



Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

The Observer

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Inside this issue

- Volunteer profile: For Bob Benda, the Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee is a form of continuing education. Page 2.
- Change of Command: Coast Guard Cmdr. Ron Morris jumps in at Marine Safety Office in Valdez. Page 2.
- Not there yet: RCAC recommends improvements in nearshore response plan. Page 3.
- Settlement reached: Kodiak Island Borough wins protection for Kitoi Bay Hatchery. Page 3.
- Passing muster: Coast Guard recertifies RCAC for another year. Page 4.
- Ranking the risks: Final touches are being put on a report by RCAC and Alyeska on the relative ecological risks in Port Valdez. Page 5.
- Bumps ironed out: EPA uses working group to develop draft permit for pollution discharge at terminal. Page 5.
- Report out soon: Fire consultants assess response capabilities at terminal, tankers. Page 5.

Study delves into mysteries of Columbia Glacier behavior

A year-long study is seeking to unlock some of the mysteries behind the Columbia Glacier's rapid retreat over the past 15 years. The answers may help oil tankers and other vessels predict and avoid heavy ice in the traffic lanes. The study is being done for RCAC by a trio of scientists working under the name Iceberg Monitoring Project.

"We're trying to predict iceberg production from Columbia Glacier," team leader Wendell Tangborn explained. "We want to know what causes them to come out into the shipping channels the way they do; what the timing is and whether this will continue for a long time. We need to understand the calving process and the other processes going on. Is it related to weather, to the velocity of the glacier? We don't know exactly what those relationships are."

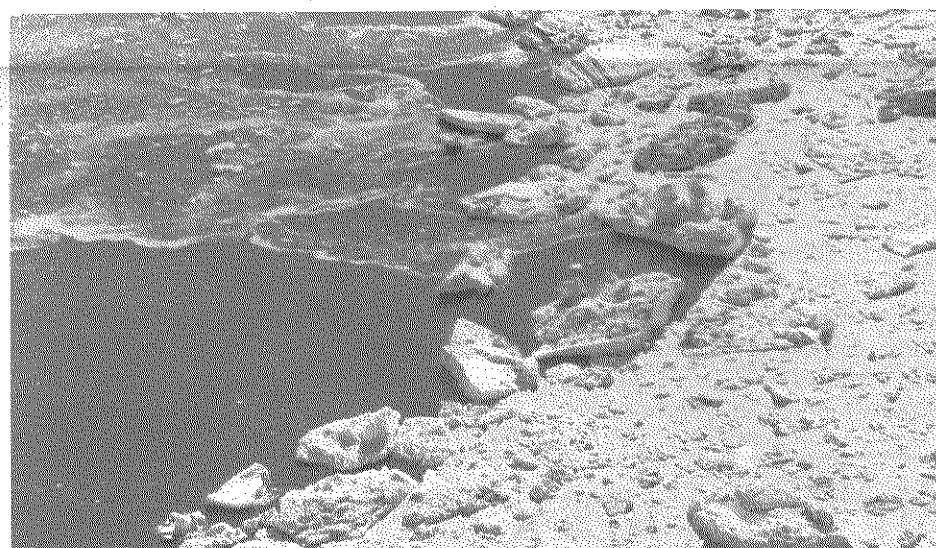
Tangborn's colleagues on the project are engineer Bill St. Lawrence, and hydrologist Austin Post. Post has been observing Columbia Glacier for 50 years and is probably the world's expert on its behavior. In the 1970s, Post predicted with remarkable accuracy that a drastic retreat of the glacier was imminent. Post's prediction bore out in the early 1980s.

The Columbia Glacier had been slowly advancing for 2,000 years until the early 1980s, when it began its retreat. Since 1980, the glacier has retreated five and a half miles and lost roughly 40 cubic kilometers – about 10 cubic miles – of ice.

Icebergs pose a big risk to oil tankers. In January 1994, the *Overseas Ohio* was traveling in the traffic lanes when a submerged iceberg gouged a hole 20 feet long in its bow. The *Exxon Valdez* was attempting to avoid ice in the tanker lanes when it hit Bligh Reef



Against the spectacular backdrop of Columbia Glacier, Wendell Tangborn assembles the tower for one of three time-lapse cameras. Photo by Austin Post.



