PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

September 2025
Status Report
As of August 7, 2025

3100 – Public Information Program

Objectives: Inform members of the general public, member entities, and agency and industry partners of PWSRCAC projects. Support legal requirements for ongoing updates to the public.

Accomplishments since last report: Staff continues to inform the general public and others about PWSRCAC's projects and mission through publications and online presence.

3200 – The Observer

The Observer: The Council's newsletter, The Observer, is produced three times per year in both print and email format. Individual articles are posted to the Council's website.

Almost 800 people are subscribed to the email edition and approximately 2000 print copies are mailed to subscribers. Approximately 250-300 copies of each edition are given out at the Council's information booth or other events.

All editions can be found on our website: www.tinyurl.com/ObserverArchive

3300 – Annual Report

Objectives: Prepare and publish PWSRCAC's Annual Report each year to:

1. Inform the general public, member entities, and agency and industry partners of PWSRCAC projects and activities; and
2. Support legal requirements for ongoing updates to the public.

Accomplishments since last report: Work for the latest annual report (2024-2025) began in June 2025. Staff are currently coordinating on the draft content and developing layouts with the contracted graphic designer.

3410 – Fishing Vessel Program Community Outreach

Objectives: This project brings the realities of oil spill response tactics, equipment, and planning to life for citizens within the Council's EVOS-region communities. Each fall and spring SERVS holds its contracted fishing vessel program training in the following communities: Cordova, Valdez, Whittier, Seward, Homer, and Kodiak. The on-water portion of the training, viewed by the public during this outreach tour in partnership with Alyeska/SERVS, shows real-time capabilities of oil spill prevention and response equipment and tactics. This project contracts a local tour boat that will allow interested students, members of the public, and media to observe and learn about oil spill prevention and response.

Accomplishments since last report: In May 2025, Outreach Coordinator Maia Draper-Reich was able to observe all three days of Valdez SERVS Fishing Vessel training with staff member Jeremy Robida

including the classroom, equipment, and on-water portions. The purpose of Maia participating was to gain a more complete and detailed understanding of the training, equipment, and response protocols in order to better educate and share the information during the Fishing Vessel Program Community Outreach project and across other outreach work. We observed the on-water portions from the 500-2 Response barge and associated work boats. Included are pictures from the training taken by Maia and Jeremy.



In FY2026, if possible, we will develop and implement an alternative outreach event format to share information about the fishing vessel program with Kodiak community members. The reason an alternative outreach event is needed is that there isn't a vessel platform available in Kodiak. Once we have detailed information from Alyeska/SERVS staff about what is logistically possible with their Kodiak training schedule, the project team will reconvene to further shape the format of a Kodiak outreach event for implementation in spring 2026.

3500 – Community Outreach Program

Objectives: Increase awareness of PWSRCAC and increase communications with communities and member organizations in the Exxon Valdez oil spill region.

Accomplishments since last report:

- **May 9, 2025** – Peksulineq Festival, Tatitlek, AK - Council staff Sadie Blancaflor and Danielle Verna attended the festival's banquet which includes traditional dishes, a dance demonstration, and an auction. Sadie and Danielle were able to assist with preparations for the silent auction and enjoyed the shared food and dancing. Travel from Valdez was facilitated by Fairwater who organizes a vessel charter for guests.
- **May 12-13, 2025** – Prince William Sound Natural History Symposium, Whittier, AK - Outreach Coordinator Maia Draper-Reich presented about EVOS and hosted the Council's booth. As a member of the planning committee, she also helped facilitate the logistics of the two-day event. PWSRCAC was a sponsor of this event.
- **May 29, 2025** – Valdez Guides Training, Valdez, AK - Valdez staff hosted our annual training for local guides, deckhands, and other seasonal workers to orient them to the terminal, tankers, and response assets they view with guests over the summer season.
- **June 4, 2025** – PWS Teachers Course Orientation, Anchorage, AK - Maia presented about EVOS, PWSRCAC, and our education resources to the teachers the day before they headed out on the Alaska Geographic/U.S. Forest Service PWS Teachers field course. She also provided Spill books, publication materials, and tide tables to participants.
- **June 7, 2025** – Copper River Nouveau, Cordova, AK - Board President Robert Archibald, Board member Robert Beedle, IEC member Kate Morse, and staff members Donna Schantz and Joe

Lally attended this year's gala event supporting the Prince William Sound Science Center. Current SAC member and long-time ex officio member, Dr. Scott Pegau, was recognized at the Fisheries Achievement Award reception for his 16 years leading herring research programs at the Oil Spill Recovery Institute (OSRI) and PWSSC.

- **June 30, 2025** – Presentation to Kayak Group at PWS College, Valdez, AK - Staff members Sadie and Maia presented to a group from Taiwan who recently completed a Valdez to Whittier kayak trip with PWS College Professor Benjamin Rush. They shared about EVOS, PWSRCAC, and highlighted the VMT.
- **August 1-3, 2025** – SalmonFest, Ninilchik, AK - Maia, with help from Board President Robert Archibald and POVTS member Max Mitchell, hosted PWSRCAC's booth in the nonprofit Cause'way section of the three-day music festival.

3530 – Youth Involvement

Objectives: Select proposals for youth activities, in collaboration with partner agencies and organizations throughout the Exxon Valdez oil spill region. Coordinate activities to facilitate hands-on learning about topics related to the Council's mission. Where appropriate and feasible, participate in mission-relevant youth activities.

Accomplishments since last report: IEC accepted the following projects as complete and meeting their deliverables:

- Alaska Marine Conservation Council – *Kodiak Marine Ecosystems Lessons & Collaborative Outreach*
- Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge - *"Tiĝlax̂ in the Bay" School Program*
- Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies - *Elevating Student Advocates & Educators through Afterschool Leadership*
- Fireweed Academy - *Ecological Stewardship for Kids: A Hands-on Application of History, Ecology, and Leadership*

Deliverables have been received for the following contract and IEC will review and vote on this contract at their next meeting:

- Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage - *Expanding Access to Equitable Outdoor Education*

Five summer contracts are underway with programs taking place on track to close by September 30, 2025:

- Alaska Marine Conservation Council - *Kodiak Marine Science and Exploration Summer Program for Youth*
- Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies - *Continued Engagement of Youth as Environmental Stewards: High School Internships & Camp Opportunities*
- Copper River Watershed Project - *Copper River Stewardship Program: Into the Future: Copper River Watershed 2125*
- Kenai Mountains - Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area - *KMTA and PWSRCAC - Expanding Access to Equitable Coastal Outdoor Education*
- Prince William Sound Science Center - *Sound Connections: Building Bridges through Birding*

IEC voted to fund two Youth Involvement projects during the 2025/2026 school Year from the most recent request for proposals (RFP). Award announcements have been made, and staff will begin the contracting process for these contractors. A RFP for Summer 2026 Youth Involvement projects will open for submissions in October.

3600 – Public Communications Program

Objectives: This program disseminates information and increases awareness through the Observer newsletter and the Council's online presence. This work helps publicize information generated from the Council's technical committee projects. Project results and information are disseminated in a format that is easily understood by the general public.

