communities that want to establish community-based oil spill response centers. The manual provides information on the organizational options for forming a community response center. It also addresses related subjects, such as available resources, major players in oil spill response and their respective roles, as well as health, safety, training and legal issues.

LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND POLICY

RCAC monitors legislation and regulations that relate to terminal and tanker operations, and oil spill prevention and response. At the state level, RCAC monitored and submitted comments on several legislative issues in 1996. They included proposals to encourage private industry to conduct environmental self-audits, reform of the civil liability system, agency budgets for oil spill prevention and response, and water quality standards. RCAC also participated in development of a regulation to define the state requirement for "best available technology," and commented formally on the regulation.

At the federal level, RCAC testified on conditions for lifting the ban on export of Alaska North Slope crude oil. RCAC monitored proposed amendments to the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, and commented on the National Invasive Species Act of 1996.

1996 ACTIVITIES

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

THE OBSERVER

RCAC increased public awareness on a wide range of issues pertaining to crude oil transportation through publication of The Observer, a quarterly newsletter distributed throughout communities in Prince William Sound, lower Cook Inlet and the Kodiak Archipelago. The Observer is also sent on request to interested citizens outside the region, as well as regulators and industry.

Each issue of The Observer includes coverage of RCAC activities, developments in the oil transportation industry and news about policy and operational issues related to marine oil transportation.

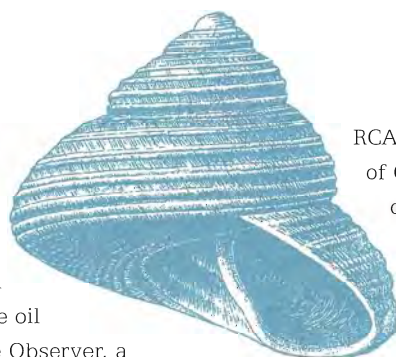


Major oil spill drills are usually covered, and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. is invited to submit a column for each issue. In the course of preparing articles for The

Observer, RCAC frequently invites feedback from appropriate industry and regulatory personnel.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

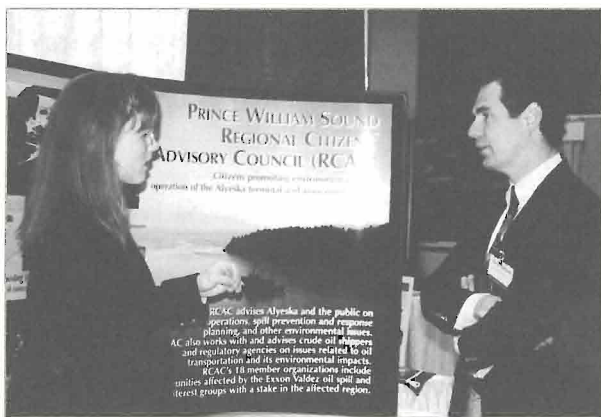
A new program was initiated in 1996 to foster closer communications and relations between RCAC and the 18 communities and interest groups that comprise



RCAC's constituency. A new, full-time position of Community Liaison was added to promote closer ties with the people represented by RCAC. The Community Liaison visits communities in the region, gives presentations, works with members of RCAC's Board of Directors, and encourages citizens to participate in RCAC.



RCAC brought the Tatitlek Alutiq Dancers in to perform at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Party. The Community of Tatitlek is one of RCAC's 18 member organizations.



Community Liaison Leann Ferry discusses RCAC's work with a visitor to the RCAC booth at the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce Convention in Sitka. The Chamber of Commerce is a member of RCAC, representing tourism interests.

RCAC RETROSPECTIVE

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 required citizen advisory groups in Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet as demonstration projects, in part to determine whether such groups should be established at other oil terminals in the country. In 1996, RCAC published a report assessing what has worked well and what hasn't, since it was organized in 1989. "RCAC Retrospective: The successes and lessons of a citizens' advisory group" analyzes RCAC's effectiveness and the lessons it has learned as an organization.