Icebergs break away from the ice jam at the terminal moraine shoal in Columbia Bay. They can drift into the shipping lanes, where they pose a significant hazard to vessels. With a freeboard of about one meter, these icebergs have a displacement of approximately 8 meters. One of the time-lapse cameras monitors the movement of icebergs from the ice jam. Photo by Austin Post.

in 1989. Tangborn and his colleagues predict that for the next few years, iceberg hazards will get considerably worse.

The underlying goal of the study is to be able to predict heavy ice in the tanker lanes. That deceptively simple-sounding goal requires scientific data about all the factors that influence both glacier calving and ice movement once the bergs calve.

Right now, calving ice is

jamming up against a huge mass of ice between the glacier and open water. Ice breaks off from the leading edge of the jam and floats freely from the end of the 6-mile Columbia Bay southeast into Valdez Arm and the tanker lanes. A sub-surface moraine left by the glacier before it retreated is now holding most of the ice from moving into the shipping lanes.

"We don't understand this either," Tangborn said. "What causes them to

Continued on Page 4

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People

Volunteer Profile: Bob Benda

Bob Benda's five year tenure on the Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring (TOEM) Committee has been a long term course in continuing education.

"It allows me to keep up in my field. I wouldn't normally have that opportunity in a community college," Benda said. "Working on the TOEM Committee fits in very well with my work." A science teacher at Prince William Sound Community College since 1984, Benda joined the TOEM Committee in March 1991. He saw it as a way to continue building on what he learned in the year following the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Benda worked for the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) as a member of the Interagency Shoreline Cleanup Committee, one of the resource groups that advised the Coast Guard.

"The oil spill was like a three-year graduate program condensed into nine months. I had worked a lot with other industries on environmental monitoring and impacts on aquatic systems, so it fit into my background," Benda said. "But I didn't have much experience with the oil industry. I learned a tremendous amount about the oil industry itself and about the impact of oil, especially the impacts on inter-tidal areas."

Benda was born near Chicago but moved to Indiana when he was seven. He has a bachelor's degree in zoology and botany from Indiana State University, a master's degree in zoology and botany from DePauw University, and a Ph.D. in ecology and systematics from Indiana State University.

He came to Valdez from three years in Ketchikan, where he

worked with the U.S. Forest Service on the environmental impact of the U.S. Borax molybdenum mining project in Misty Fiords National Monument. Before that, he spent three years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at South Dakota State University, where he taught and worked in cooperative fisheries research. Benda also spent two years at Lake Victoria in East Africa, working on a USAID project assessing fish stocks in the lake.

In his spare time, Benda is outdoors as much as possible, wandering and taking photographs. He takes his two wolf hybrids out every day. "I'm a naturalist - a person who enjoys plants and animals and where they live. I spend my time wandering. It's different from hiking. I stop a lot. I sit and I observe. I take pictures. I thoroughly enjoy just being there. I can sit for hours by a waterfall."

In his five-plus years on the TOEM Committee - including the past year as chairman - Benda has seen it evolve. "The committee has gone from being very adversarial with Alyeska to a more cooperative relationship. I think it's working much better now than before. I was a big adversary, but the cooperative approach works much better," he said.

Benda expects several issues will keep the TOEM Committee's attention for some time: maintenance of the Valdez Marine Terminal and the pipeline; monitoring of ballast water from tankers, and monitoring for any effects from discharge of treated ballast into Port Valdez. He is especially enthusiastic about RCAC plans for a pilot test to determine



Bob Benda soaks up nature with one of his wolf hybrids. Photo by Tillie Wonder

"The committee has gone from being very adversarial with Alyeska to a more cooperative relationship. I think it's working much better now than before."

- Bob Benda

the feasibility of using caged mussels to monitor water quality in Port Valdez.

"My whole career has been in environmental monitoring. I see

mussels as a good indicator of water quality. I think it should be an on-going research and monitoring tool. It's used many places and it should work well here," he said.

Coast Guard gets new command

Cmdr. Ron Morris has succeeded Cmdr. Greg Jones as Captain of the Port and head of the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office in Valdez. The change of command ceremony took place July 8, in Valdez.