This program funds training for the Public Communications Project Manager to maintain knowledge of the latest technology and best practices for public communication. Recently attended trainings include: Nonprofit Technology Networks' course on AI, Google Analytics and Google's Looker Studio (software for creating dashboard reports on website analytics), search engine optimization, and introduction to U.S. Census' online database.

3610 – Web Best Available Technology

Objectives: This project helps ensure the Council's websites and web presence use up-to-date technology and best practices by funding new features, repairs, and upgrades to the Council's websites. This includes regular maintenance and technical upgrades as well as upgrades to such aspects as user experience and branding. Recent work has focused on:

- A new plugin that has improved navigation in some sections of the website. Notable changes include the Reports and Documents section of the website, which now highlights the top downloaded resources and a feed of recently approved reports; and improvements to the navigation in the database of educational lesson plans and the Regional Stakeholder Committee Resources. The new section highlighting the Peer Listening will also feature this navigation when the campaign is launched.
- Training Project Manager Amanda Johnson in Google's new website analytics (GA4) and subsequent updates to optimize site according to recent changes.
- Ongoing improvements to website content to improve site search and optimize for search engines.
- Ongoing improvements to documentation of technology and procedures for all websites.

Website data: Website usage for www.pwsrcac.org is tracked through Google Analytics for information such as numbers of visitors, their locations, how they found the site, which pages are visited most often, how much time is spent on particular pages, whether visitors are engaged enough to view more than one page, and more. A dashboard report is available:

- Desktop version: https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/5acb0b03-619c-4b0d-ae5b-e13edeb08a50
- New mobile-friendly dashboard: https://lookerstudio.google.com/s/l_MxdhAPly0

Please contact Project Manager Amanda Johnson if you have questions or need additional details.

3810 – Illustrated Prevention & Response System Outreach

Objectives: Work with artist and author Tom Crestodina to develop artwork for a book and other materials showcasing the oil spill prevention and response system in Prince William Sound. Educate stakeholders and the general public about the importance of oil spill prevention and response, why the PWS prevention/response system is one of the best in the world, and how it can be kept that way. Create new work partnerships with industry and regulators, similar to how groups collaborate during the fishing vessel training community outreach tours.

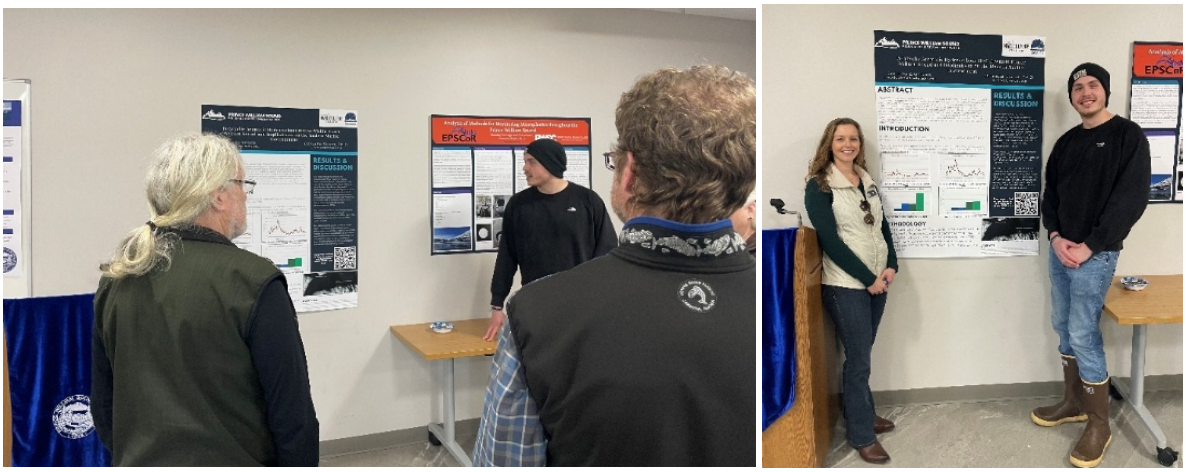
Accomplishments since last report: Staff are currently waiting for updates to the text and final draft illustrations from Crestodina. It is hoped that the materials can be finished this fall and the book sent to print this winter.

3903 – Internship

Objectives: Coordinate with regional secondary and/or higher education institutions to recruit students for internships, and coordinate with other committees to support students' educational goals while meeting appropriate PWSRCAC project needs.

Accomplishments since last report: The Council's spring-semester intern, Timothy Derbidge, completed the scope of his internship work, which included preparing for and participating in the annual fieldwork for the Long-Term Environmental Monitoring project (LTEMP), a data analysis project, and presenting his project poster at the PWS College Environmental Sciences Symposium. Dr. Danielle Verna, Council staff, supervised and mentored Timothy, while IEC member Dr. Amanda Glazier supervised and funded his receipt of academic credit through PWS College.

Intern Timothy Derbidge participated in LTEMP annual sampling in Port Valdez. Photos by Danielle Verna and Jeremy Robida.



Council volunteers and staff attended the Symposium in Valdez. Photos by Maia Draper-Reich

Timothy also completed an exit interview with Maia on July 1, allowing him to provide feedback for future iterations of the internship. He had overall positive feedback and helpful input. His LTEMP

internship under this project is complete. The partnership with PWS College to facilitate this internship was smooth and successful.

5000 – Terminal Operations Program

Objectives: The goal of the Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring (TOEM) Program is to prevent hazardous liquid spills and minimize the actual and potential environmental impacts associated with the operation and maintenance of the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Accomplishments since last report:

Storage Tank Maintenance Review of Ballast Water Tank 93: TOEM reviewed Taku Engineering's report titled "Review of Ballast Water Tank 93 Out-of-Service Inspection Report and Tank Repairs" and recommended the Board accept the report as final.