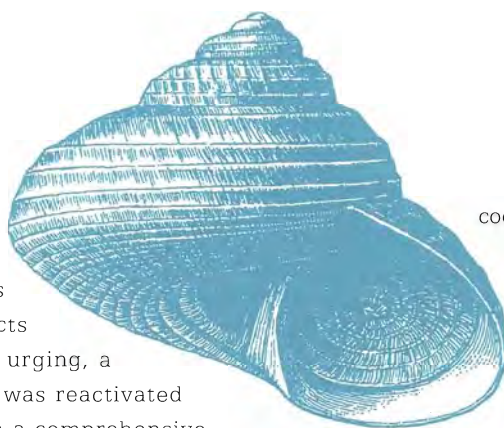
The report is intended for several audiences: citizens interested in organizing similar advisory groups; the U.S. Congress, should it consider applying the model in other areas; and resource companies committed to meaningful citizen participation.

1996 ACTIVITIES

FIRE PROTECTION

Coordination and planning of response to fire on tankers was the focus of several related projects and activities in 1996. At RCAC's urging, a dormant task force was reactivated to work on a comprehensive marine fire response plan for Prince William Sound. Later in the year, a second task force was organized to address fire response issues at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

RCAC retained a consultant to conduct an independent study of marine fire response and emergency planning for Prince William Sound. The consultant reviewed and analyzed the adequacy of fire fighting resources, and reviewed model fire response plans to determine possible improvements for Prince William Sound. Based on the consultant's report, RCAC recommended several steps to improve fire response



coordination and planning. They included specific changes in the U.S. Coast Guard's fire contingency plan for Prince William Sound; a marine firefighting training program be developed to train land-based firefighters in marine support; establishment of a maritime incident response team; and acquisition of a portable air compressor. To encourage development of the training program, RCAC began planning a fire response workshop to be held in 1997.

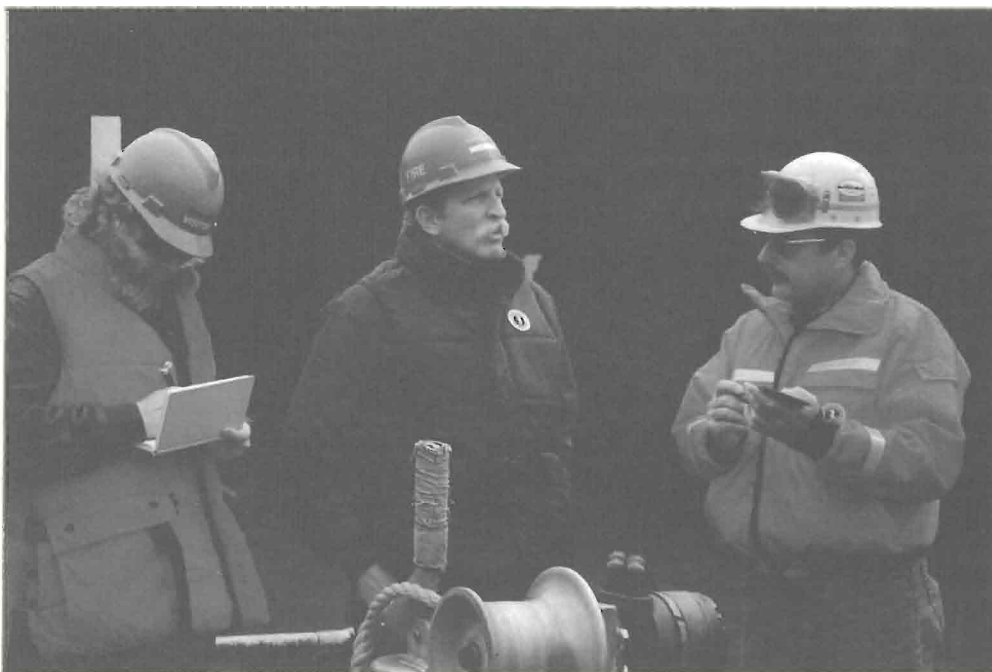
RECERTIFICATION

The U.S. Coast Guard recertified RCAC as the federally approved citizens' advisory group for Prince William Sound, pursuant to the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90). RCAC has been the certified group since 1991.