Valdez is Morris' second posting in Alaska. From 1989 to 1992, he served as executive officer in the MSO Juneau. Between then and now, Morris has been chief of the Merchant Vessel Safety Branch at the Coast Guard's 9th District Office in Cleveland, Ohio.

"Valdez is a wonderful opportunity for me. I've been working all my Coast Guard career to reach this position," Morris said. "This is what I've been aiming for, to be the commanding officer. Plus, I really wanted to get back to Alaska, so I could not have asked for a better situation."

Morris said Valdez is different from other posts because of the wide range of interests.

"There's a lot of people to get to know. The mechanics of the work aren't that different, but the range of stakeholders is unusual. Some might see this as a place with a lot of contentious issues, which makes it hard to get things done. I see it as an interesting challenge to look forward to."



Cmdr. Ron Morris

Morris comes to Valdez from four years in Yorktown, Virginia, where he was an instructor at the Marine Safety School, at the Coast Guard's Reserve Training Center. He taught pollution response and hazardous chemical training, and for the last two years, also directed on-scene coordinator and regional response team exercises.

Past posts have included four years at the Marine Inspection Office in New Orleans. As part of his assignment there, Morris inspected U.S. vessels in Brazil and Chile.

Staff changes

Sandra Arnold has joined RCAC as Executive Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator. Arnold, an Alaskan resident since 1993, was Executive Director at the Alaska Wildlife Alliance for



Sandra Arnold

three years. Before coming to RCAC in July, she directed an environmental summer camp for children through the Alaska Center for the Environment.

Arnold has a bachelor of science degree in wildlife ecology from the University of New Hampshire and a master's degree in environmental policy from Evergreen State College in Washington. Arnold replaces Michelle Meckstroth.

Leann Ferry has moved from the RCAC's Valdez office to Anchorage to take the newly-created position of Community Liaison. In her new position, Ferry is working to foster closer communications and relations



Leann Ferry

with the 18 communities and interest groups that comprise RCAC's constituency. Ferry has been with the RCAC since January 1993. For the past year she was a Project Manager in Valdez. She was initially hired as a program assistant for the Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee, one of RCAC's technical advisory committees.

Response and planning

Agreement reached on Kitoi hatchery protection

The Kitoi Bay Hatchery north of Kodiak will be better protected in the event of an oil spill, under terms of an agreement between the Kodiak Island Borough, four crude oil shippers and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC).

The agreement includes provisions such as development of a hatchery protection plan, pre-positioned spill response equipment, and response training for local residents.

With a signed agreement, the Kodiak Island Borough agreed to drop its administrative challenge of tanker oil spill contingency plans filed with the State of Alaska in 1995.

Linda Freed, Planning Director and Deputy Mayor of the Kodiak Island Borough, said the agreement ensures that the Kitoi Bay Hatchery will have the same protections as hatcheries in Prince William Sound.

"I'm very excited about it," Freed said. "It sets out a process and a commitment from all parties that need to be involved, that we'll get on with planning to protect Kodiak. It accomplishes more than litigation would have. One of the reasons this worked is that the borough is doing its share. We're stepping up to the plate."

A key to the settlement was the borough's agreement to use the federal area planning process, instead of the state's, as the vehicle for addressing its concerns. The federal plan – for Kodiak, it's the Kodiak Sub-Area Plan – has a broader, more general scope and is still being developed. The borough's protest had been over the failure of the state tanker contingency plans to address protections for the hatchery.

The agreement was signed by the

borough, ADEC, Tesoro Alaska Petroleum, West Coast Shipping (Unocal's shipping arm), ARCO Marine Inc., and BP Oil Shipping Co. USA on behalf of the tankers it charters. Only SeaRiver Maritime refused to be part of the agreement.

Tesoro Alaska was the leading industry player in the negotiations. Jim Meitner, Manager of Special Projects for Tesoro, is very pleased with the agreement and the process that led to it.

"I'm just real pleased with the whole thing. It provides Kitoi Bay with the spill response capability they need. We want the folks at Kitoi Bay to be able to respond to spilled oil without waiting for us to arrive. That's one of the lessons we learned from the Exxon Valdez. Under this, we'd know that Kitoi Bay is taken care of," Meitner said.