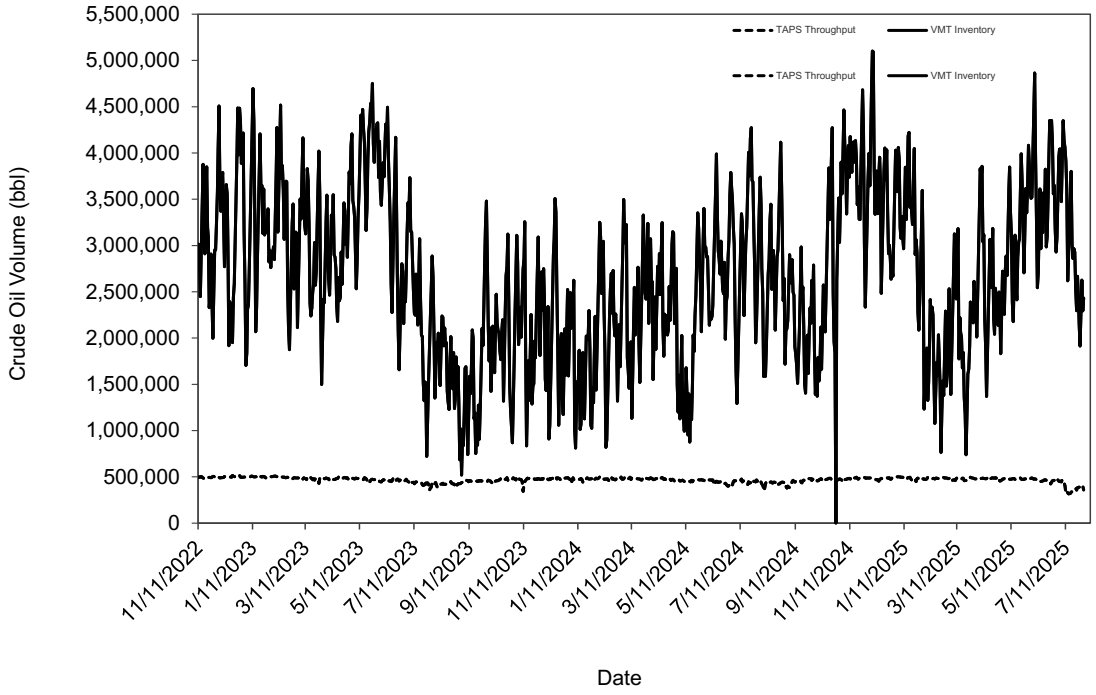
Maintaining the VMT Secondary Containment Liner: TOEM continues to provide advice and recommendations to both Alyeska, and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), throughout the VMT Condition of Approval process associated with Alyeska's final secondary containment liner testing plan for East Tank Farm.

Outstanding Requests for Information and Responses to Recommendations: Council staff continue to maintain a track record of all information requests made from 2021 to present. There are several outstanding requests for information needed to complete FY2025 projects that, as of August 7, 2025, have not yet been received.

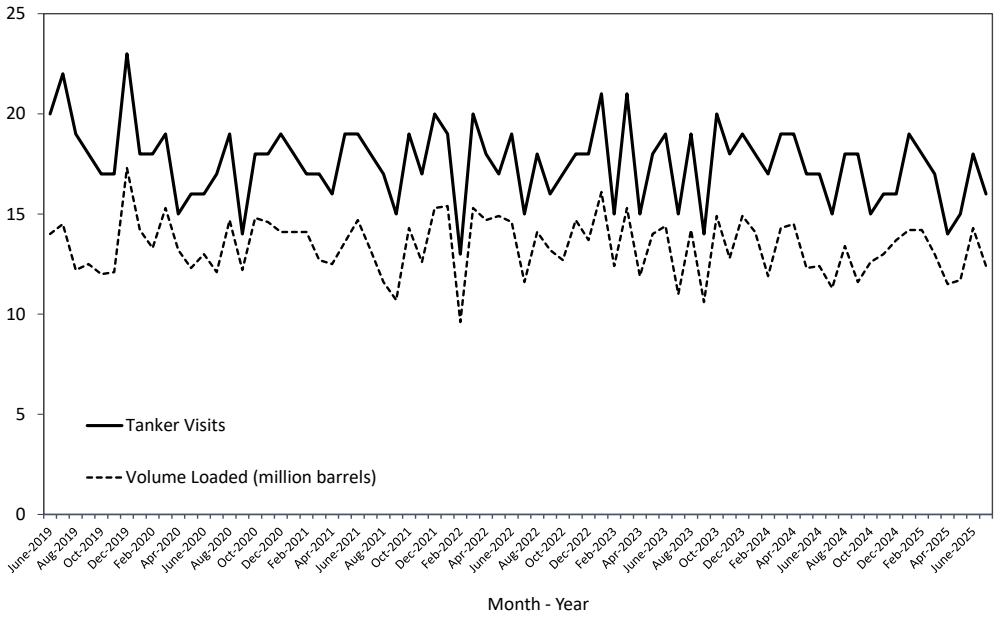
Attachments: Graphs depicting a variety of data related to the operation and environmental impacts of the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Daily Oil Inventory at the Valdez Marine Terminal and Trans-Alaska Pipeline Throughput

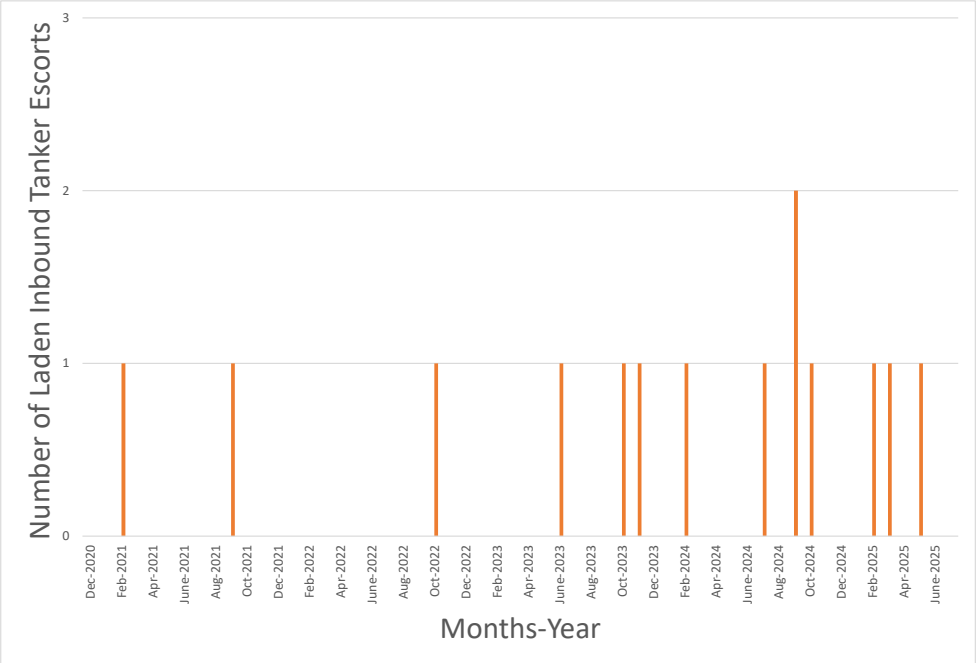
(Source: Alaska Department of Revenue - Tax Division, http://tax.alaska.gov/programs/oil/production.aspx)