Under the annual recertification process, the Coast Guard assesses whether RCAC fosters the general goals

and purposes of OPA 90 and is broadly representative of the communities and interests as envisioned under OPA 90.

As part of its review, the Coast Guard considers comments from industry, interest groups, and citizens. RCAC fulfills the OPA 90 requirement for an industry-funded citizens advisory group, but it was established before the law was enacted.



Fire consultant Michael S. Hildebrand (right) interviews Robert Carlton, Fire Chief of the Valdez Marine Terminal. Mike Wrabetz, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, (left) takes notes. Hildebrand conducted an independent analysis of marine fire response capabilities in Prince William Sound. (Photo: Leann Ferry)

COMMITTEES



As members of RCAC's Scientific Advisory Committee, (from left) Ivan Frohne, Gig Currier and Bill D'Atri review research projects and advise the rest of the organization on scientific issues.

Four advisory committees advise the Board of Directors and staff on projects and activities in their respective areas. Committee volunteers also assist staff on individual projects. The advisory committees are comprised of interested citizens, technical experts, and members of the RCAC Board. Committee volunteers are selected through an annual application process. They are appointed to two-year terms and may serve consecutive terms.

OIL SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE COMMITTEE

Jerry Brookman, Kenai - Chairman
Paul Andrews, Homer
Wayne Coleman, Kodiak (RCAC Board Member)
Tom Copeland, Cordova
Jon Dahlman, Seward
Gail Evanoff, Chenega Bay
Joe Jabas, Valdez
Lee Majors, Valdez
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Kristin Stahl-Johnson, Kodiak (RCAC Board Member)
Lou Weaver, Valdez

PORT OPERATIONS AND VESSEL TRAFFIC SYSTEMS

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Bill Conley, Valdez
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Tom McAlister, Valdez
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Ivan Frohne, Wasilla
Gig Currier, Cordova
David Hite, Anchorage
A. J. Paul, Ph.D., Seward
Kristin Stahl-Johnson, Kodiak (RCAC Board Member)
James D. Steward, Anchorage
Thea Thomas, Cordova
Charles K. Weaverling, Cordova (RCAC Board Member)

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Suzie Kendrick, Soldotna
David Connor, Valdez
Paul McCollum, Homer
Sara Pearson, Soldotna
George Skladal, Anchorage
Stan Stephens, Valdez (RCAC Board Member)



RCAC board member Marilynn Heddell (left) joins Jerry Brookman and Lee Majors, members of the the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee, in a discussion of spill response issues. Project Manager Joe Banta (rear) listens in.

RCAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 1996



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Seated: Michelle Hahn O'Leary, Vice President, and Louis 'Tex' Edwards, President.

Standing, from left: Marilyn Heddell, member at-large, Bill Lindow, Treasurer, and Charles K. Weaverling, Secretary.



Charles Christiansen
Kodiak Village
Mayors Association



Wayne Coleman
Kodiak Island
Borough



Louis 'Tex' Edwards
City of Homer



Mike Gallagher
City of Valdez



Keith Gordaoff
Chugach Alaska
Corporation



Marilynn Heddell
City of Whittier



Blake Johnson
Kenai Peninsula
Borough



Margy Johnson
City of Cordova

RCAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 1996



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Community of
Tatitlek



Bill Lindow
Prince William Sound
Aquaculture Corp.