"The process worked well because everybody was dedicated to making it work. We decided we could solve this problem and took it on as such. It sets a precedent for solving problems. It was a real team effort by everybody," he said.

Key provisions of the agreement are:

- Tesoro will prepare a Kitoi Bay Hatchery Protection Plan and train hatchery workers to respond in the event of a spill.

- The four plan holders – Tesoro, BP, ARCO and West Coast Shipping/Unocal – will spend up to \$250,000 to implement the hatchery protection plan. Implementation includes preparing a site, acquisition of storage vans and transporting equipment to the hatchery.

- The plan holders and ADEC will help the borough identify environmentally sensitive areas. Information about sensitive areas will be incorporated into oil spill contingency plans.



Tesoro did a trial deployment in May to confirm the types of response equipment that will be needed at the hatchery. Above, Tesoro's Eric Haugstad (left) and Jim Meitner (right) confer with Don Alexander, Environmental Engineer with the Kodiak Island Borough, and Lacey Berns, of the Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association. Below, Kitoi Bay Hatchery, Afognak Island. Photos: Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association.



- ADEC has committed \$300,000 to \$500,000 for spill response equipment to be placed in communities in Kodiak Island Borough. Local residents will be trained to use the equipment.

- The shippers will identify and demonstrate how spill response equipment from outside Kodiak would be delivered in bad weather.

- The Kodiak Island Borough promised to encourage other potential spillers to participate in the planning process and help fund the hatchery protection. Crude oil isn't the only hazardous substance that can be spilled, but crude shippers say non-crude carriers don't share enough in the responsibility for spill response.

RCAC points out problems in nearshore response

Insufficient storage capacity for recovered oil and water, and too few fishing vessels are among the deficiencies that RCAC believes need to be resolved in shippers' plans for mounting spill response close to shore.

In a July 29 letter to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), RCAC detailed its concerns about the adequacy of shippers' nearshore response plans.

Nearshore response is the effort to keep spilled oil from hitting shorelines. The concept of nearshore response emerged after the Exxon Valdez oil spill when local fishing vessels organized to protect sensitive fish hatcheries. The success of those efforts led to

formal inclusion of local vessels in shippers' response plans. RCAC has long been a vocal proponent of nearshore response and incorporation of local people and vessels into spill response.

"We believe that nearshore response is a critical component necessary for successful oil spill response in our region," RCAC President Tex Edwards wrote. "We look forward to working with you and industry on this issue to make nearshore response as effective as it can be."

RCAC's concerns include:

- Ability of response task forces to operate effectively and concurrently at various locations spanning geographically isolated areas
- Storage capacity for recovered

oil and water sufficient to allow nearshore task force skimmers to operate 12 hours a day

- Number of fishing vessels available to meet the 72-hour deadline

- Ability to rapidly deploy skimmers and storage barges

- Adequacy of equipment to mobilize up to five nearshore free oil task forces from within Prince William Sound

- Reported decline in training of fishing vessels

RCAC's comments addressed a document submitted by the major shippers of North Slope crude in December 1995. The document is the shippers' response to questions from ADEC as one of the conditions of contingency plan approval.

RCAC did not comment on the shippers' document earlier because ADEC had indicated it would conduct a public review process on nearshore response, as well as other major issues related to the shippers' oil spill contingency plans. In July, ADEC informed RCAC that public review would not be done.

Nearshore response is a component of the shippers' contingency plans for spills from their tankers. In November 1995, ADEC granted conditional approval to the tanker plans; one of those conditions deals with nearshore response. ADEC planned to issue a decision on nearshore response the end of August.

Spill prevention

State, industry agree on navigation improvements

Interactive computer-simulated training and introduction of a marine incident analysis program are among the navigation safety improvements to be made by Keystone Shipping Co. and Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System (SERVS), under an agreement with the State of Alaska.

The agreement, signed August 6, stems from the state's investigation of an incident Nov. 10, 1995, in which the oil tanker S/S Kenai traveled 600 yards outside the optimum trackline and came within 310 yards of Entrance Island. The S/S Kenai is owned and operated by Keystone Shipping Co. and chartered by BP Oil Shipping Co.