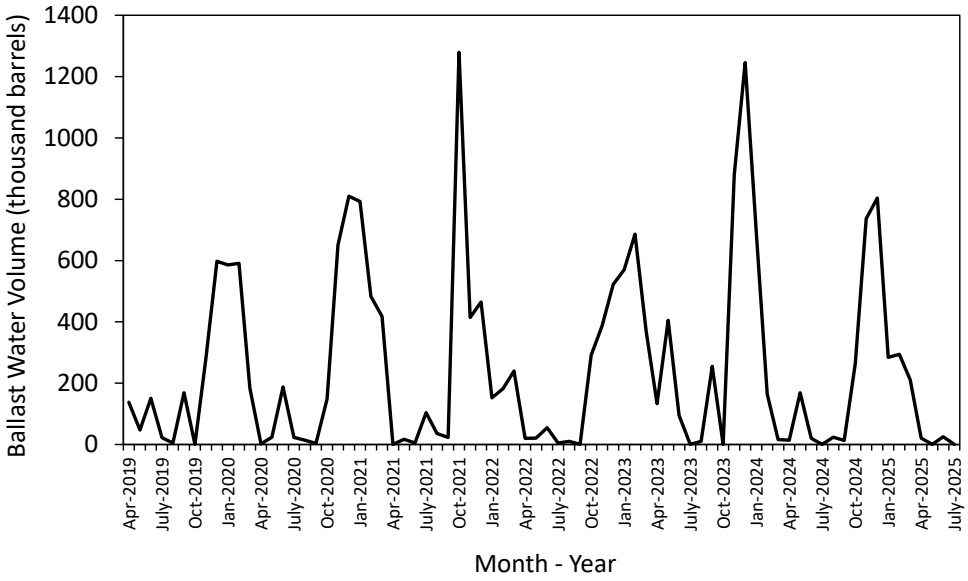
Number of tanker visits and crude oil volume loaded onto ships from VMT
(Source: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. Partitioned by VMT vessel arrival date.)



Inbound laden tanker escorts to VMT
(Source: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. Partitioned by VMT vessel arrival date.)



Monthly ballast water deliveries to Ballast Water Treatment Facility from tanker ships
(Source: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. Partitioned by VMT vessel arrival date.)



5051 – Water Quality Review of VMT

Objectives: This project entails a review of 2018-2023 water quality data. The goal of this project is to ensure the terms of the Valdez Marine Terminal's water quality permit minimize the environmental impact of wastewater effluent discharged from the facility.

Accomplishments since last report: Fjord & Fish Sciences, the contractor for this project, has reviewed the draft permit and is currently awaiting ADEC's release of the water quality permit for public comment. This release timeline has been extended from 2025 to early 2026.

5053 – Addressing Risks and Safety Culture at Alyeska's VMT

Objectives: This project will provide a retainer to Billie Garde to provide support to assist the Council in tracking and implementing recommendations identified in the Council-sponsored report, "Assessment of Risks and Safety Culture at Alyeska's Valdez Marine Terminal."

Accomplishments since last report: Garde continues to support the Council with follow-up and additional work related to the recommendations from the report.

5057 – Air Quality Review of VMT

Objectives: This project verifies that Alyeska is mitigating and reducing sources of air pollution at the VMT which may pose adverse environmental and health impacts on residents of Valdez. The goal of this project is to provide actionable, clear, and specific recommendations to advance efforts to reduce sources of air pollution at the VMT.

Accomplishments since last report: Ron Sahu, Ph.D., the contractor for this project, continues to prepare for the release of the VMT Title V Air Quality permit, and provide the Council with ad-hoc advice and recommendations related to VMT air quality.

5081 – Ballast Water Tank 93 Maintenance Review

Objectives: This project entails performing a technical review of the maintenance of ballast water tank 93, during its out-of-service inspection and repairs in 2023.

Accomplishments since last report: Taku Engineering, LLC, reviewed available documentation provided by Alyeska and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to complete and finalize the report titled "Review of Ballast Water Tank 93 Out-of-Service Inspection Report and Tank Repairs."

5082 – Timeline of VMT Tank Repairs and Inspection Intervals

Objectives: This project is intended to provide an overview of the current and projected status of VMT East Tank Farm tank repairs and inspectional intervals from 1990 (the date of initial API 653 internal inspections) to present.

Accomplishments since last report: Historical documentation related to this project has been compiled for transmittal and review by Taku Engineering, LLC, the selected contractor for this work.

5595 – Review of VMT Cathodic Protection System Testing Protocols

Objectives: This project seeks an independent review of current VMT CP protocols and data collection for the VMT crude oil storage tanks in order to verify that corrosion is being effectively mitigated by well-functioning cathodic protection systems.

Accomplishments since last report: The Council transmitted a letter to Alyeska on May 29, 2025, requesting a meeting between Alyeska's cathodic protection subject matter experts and Council contractor, Kevin Garrity, of Mears Group Inc. This meeting is intended to clarify questions related to Alyeska's VMT CP testing protocols and data collection methods. As of August 7, 2025, the Council has not received a response to this request.

5640 – Alaska North Slope Crude Oil Properties

Objectives: This project entails analyzing the physical and chemical properties of Alaska North Slope (ANS) crude oil and interpreting how those properties would impact the effectiveness of oil spill response measures, including mechanical recovery, in-situ burning, and dispersants. A crude oil sample will be obtained, and then sent to a laboratory for physical and chemical analysis. The data will be reviewed by a spill response subject matter expert to interpret how the oil's chemical and physical properties would influence various spill response techniques.

Accomplishments since last report: On April 16, 2024, the Prince William Sound Response Planning Group shipped an ANS crude sample to Dr. Robert Faragher of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to conduct an analysis of the current properties of ANS crude oil. ECCC has agreed to perform this testing free of charge for PWSRCAC. Some testing has already taken place, but the

completion of the tests and the resulting report is expected within 6 to 9 months from the date that ECCC received the sample. This project is still ongoing, however, ECCC contacted us about the possible need to extend the timeframe until February 2025. We received a partial report from ECCC on February 28, 2025, which indicated that some testing was still ongoing, and the report would be updated once the tests were completed. Staff completed a contract with Dr. Merv Fingas of Spill Science to review the ECCC analysis and write a report on his findings. We received the completed analysis from ECCC on May 30, 2025. Dr. Fingas has completed his draft report based on the ECCC analysis and provided a briefing of the report at the July 31 OSPR meeting. Dr. Fingas will be presenting his final report to the Board at their September meeting.

6000 – Oil Spill Response Program

Objectives: Through this program, PWSRCAC develops positions and recommendations on oil spill response technologies; reviews state and federal contingency plans (c-plans) and plan-related issues; promotes compliance, enforcement, and funding of existing environmental regulations; and promotes the incorporation of local knowledge of sensitive areas into contingency planning.

Accomplishments since the last report:
Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT): General information on the ARRT can be found HERE. The ARRT is scheduled to meet on Thursday, September 11, 2025, in Anchorage. PWSRCAC attended the ARRT's Cultural Resources Committee meeting in June and provided feedback on the "Alaska Implementation Guidelines" for the 1997 National Programmatic Agreement.

Prince William Sound Area Contingency Plan (PWS ACP): Staff submitted comments on the PWS ACP on August 2, 2025.

Arctic and Western Alaska (also known as Sector Western Alaska and U.S. Arctic) Area Contingency Plan (AWA ACP): Comments on this plan were submitted on April 11, 2025. Inclusion of job aids for the Regional Stakeholder Committee (RSC) and the RSC Liaison Officer were part of this review.