Dennis Lodge
City of Seward

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

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Environmental Conservation:
Tom Chapple

Alaska Department of
Fish and Game:
Claudia Slater

Alaska Department of
Natural Resources:
Mike Wrabetz

Alaska Division of
Emergency Services:
Mike Byington

National Oceanic
& Atmospheric Administration:
John Whitney

U.S. Coast Guard:
Cmdr. Ron Morris

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Office of Environmental
Affairs:
Doug Mutter

U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency:
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U.S. Forest Service:
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**Michelle Hahn
O'Leary**
Cordova District
Fishermen United



**Kristin Stahl-
Johnson**
City of Kodiak



Stan Stephens
Alaska Wilderness
Recreation &
Tourism Association



Tim Volstad
City of Seldovia



Bill Walker
City of Valdez



**Charles K.
Weaverling**
Oil Spill Region
Environmental
Coalition



George Wuerch
Alaska Chamber of
Commerce

Vacant
Community of
Chenega Bay

REPORTS AND STAFF

PUBLICATIONS

- "RCAC Retrospective: The successes and lessons of a citizens' advisory group." 12/6/96 (#5006.645)
- Community Response Center Manual. Author: EcoSystems for Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet RCACs. March 1996. (#C/220.96.1)
- "1995 Year in Review." (#5.9.511.95)
- "The Observer," RCAC newsletter, published quarterly since 1991.

CONSULTANTS' REPORTS

- Nearshore Systems Analysis. Author: Tim Robertson. December 1996 (#C/612.97.1)
- Marine Fire Response and Emergency Planning for Prince William Sound, Alaska. Author: Hildebrand and Noll Associates. 9/6/96 (#C/700.621)
- Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program, Annual Report for 1995. Author: Kinnetic Labs., Inc. 6/1/96 (#C/4.5.4022D)
- Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program, 7th Survey Report (March 96), 6/12/96 (#4022C)
- Drill Monitoring Annual Report 1995. Author: Tim Jones. (#2070.605)

ADVICE & COMMENTS

- Letter to ADEC Commissioner Brown regarding enforcement of air quality control permit at Valdez Marine Terminal. 12/23/96
- Letter to Ship Escort/Response Vessel System (SERVS) regarding training and other operations issues. 12/20/96 (A/C#2.2.2570)
- Letter to the Alaska Division of Governmental Coordination regarding assessment of the Alaska Coastal Management Program. 12/17/96 (A/C #2.2.2565)
- Comments to ADEC regarding proposed regulations for "best available technology." 12/2/96 (A/C#2.2.2569)
- Comments to ADEC on Kodiak Subarea Plan. 10/18/96 (#2.2.2567)
- Comments to ADEC on proposed regulations for "best available technology." 10/18/96 (A/C#2.2.2568)
- Letter to ADEC Commissioner Brown regarding nearshore response system in Seldovia. 9/30/96 (A/C#2.2.2566)
- Comments to ADEC on proposed regulations for "best available technology." 8/9/96 (A/C#2.2.2563)

- Comments to ADEC on nearshore response submittal by Response Planning Group. 7/29/96 (A/C#2.2.2562)
- Comments to ADEC on Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan. 7/1/96 (A/C #2.2.2561)
- Comments to ADEC on Cook Inlet Subarea Contingency Plan for Oil and Hazardous Substance Spills and Releases. 6/30/96 (A/C #2.2.2560)
- Comments to Senator John Glenn, on National Invasive Species Act of 1996. 6/26/96 (A/C #6321)
- Letter to Alyeska regarding elevated PAH concentrations in sediment samples at terminal sampling site. 5/9/96 (A/C #4.4)
- Letter to state legislators regarding SB 199 on environmental self-audits. 4/16/96
- Letters to state legislators recommending changes in HB 158 on tort reform. 3/20/96 (A/C #10.7)
- Letter to Washington (State) Department of Energy regarding support for in-situ test burn. 3/11/96 (A/C #4.4)
- Letter to Governor regarding funding for Nearshore Systems Program. 2/26/96 (A/C #2.9.3)
- Letter to U.S. Department of Commerce regarding conditions on lifting the ban on export of ANS crude. (1/26/96 with follow up letter 2/19/96)

RCAC STAFF/1996

ANCHORAGE

Executive Director: H.E. 'Stan' Stanley

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Executive Assistant & Volunteer Coordinator:
Sandra Arnold