The state's investigation found that Keystone, the tanker's bridge personnel (including the captain

and the pilot) and the SERVS escort vessels failed to comply with provisions of Keystone's oil spill prevention and contingency plan. The state's investigation concluded there was little if any verbal communication between the tanker captain, the state pilot and the escort vessels about correcting the ship's course.

While Keystone Shipping and Alyeska did not completely agree with ADEC's assessment of the incident, they did agree on a number of safety enhancements for navigation in Prince William Sound.

Major provisions of the agreement are:

- Keystone Shipping and Alyeska will work with other shippers and the Southwest Alaska Pilots Association to develop and

acquire Alaska-specific simulator software for interactive training of tanker pilots, tanker personnel and escort vessel officers. The simulator training will focus on response to navigational and operation failures during tanker travel. By Sept. 5, Keystone Shipping and Alyeska were to have set up a \$250,000 escrow account to pay for the simulator software.

- Alyeska and Keystone Shipping will make Alaska-specific interactive simulator training available to all holders of oil discharge prevention and contingency plans for trans-Alaska pipeline system (TAPS) tankers.

• Alyeska and Keystone Shipping will make the simulator training available to pilots and bridge crews on other ships.

- The Vessel Escort and Response Plan (VERP) will be amended to designate a maneuvering corridor for the north entrance to the Valdez Narrow; require that bridge crews record the tanker's position relative to the optimum trackline; specify the off-track positions where the escort vessels must contact the tanker; and require that ADEC be notified when a tanker travels off-track. The VERP applies to all TAPS tankers.

- Keystone Shipping and Alyeska will work with other TAPS shippers, the U.S. Coast Guard, and RCAC to introduce a cooperative marine incident analysis program. The intent is to

develop a systematic, coordinated approach to incident analysis. In the case of the S/S Kenai, ADEC and the Coast Guard reached significantly different conclusions based on their respective investigations.

- Keystone Shipping will implement an on-board bridge team management training program for real navigation situations in Prince William Sound.

- Keystone and Alyeska will conduct additional analysis of tanker maneuvering safety at tanker speeds of 5 knots and 6 knots through the Valdez Narrows, if ADEC determines such analysis is necessary.

Also under the agreement, the state will be reimbursed \$75,000 to cover the cost of its investigation.

ADEC Commissioner Michele Brown praised the agreement and industry's response after the Kenai incident came to light.

"The agreements, as well as the responsive actions industry undertook immediately following the incident, put in place a stronger transit system based on lessons learned," she said.

"What's also important is the joint process of scrutiny and cooperative analysis. We sat down with Keystone Shipping, BP Oil Shipping, and Alyeska, and as a group determined that it was essential to prevent any future incidents such as what happened with the tanker Kenai," she said.

Weather data available 24 hours

RCAC now has access, via the internet, to data from the weather stations deployed last summer. The stations consist of weather buoys at Sea Rocks, and in the middle of Prince William Sound, and fixed land stations at Bligh Reef and Potato Point. RCAC also has access, through NOAA's Interactive Marine Observations internet page, to information from weather buoys in the Gulf of Alaska.

Information from these buoys can be useful for monitoring weather pattern throughout the Gulf of Alaska. Wind and wave

conditions can have a tremendous effect on a tanker transiting Prince William Sound.

Until spring of 1995, much of the weather information available to mariners was provided by other ships which had recently transited the area. With the installation of the four new weather monitoring stations, and the existing weather buoys in the Gulf of Alaska, updated weather information can now be obtained around the clock.

RCAC spearheaded the drive for federal funding for the weather monitoring stations.

RCAC passes muster

The U.S. Coast Guard has 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, when the regulations were first implemented.

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.

"Comments received from industry, government and the general public in Prince William Sound were very favorable, and supported your request for recertification," Rear Adm. J.C. Card said in his letter notifying

RCAC of its recertification.

"We appreciate RCAC's endeavor to provide oversight and monitoring of the terminal facilities and tanker operations in Prince William Sound . . . and we look forward to working with you during the coming year," Card wrote.