6510 – Contingency Plan Review

Objectives: The purpose of this project is to monitor, review, and comment on state and federal contingency plans (c-plans) for the Valdez Marine Terminal (VMT) and the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) tankers that transit Prince William Sound. Reviewing c-plans is a major task for PWSRCAC as outlined in both the PWSRCAC/Alyeska contract and OPA 90.

The Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (PWS Tanker C-Plan) and associated vessel response plans for Alaska Tanker Company, Andeavor (subsidiary of Marathon Petroleum), Fairwater Tankers Alaska (formerly Crowley Alaska Tankers), Hilcorp North Slope, and Polar Tankers, was renewed on January 31, 2022, and will expire in 2027. Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (Alyeska) Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (VMT C-Plan) was renewed on November 6, 2024, and will expire in 2029.

Accomplishments since the last report:
PWS Tanker C-Plan: The following timeline and plans were submitted in 2025:

Oil Search (dba Santos) c-plan:

Date	Activity
Feb 17, 2025 – Mar 19, 2025	Initial public review of Santos c-plan
Mar 19, 2025	PWSRCAC submitted comments and suggested requests for additional information on Santos c-plan
May 19, 2025	Santos responded to ADEC's Requests for Additional Information (RFAIs)
June 18, 2025	PWSRCAC submitted final comments and suggested additional RFAIs

ADEC has 60 days after RFAIs have been provided and the plan is considered complete to issue a decision on approval, approval with conditions, or no approval of the c-plan.

SeaRiver Maritime c-plan

Date	Activity
Apr 14, 2025 – May 14, 2025	Initial public review of SeaRiver c-plan
May 14, 2025	PWSRCAC submitted comments and suggested RFAIs on SeaRiver Maritime c-plan

ADEC has 60 days after RFAIs have been provided and the plan is considered complete to issue a decision on approval, approval with conditions, or no approval of the c-plan.

Teekay Services Limited c-plan:

Date	Activity
Mar 28, 2025 – Apr 28, 2025	Initial public review of Teekay c-plan
Apr 28, 2025	PWSRCAC submitted comments and RFAIs on Teekay c-plan
June 20, 2025	ADEC issued Requests for Additional Information that were due on July 25, 2025

Repsol Trading USA c-plan:

Date	Activity
July 24, 2025 – Aug 25, 2025	Initial public review of Repsol c-plan
Aug 25, 2025	*Comments due*

VMT C-Plan Renewal

ADEC's 5-year renewal of the VMT C-Plan was issued on November 6, 2025, and expires on November 5, 2029. ADEC issued five conditions of approval and addressed 29 issues in the Basis of Decision document.

Staff continues to work on Alyeska's final evaluation method selection on the secondary containment liner.

REGULATORY REFERENCE MATERIALS [downloads as a PDF]

18 AAC 75.075: Secondary containment requirements for aboveground oil storage tanks.

(a) Onshore aboveground oil storage tanks must be located within a secondary containment area that has the capacity to hold the volume of the largest tank within the containment area, plus

enough additional capacity to allow for local precipitation. Minimum secondary containment system requirements include:

(1) berms, dikes, or retaining walls that are constructed to prevent the release of spilled oil from within the containment area; and

(2) with the exception of the area under a tank, components constructed of, or lined with, materials that are:

(A) adequately resistant to damage by the products stored to maintain sufficient impermeability;

(B) resistant to damage from prevailing weather conditions; and

(C) sufficiently impermeable; and

(D) resistant to operational damage.

18 AAC 75.990: Definitions

(124) "sufficiently impermeable" means, for a secondary containment system, that its design and construction has the impermeability necessary to protect groundwater from contamination and to contain a discharge or release until it can be detected and cleaned up.

May 23, 2025	ADEC posted Notice of Adjudicatory Hearing on Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (available HERE) [*This is information only*. PWSRCAC is not a party to this adjudicatory hearing as we were denied an adjudicatory hearing, and our issues went back to the SPAR Director for resolution.]
May 27, 2025	• Due date for Alyeska's response to ADEC's April 21, 2025 letter requesting additional information on the final evaluation method selection. • Alyeska's response: Alyeska GL #57576 transmitted Alyeska's Memorandum, Subject: VMT – East Tank Farm Secondary Containment System Final Evaluation Method Selection Rev 1
May 30, 2025	PWSRCAC sent letter to Alyeska and ADEC SPAR Director transmitting Drs. Benson and Scalia report "Review of Electrical Leak Location and Electrical Resistivity Tomography Pilot Study of the Secondary Containment System at the Valdez Marine Terminal West Tank Farm Conducted July 2024." The letter corrected Dr. Benson's recommendation that 20% of the liner should be inspected, not 10%.
June 4, 2025	ADEC sent letter to Alyeska, PWSRCAC, City of Valdez Subject: Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan, DEC Plan # 23-CP-4057; VMT Secondary Containment Area Evaluation Method Selection Report Confer Process (attached). • *The SPAR Division has determined a process to confer (directed by ADEC Commissioner) between Alyeska, PWSRCAC, and City of Valdez ("the parties").* • *SPAR has been reviewing Alyeska's evaluation method selection. SPAR will inform the parties when the report will be ready for review and provide copies to PWSRCAC and the City.* • *Comments on the final report will be due 10 working days after receipt of the report.* • *Following review of comments, individual 1-hour meetings will be held with PWSRCAC, Alyeska, and City of Valdez to present or clarify any comments on Alyeska's final report. SPAR reserves the right to schedule additional meetings if necessary.* • *SPAR will consider written and oral comments from the parties when making a final decision on both the approval of Alyeska's evaluation method selection and decisions on remand.* • *If SPAR's final decision results in a change to the VMT C-Plan, a public notice will be issued for those changes.*

June 30, 2025	ADEC sent letter to Alyeska requesting revisions to their May 27, 2025 Final Evaluation Method Selection Report. ADEC specifically requested more supporting information on: the percentage selected to evaluate in each dike cell; all the inputs in the statistical analysis and how the inputs were used to support the conclusions in the report; include rationale if less than 10% survey area is being proposed since a report Alyeska used along TAPS recommends a 10-20% survey area; and a proposed schedule that includes the order of the dike cells to be inspected, diagrams that show the location of areas to be inspected within each dike cell, and why locations in each dike cell were selected and any other relevant factors (i.e., spill history, proximity to interference factors, areas already inspected, etc.). Alyeska responded with a request for an extension to provide the revised report with these requested revisions.
July 2, 2025	ADEC SPAR sends letter to ADEC Commissioner clarifying that once the Division finds the Final Evaluation Method Selection report complete and provides copies to the City of Valdez and PWSRCAC, the parties will have 10 working days from receipt to provide written comments. Following the Division's review of the written comments, each party will be offered a 1-hour meeting to present or clarify any of their comments or position.
July 30, 2025	ADEC granted an extension to Alyeska to provide the Final Evaluation Method Selection Report by August 15, 2025.
August 15, 2025	Alyeska sends letter to ADEC, with their updated Final Evaluation Method Report titled "VMT – East Tank Farm Secondary Containment System Hydraulic Evaluation Method." The report abandons Alyeska's previously submitted plans for electrical leak location testing of the VMT East Tank Farm, in favor of the use of a hydraulic evaluation method. • *The rationale provided is based on Alyeska's assertions that:* o *ELL is "intrusive," requiring physical excavation to isolate the testing area from interference. Alyeska has stated that the physical excavation required for electrical testing could cause damage to the liner, and;* o *the hydraulic evaluation method allows for evaluation of 100% of the liner, in a fraction of the time required by ELL.* *The method involves flooding each dike cell with fresh water until the levels are near the top of the tank ring walls. Alyeska explains that all of the fill area above the liner will be saturated but standing water will only be observed at lower elevations within the cell. Once full test height has been achieved, the dike cell will be monitored for level loss with a stationary staff gauge set within a stilling well, and the level will be monitored to the nearest 1". The duration of the test will be 4 days (96 hours), and the schedule is to test East Tank Farm dike cells 1, 2, 3, and 4 in 2026 and cells 5, 6, and 7 in 2027 in late summer/fall.*