Public Information Director: Patty Ginsburg

Community Liaison: Leann Ferry

Financial Operations Manager: Linda Robinson

Information Systems Manager: Daphne Jenkins

Administrative Assistant: Andrea Archer

Project Managers: Joe Banta, Lisa Ka'aihue

Project Assistant: Becky Lewis

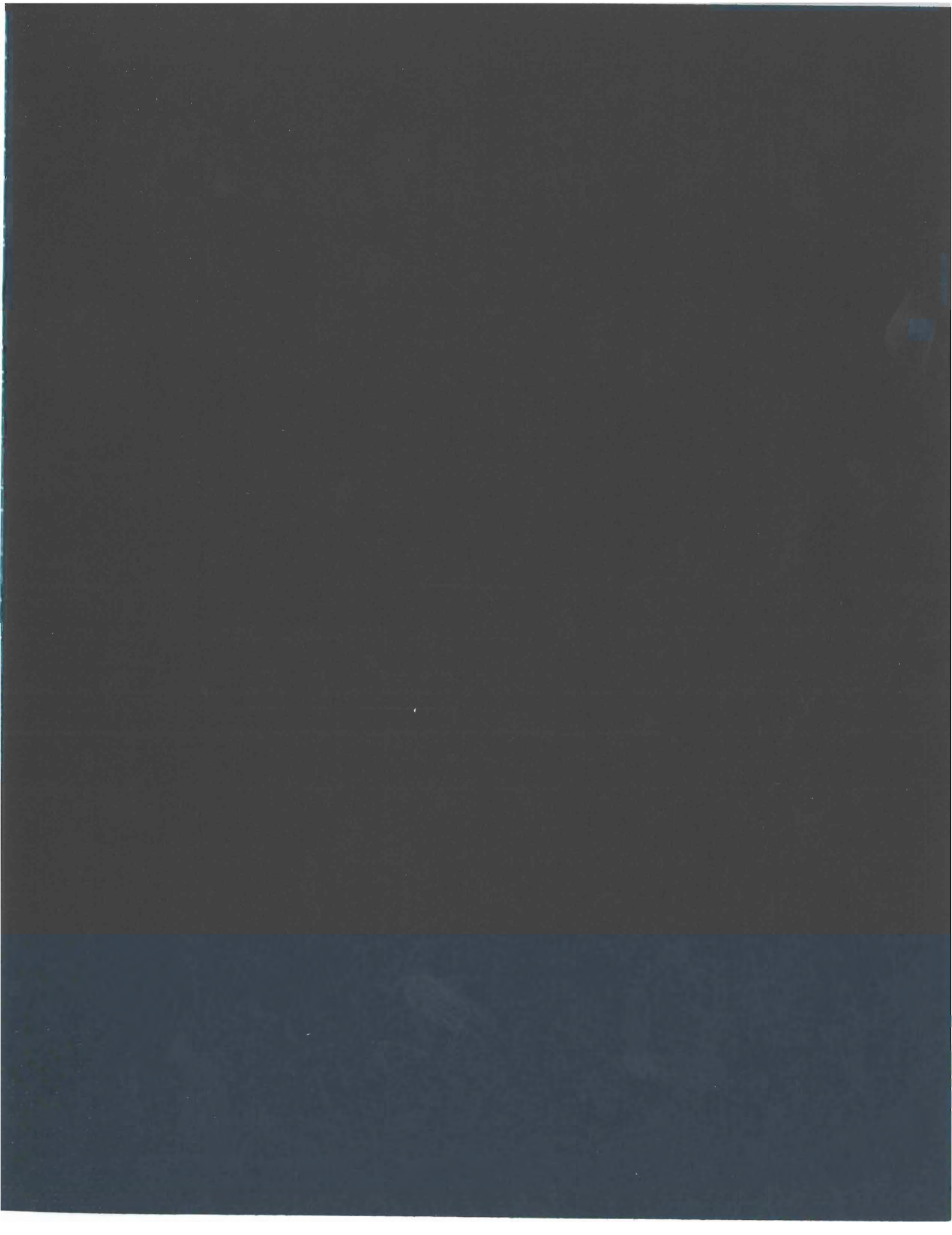
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Project Managers: Joe Bridgman, Tom Sweeney

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Administrative Assistant: Rica Salvador





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