In past reviews, the Coast Guard urged RCAC to work harder at promoting a spirit of partnership with industry and government agencies.

"It's gratifying that the Coast Guard recognizes the progress we've made in developing positive relationships," RCAC President Tex Edwards said. "We're attacking problems from a positive point of view."

RCAC fulfills the OPA 90 requirement for an industry-funded citizens advisory group, but it was established before the law was enacted through a contract with Alyeska.

Glacier study

Continued from Page 1

break out and what's the timing? How much can we expect at a particular time of year? The entire bay was cleared for several days last November. It's pretty hazardous if the entire body of ice breaks out like that. Why and how did that happen?"

The primary objective of the project is to develop two computer models. One will predict iceberg calving rates of Columbia Glacier for the next 10 to 40 years. The other will predict the discharge - volumes, velocities and time distribution - of icebergs into Prince William Sound.

The data will come from aerial photography, time-lapse photography, weather and tide records, and hydrographic surveys.

Aerial photography will help determine changes in glacier thickness, glacier flow speed and the rate of iceberg calving on a seasonal basis.

Time lapse photography will determine the nature of iceberg calving and drift on a daily or even hourly basis. Three cameras are stationed at different sites to track calving from the glacier, ice

breaking off the ice jam, and iceberg drift into the shipping channels.

Hydrographic, or water-depth, surveys will provide precise information about the depth of water at the moraine shoal and in the area exposed by the glacier's retreat. Water depth is important because it indicates the maximum depth of icebergs calving into the Sound, and provides major clues about how much ice calved each season since the drastic retreat began in 1983.

The team is working closely with hydrologists Robert Krimmel and Dennis Travant, from the U.S. Geological Survey, and will use earlier data compiled by the USGS. Weather and tidal records are also important. Tangborn said the team is "99 percent sure" that water depth, wind, weather, tides and currents affect glacier calving and release of ice from the ice jam. "We're pretty sure there is a connection, but we have to figure out exactly what the connections are. We anticipate the data will provide meaningful answers," he said.

The \$150,000 study is to be completed in the summer of 1997.

Air and water

Joint study looks at ecological risks in Port Valdez

A study expected to be concluded soon will provide valuable information about the ecological risks from human activities in Port Valdez. The "Ecological Risk Assessment of Port Valdez" is a joint project of RCAC and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to gauge the relative effects of potential pollution sources – called "stressors" – on aquatic life and habitats. The actual study is being done by scientists at Western Washington University. Scientists at the University of Alaska Fairbanks are reviewing the work.

A final report and conclusions from the study will be released jointly by RCAC and Alyeska, possibly in September.

For purposes of the study, the

investigators divided the port into 11 geographic sub-areas. The organisms and habitats in each sub-area were identified, along with the actual and potential stressors that could have negative effects on them.

In ranking the risks, the investigators assess the diversity of organisms and habitat in each area, the vulnerability of each habitat and organism to harm, and the likelihood of such harm occurring. For example, one of the sub-areas is the Duck Flats, east of the City of Valdez. The flats provide nesting habitat for many waterfowl, refuge for young fish, and are a stopover for thousands of ducks and geese during spring and fall migrations. The risk assessment for that particular area involves identifying the stressors and the "receptors," which are the various organisms



Environmental risks to the aquatic life and habitats in different areas of Port Valdez, such as the Duck Flats (above) will be ranked by the study. Photo by Bob Benda.