6512 – Maintaining the Secondary Containment Systems at the VMT

Objectives: This project entails promoting methods Alyeska could use to verify the integrity of the secondary containment systems at the Valdez Marine Terminal's (VMT) East Tank Farm, otherwise known as the catalytically blown asphalt (CBA) liner. The goal of this project is to ensure that the buried CBA liner at the VMT will hold spilled oil long enough to be cleaned up prior to ground or surface water contamination.

Accomplishments since last report: Dr. Craig Benson continues to provide the Council with ad-hoc advice and recommendations related to the VMT Contingency Plan Condition of Approval and Alyeska's testing plan for the VMT East Tank Farm secondary containment liner.

6530 – Weather Data / Sea Currents Project

Objectives: This project studies wind, water currents, and other environmental factors near the Valdez Marine Terminal, in Prince William Sound, and in the Gulf of Alaska, which may affect the ability to prevent, respond to, contain, and clean up an oil spill.

Accomplishments since last report: The Kokinhenik Weather Station has been operating properly since June, when new batteries and a new cellular modem were installed. The Cape St. Elias Weather Station is still functioning. A new station has been fabricated and is in Cordova to replace the one currently deployed. Council staff have been working with the Marine Exchange to add our Weather Station to their automated AIS station, using their power supply and data telemetry. The deployment schedule is still to be determined, but it may occur in mid- to late August. The station will be moved southward to an area with less vegetation, in order to more accurately capture the winds at sea level.

6531 – Port Valdez Weather Buoys

Objectives: This project is to assemble, deploy and maintain two buoys capable of measuring ocean currents and common weather parameters. The first buoy is installed near Jackson Point in Port Valdez [61.0910°N 146.3811°W]. The second buoy is installed at the Valdez Duck Flats [61.1201°N | 146.2914°W]. The Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC) partners with the Council to facilitate this project.

Congress mandated formation of the Council in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The Act requires the Council to study wind and water currents and other environmental factors in the vicinity of the terminal facilities which may affect the ability to prevent, respond to, contain, and clean up an oil spill.

Weather is a significant factor in the management of safe crude oil transportation through Prince William Sound. Some of these concerns include marine safety, tanker escort operations, oil spill contingency planning, containment boom design, and safe loading of oil tankers.

Accomplishments since last report: Dr. Rob Campbell visited Valdez in late May to service both weather buoys. The VMT buoy was re-deployed and is functioning properly. A handful of minor repairs to the ground tackle were made that were suggested by Global Diving in their ROV inspection report. There has been discussion at the two previous OSPR meetings about redeploying the buoy that was at the Duck Flats at a location east of Naked Island and the Committee was in favor, but no official action has been taken at this time. In preparation for this, Dr. Campbell transported the buoy to Cordova. If OSPR decides to proceed with the relocation, the buoy will need new sensors installed and minor fiberglass repairs.

6540 – Copper River Delta and Flats GRS Development

Objectives: The goal of this project is to create ten new Geographic Response Strategies (GRS) in the Copper River Delta and Flats (CRDF) vicinity. The Consultant is tasked with coordinating PWS Area Committee leadership, local stakeholders, trustee agencies, and the regulatory community via a workgroup process, to identify and build ten GIS-based GRS, and provide them to ADEC for incorporation into the GRS database. GRS work completed circa 1999 in this area was among the first conducted in Alaska, and this material needs to be updated and/or new sites developed in a modern format.

Accomplishments since last report:
The project is progressing along the anticipated timeline.

- Workgroup participation remains strong. A total of five workgroup meetings will have taken place by the September Board meeting. Meeting notes and other project resources are available on a project-specific website for those curious about more details. https://nukadraft.wixstudio.com/crdfgrsproject (Password: Cordova)

- Continued Steering Committee interactions and PWS Area Committee updates. Ahead of the different workgroup meetings, the steering committee has been meeting. The steering committee is made up of key ADEC and USCG staff, most of which are also key PWS Area Committee leadership. These meetings serve as an opportunity to refresh everyone on project status and progress, plan for the next larger workgroup meeting, and discuss any specific issues. Staff member Jeremy Robida also spoke about the project's status at the PWS Area Committee meeting on April 10.

- Separate meetings with wildlife trustee agencies, NOAA, and others. In addition to workgroup and steering committee meetings, Robida and contractor Nuka have also met with wildlife trustee agencies, NOAA, and others such as the Copper River Watershed Project to discuss specific issues as they arise. These discussions are always appreciated.

- Planning for in-person Cordova outreach meetings and field work is underway. Nuka's Elise DeCola, and Robida will be in Cordova, September 7 -14 to meet with key stakeholders (e.g., CDFU, NVE), conduct project outreach meetings, and, if weather cooperates, do field visits to different sites and areas. Space in the Cordova Center was secured for two different dates/times with fisherman and fishing dates/openers specifically in mind: Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 3–5 p.m., and Wednesday, Sept. 10, from 10 a.m.–12 p.m. This time will be used to explain our workgroup process, discuss the agency work that's occurred in the background, collectively look at maps, and gather local fisherman perspectives on the response ideas currently being developed. Robida is also working through charter vessel logistics and other specifics related to the field survey work.

6575 – Comparison of Windy Application and Seal Rocks Buoy Wind/Wave Data

Objectives: The National Data Buoy Center hosts a weather buoy at Seal Rocks (46061) that is used to determine closure limits for laden tankers outbound from the Valdez Marine Terminal through Hinchinbrook Entrance. Closure occurs when sustained wind exceeds 45 knots or wave height exceeds15 feet. Buoy 46061 has failed several times in recent history and repairs take an inordinate amount of time to accomplish. During buoy failures, the SERVS' Hinchinbrook Tug may be required by the Vessel Emergency Response Plan (VERP) to make weather observations in the vicinity of Seal Rocks.

This project proposes comparing data from the Windy mobile application (Windy), specific to wind and wave predictions, to data generated by Buoy 46061. The project would then evaluate which forecast model used by Windy most closely matches historic data provided by Buoy 46061 and make recommendations on the use and efficacy of the Windy application for this purpose.

Accomplishments since last report: Staff has received access to historical forecasts from the European Centre for Medium-range Weather Forecasting. This will allow analysis of roughly 20 Hinchinbrook Entrance closure events that occurred from January 2021 to the present. That work is just beginning and will continue as time allows. Comparisons of various forecast products will be made during upcoming closure events as they occur.

7000 – Oil Spill Response Operations Program

Objective: This program encompasses monitoring and reporting on the activities related to the operational readiness of the oil spill response personnel, equipment, and organization of the TAPS shipping industry. The program also encompasses monitoring actual oil spill incidents within our region and evaluating overall response readiness.

Accomplishments since last report: In early April, staff attended a training on a phone app called "Field Maps," which can be used to verify and suggest changes to existing Geographic Response Strategies (GRS). This training was initiated by the Arctic and Western Alaska GRS Subcommittee and is part of the evolution and broader move toward a GIS-based digital system. When an Oil Spill Response Organization (OSRO) such as SERVS deploys a GRS, especially at a site that has never been deployed before, boom lengths, ideal anchor locations, and other details may not match what the GRS call for. ADEC has traditionally gathered any OSRO-suggested changes via paper forms and will continue to do so, but the goal is to transition to the digital app going forward. This will speed the process of making updates to the GRSs, since all GRSs are now digital, and the app likewise keeps the workflow digital. Suggested changes via the app do not result in instant, live updates to the GRS. Instead, the respective Area Plan GRS Subcommittee must first approve the suggestions. Once approved, however, the changes can simply be activated and go live. The April training was attended by approximately 30 people and included both classroom and field time. The same training is anticipated to be held in Valdez in the future, but dates are still unknown.

Staff reviewed and commented on two different Area Plans since the last Board meeting: the Arctic and Western Alaska Plan, and the Prince William Sound Plan. These public review periods were driven by a format change and a reorganization of plan contents to match the format used in the rest of the country. In addition, the two job aids compiled by the RSC task force were added to the ADEC Tools and References webpage and specifically flagged for comment during the AWA Plan review. Informal comments were also submitted ahead of the formal public comments. Staff hope that with the format changes completed (there have been two large format changes since 2018), focus can now shift to improving and building out areas of these plans that need attention.

There was an increase in drill and exercise activity with the summer season. Staff continued to observe a variety of exercises and trainings. OSPR was kept apprised of recent exercise activity.

With fall right around the corner, more SERVS fishing vessel program training is on the way. Robida Staff intend to cover the Cordova and Whittier trainings. Consult with your local FV administrator for specifics.

9/10 - 9/18	Fishing Vessel Training Cordova (9/10 travel, 9/11 setup, 9/13-9/15 classroom, 9/16 - 9/17 on water)
9/18	ORE Cordova
9/19 - 9/23	Fishing Vessel Training Whittier (9/19 travel, 9/20 setup, 9/21 classroom, 9/22 on water)
9/23	ORE Whittier

7520 – Preparedness Monitoring

Objectives: PWSRCAC's Drill Monitoring Program falls under a broader program called Oil Spill Response Operations. Objectives for the Drill Monitoring Program are to promote oil spill response operational readiness within the EVOS region by observing, monitoring, and reporting on oil spill prevention and response drills, exercises, and training; to provide citizens, regulatory agencies, and responders (Alyeska and the shippers) with independent observations and recommendations to improve preparedness; and provide citizen oversight. Tasks to be completed include:

- Monitor and report on regular oil spill drills and training exercises at the VMT and throughout the Exxon Valdez oil spill region to citizens, the Board, industry, and regulatory agencies
- Provide quarterly recommendations to the PWSRCAC Board of Directors
- Keep PWSRCAC's standing committees (OSPR, TOEM, POVTS, IEC, and SAC) informed
- Produce an annual report on effectiveness and progress of the regularly monitored drills and exercises
- Continue developing and implementing staff training for drill monitoring

Recent Exercises

Valdez Marine Terminal Skimmer Deployment Exercise – July 23, 2025
Alyeska conducted a skimmer deployment using Berth 5 as the simulated oil spill site. Three different skimmer types (Marco, JBF, and Weir) were demonstrated on what turned out to be a very foggy morning.

OSRB-5 Open Water Demonstration Exercise – July 9, 2025
SERVS conducted an open water oil recovery exercise on July 9, to demonstrate the ability to function as an open water oil recovery vessel. SERVS installed the same oil recovery system that is on the other OSRB barges on the OSRB-5 as a mitigation measure to allow the other OSRBs to leave Prince William Sound for dry-dock inspections and maintenance.

Tug Commander U/J Deployment Exercise – June 6, 2025
SERVS conducted a U/J deployment exercise with the tug Commander in Port Valdez. These are performed with the tug and the onboard workboat using the tug's boom and skimmer.

ATC Alaskan Legend Emergency Towing Exercise – May 29, 2025
The ATC Alaskan Legend conducted an emergency towing exercise in central Prince William Sound on May 29, with tugs Courageous and Challenger.

Port Valdez Sensitive Area Protection Training Exercises – May, June, and July 2025
Alyeska has conducted several sensitive area protection training exercises with the TCC crews on the Valdez Duck Flats and the Solomon Gulch Hatchery protection strategies. These are excellent trainings.

Polar Tankers Annual Shippers Exercise – May 13-15, 2025
Polar Tankers and ConocoPhillips held a large-scale exercise in Valdez during the second week of May. This exercise was conducted primarily in person, with few virtual components this year. It featured a large incident management team tabletop exercise, with field deployments including a large vessel decontamination demonstration and tour, and deployment of the MSRC dispersant 737 aircraft.

Upcoming Drills and Exercises
Alyeska VMT Functional Exercise – October 8, 2025

8000 – Maritime Operations Program

Objectives: This program reviews port organization, operations, incidents, and the adequacy and maintenance of the vessel traffic system, and coordinates with the Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems (POVTS) Committee. Major program components include participation with the Valdez Marine Safety Committee (VMSC), monitoring changes to the escort system, reviewing Best Available Technology documents for the escort system and the Vessel Emergency Response Plan (VERP), and supporting maintenance for the NOAA weather stations.

Accomplishments since last report: The Seal Rocks and Cape Suckling Buoys were both serviced in June and are functioning properly. Relatedly, Alaska Senate Joint Resolution 12, sponsored by Sen. Forrest Dunbar, passed the Alaska State House on May 9, and was transmitted to the Alaska Congressional Delegation and the governor afterwards.

Staff has worked with the Contingency Plan Project Team to provide public comments on the recently submitted Santos, Teekay, and SeaRiver contingency plans. We are still waiting on the submission from Repsol to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

Staff participated in the Polar Tankers exercise held in Valdez in May, working with the Salvage Source Control team and evaluating the large-vessel decontamination field deployment conducted at the end of the exercise. Staff also participated in a U/J boom deployment exercise on June 6 aboard the tug Commander.