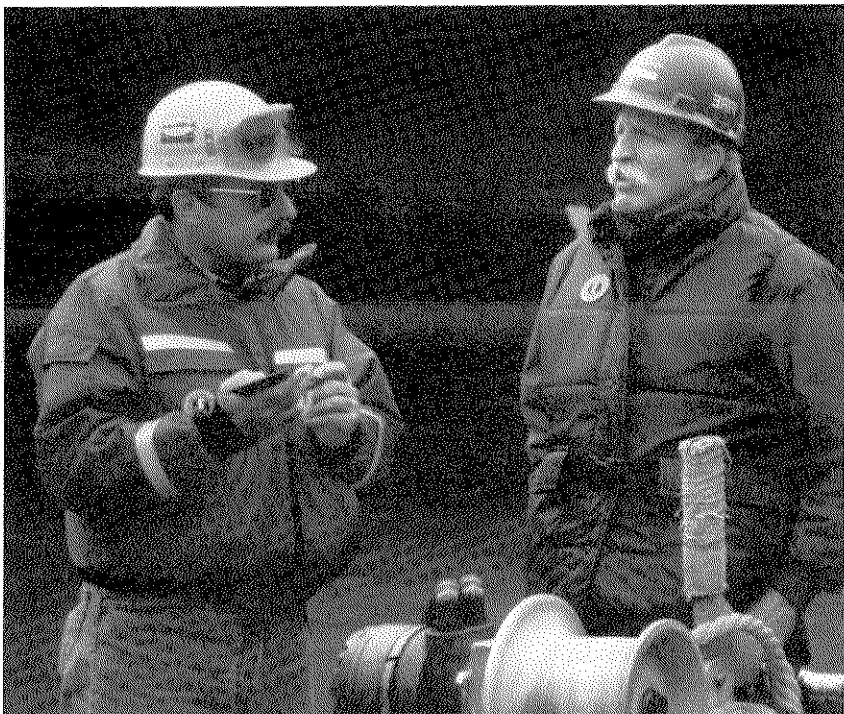
and habitats that would suffer ill effects from exposure to stressors. For the Duck Flats, the receptors would include the different species of waterfowl and the habitats they depend on.

The degree of risk is influenced by the amount of exposure and the nature of the effects from exposure to the stressor.

There are many types of stressors. They include obvious pollutants such as treated sewage from the city and effluent from the Ballast Water Treatment Facility, contaminated runoff and accidental spills. Stressors also

include solid organic wastes, such as fish processing wastes, vessel traffic, disturbances resulting from land development, shoreline activity and hatchery salmon. The hatchery is both a stressor and a receptor. It is a source of pollution and competition with natural stocks of salmon, but it is also a potential risk from other stressors.

The final report will describe the scientists' conclusions and best professional judgment regarding environmental risks in Port Valdez. It also may identify gaps in the data needed to understand the environmental risks.



Fire consultant Michael S. Hildebrand, right, interviews Robert Carlton, Fire Chief at the Valdez Marine Terminal, in June.

Fire report due soon

An independent analysis of marine fire emergency response capabilities for Prince William Sound will be presented to the RCAC Board of Directors, when it meets in Seldovia, Sept. 26-27. The analysis will include recommendations for ways to improve fire response.

RCAC retained the firm, Hildebrand and Noll Associates, Inc. of Maryland, to review fire-related contingency plans and audits of fire-related procedures and systems. The consultants reviewed various reports, fire response plans and existing procedures related to emergency response planning in the Prince William Sound region.

They also reviewed and analyzed the adequacy of firefighting resources, and reviewed model fire response

plans to determine possible improvements for Prince William Sound. The project scope covers fire at the Valdez Marine Terminal, and fire on board tankers at berth and underway.

A project team from Hildebrand and Noll spent several days in Valdez and Cordova in late June. The consultants evaluated fire training programs and equipment at the Valdez Marine Terminal and the Valdez and Cordova Fire Departments, looked at equipment maintenance programs and assessed routine fire inspections.

Hildebrand and Noll worked with two multi-agency working groups in the region that are addressing fire response issues.

EPA issues draft of new discharge permit

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued a draft permit for Alyeska's ballast water treatment facility.

The draft permit came out July 11, and was followed by a 60-day public comment period. As part of the public review, EPA representatives held a public workshop and hearing in Valdez, Aug. 15.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit regulates the quality and quantity of effluent released from the ballast water treatment facility, and sets monitoring and reporting requirements. The plant discharges approximately 16 million gallons of wastewater into the Port each day.

The draft permit was developed through a cooperative process begun in late 1994, which included RCAC, Alyeska and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), as well as EPA. The "working group" approach resulted in consensus on most issues.