Staff has contacted the fleet managers for the fish processors purchasing pink salmon for the Prince William Sound purse seine fishery. This comes from an idea that Board member Robert Beedle had to attempt to provide fishermen with a warning outside the usual broadcasts on VHF Channels 13 and 16 about inbound or outbound tankers during an opener in the Valdez Narrows. Staff has been notifying the fleet managers for Trident Seafoods and Silver Bay Seafoods about any inbound or outbound tanker traffic in Valdez Narrows and Valdez Arm using AIS data from the Marine Exchange of Alaska.

8520 – Miscommunication in Maritime Contexts

Objectives: Seeking to identify and address various causes of miscommunication, the proposed project will provide a comprehensive perspective by collecting information on the linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic needs and practices of native and non-native English-speaking mariners in Prince William Sound. The proposed project would entail the first two of four phases.

Accomplishments since last report: Staff is still in the process of contacting and waiting for replies from Alaska Tanker Company, Fairwater, and Marathon to determine if they will participate in Phase 3 of this project. The Southwest Alaska Pilots Association has been contacted but their participation is yet to be determined. New potential TAPS shipper Teekay Tankers has agreed to participate and Dr. Ziegler will be reaching out to their fleet training officer to discuss next steps. Dr. Ziegler and the project manager are currently planning to seek participants on a variety of social media platforms, hoping to engage former or retired mariners who worked on tankers or tugboats in Prince William Sound.

9000 – Environmental Monitoring Program

Objectives: Coordinate projects developed and overseen by the Scientific Advisory Committee and obtain scientific knowledge and technical information about issues related to the actual and potential environmental impacts of the Valdez Marine Terminal and associated crude oil tankers. The notable tasks to be accomplished under this program are as follows:

- Project manager to attend at least one technical scientific conference
- Plan and complete budgeted environmental monitoring and scientific research projects
- Conduct PWSRCAC Science Night

Accomplishments since last report: Projects managed under this program continue to be planned and executed successfully. Science Night 2025 will be held on the evening of December 4, 2025, at the Embassy Suites in Anchorage. Planning is underway.

9110 – Monitoring Spatial Variability of Marine Birds During Winter in PWS Tanker Escort Zone

Objectives: Provide up to date information on winter marine bird density and distribution throughout the Prince William Sound tanker transit zone, including under-surveyed areas such as the open waters and adjacent bays in and around Port Valdez, Valdez Arm, Tatitlek Narrows, Port Fidalgo, and Port Etches.

Accomplishments since last report: A report summarizing the results and recommendations from the fall and early winter 2024 marine bird and mammal surveys was presented to the Board in May. A second year of surveys are expected to take place in September and November 2025, in Prince William Sound in and around the tanker lanes, by the same contractors from the Prince William Sound Science Center.

9510 – Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Project

Objectives: Monitor the actual and potential environmental impacts of the Valdez Marine Terminal and associated crude oil tankers and provide the Council with information about the presence and effects of hydrocarbons generated by the terminal facility and tankers. This includes monitoring hydrocarbons in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska through marine sediments, mussel tissue, and passive sampling devices.

Accomplishments since last report: All 2025 LTEMP samples have been collected and shipped to laboratories for analysis. The 2025 Port Valdez samples included passive sampling devices deployed and retrieved in the water column from three sites; blue mussels collected at four sites; and marine sediments collected at two sites. Results will be shared this fall with Dr. Morgan Powers of Fjord & Fish Sciences for interpretation and report writing. In addition, mussels were collected at four sites in Port Valdez and dissected for possible future transcriptomics analysis. For now, the samples will be placed in frozen storage with USGS.

In addition, an internship program for LTEMP was carried out in coordination with the Information and Education Committee. The intern, Timothy Derbidge, analyzed a summary of LTEMP hydrocarbon data, participated in field work this spring, and presented a poster about his internship at the Prince William Sound College science symposium in May.

9520 – Marine Invasive Species

Objectives: Understand and minimize the environmental impacts of invasive species potentially arriving in the PWSRCAC region from tanker ballast water and hull fouling. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this project:

- Obtain plankton samples in Port Valdez at three sites: the small boat harbor, Valdez Container Terminal, and Valdez Marine Terminal
- Perform metagenetic analysis on plankton samples to identify variability in the plankton community between locations and through time, and identify any nonindigenous species
- Interpret and report results of plankton metagenetic analysis
- Conduct monitoring of invasive crab and tunicate species in Valdez, Cordova, and Kodiak

Accomplishments since last report: Contractors from the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center deployed settlement panels throughout Kachemak Bay in early June 2025. The panels will be

retrieved in late August or early September for analysis. A Plate Watch workshop that will bring together monitors from across Alaska to learn about potential eDNA monitoring alongside settlement panels will take place in Homer on August 22. A community outreach event is planned for Homer in the fall of 2025.

9521 – Marine Invasive Species Internship

Objectives: Support local students to monitor for invasive species potentially arriving in the PWSRCAC region from tanker ballast water and biofouling. Target species include European green crab and tunicates in the communities of Valdez, Cordova, and Kodiak.

Accomplishments since last report: The project manager traveled to Kodiak to meet with intern John Paul in April and traveled to Cordova to meet with interns Samaya and Liz in May. Student interns are currently monitoring for invasive green crab in the communities of Cordova and Kodiak in summer 2025. No green crab have been detected in our region to date. Settlement panels were deployed in the Cordova harbor, Valdez harbor, and at the Valdez Marine Terminal in May, and will be retrieved in September.

9550 – Dispersants

Objectives: The Council has a long history of supporting dispersants-related projects, commenting on proposed regulations, maintaining an extensive literature database, and maintains a position statement with supporting materials on the use of dispersants in the Exxon Valdez oil spill region. The goal of this project is to retain a dispersants expert who can assist the Council in being knowledgeable of current changes to regulations and stockpiles of dispersants that could be authorized for use in our region.

Accomplishments since last report: The Council contracted with Dr. Merv Fingas of Spill Science, LLC. Dr. Fingas produced a draft report on the latest EPA regulatory changes regarding dispersants listing and authorization of use; led a comparison of the three newly listed dispersants on the National Contingency Plan Product Schedule and the outgoing Corexit 9500A; and presented this information to the Scientific Advisory Committee. An update will be shared with the Board at this meeting.

9850 – Transcriptomics

Objectives: To continue the use of transcriptomics to assess the genetic response of hydrocarbon exposure on blue mussels collected at LTEMP sites. This genetics assessment compliments the traditional chemistry analyses conducted on blue mussels, which have formed the base of the LTEMP dataset over the past 30+ years.

Accomplishments since last report: Blue mussels were collected in 2023 and 2024, at all 13 LTEMP sites in Prince William Sound and Gulf of Alaska for dissection and preservation. The blue mussel tissue samples were shipped to contractor Dr. Liz Bowen at USGS in California. Dr. Bowen and her colleagues are in the process of developing a 24-gene panel and analyzing the mussel tissues. A report containing results and recommendations is expected later this fiscal year.