The consensus approach is a marked contrast from the process that resulted in the permit now in effect, which was in the courts for

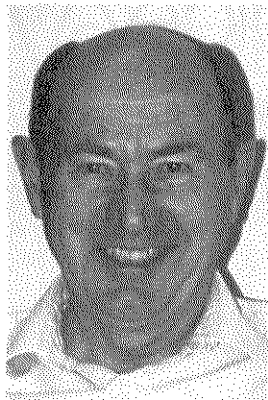
more than four years. The current permit, issued in 1989, expired in 1994, but remains in effect and enforceable until the new permit is formally issued.

The new draft permit does not reflect all of RCAC's recommendations, however, and RCAC expected to reiterate several of those – primarily related to water column monitoring and toxicity testing – in its final written comments.

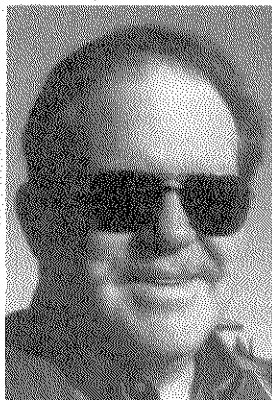
The new draft permit is stricter than the current permit in several respects. It lowers the amounts of carcinogens such as benzene, toluene and xylene that can be discharged into Port Valdez. The size of the so-called "mixing zone" – a circumscribed area in which discharged pollutants mix with the receiving water – would be reduced. The EPA also changed requirements in Alyeska's Best Management Practices Plan, in part to put more focus on pollution prevention. Effluent toxicity testing and environmental monitoring requirements also were revised.

The new permit is expected to be in place early in 1997, perhaps as soon as January, according to EPA officials.

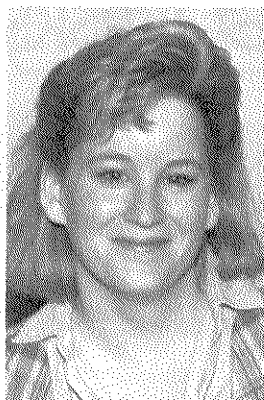
Back page



Floyd Heimbuch



Bill Conley



Michelle Meckstroth

Farewell and thanks

RCAC bids a sentimental farewell to two committee volunteers and a long time employee, who have left RCAC in recent months.

Floyd Heimbuch resigned from the Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) Committee earlier this year. Heimbuch chaired the OSPR Committee the last four years and served on it a total of five years. Before moving to Anchorage from Kenai, he represented the Kenai Peninsula Borough on the RCAC Board of Directors for six months in 1993.

Bill Conley didn't just leave the Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems (POVTS) Committee, which he chaired the last several

years. He left the country. Conley and his wife Betty, are in Ecuador, working as volunteers with the World Radio Missionary Fellowship. Conley, of Valdez, was on the POVTS Committee for six years.

Executive Assistant **Michelle Meckstroth** left RCAC the end of July bound for Texas, where she will attend Christ for the Nations, a school in Dallas.

Meckstroth came to RCAC as a temp in December 1991. She was project assistant with the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee for several years. In 1993, Executive Director Stan Stanley appointed her Executive Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator.

Publications, reports available

Copies of most documents are available to the public free of charge. A handling fee will be charged for large documents and requests of more than 10 documents. The following are recent publications and reports.

Publications

- "1995 Year in Review." (Ref. #5.9.511.95)
- "Oil Spill Prevention: Improvements in Tanker Safety," September 1995. (Ref. #5.5.5005)
- "The Observer," RCAC newsletter, published since 1991. (Specify issue).

Consultants' Reports

- Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program, 1995 Annual Monitoring Report. Author: Kinnetic Laboratories, Inc. June 96 (#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 (1996)

- Comments to ADEC on proposed regulations for "Best Available Technology." 8/9/96 (A/C#2.2.2563)
- Comments to ADEC on nearshore response submitted 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)

Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (RCAC) is an independent, non-profit organization formed after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill to minimize the environmental impacts associated with the terminal and tanker fleet.

The RCAC has 18 member organizations, including communities impacted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill, a Native regional corporation and groups representing commercial fishing, aquaculture, environmental, tourism and recreation interests in the impact area.

RCAC 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. The contract, which is in effect as long as oil flows through the pipeline, guarantees RCAC's independence, provides annual funding, and ensures RCAC the same access to terminal facilities as state and federal regulatory agencies.

The mission of RCAC is citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers.

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