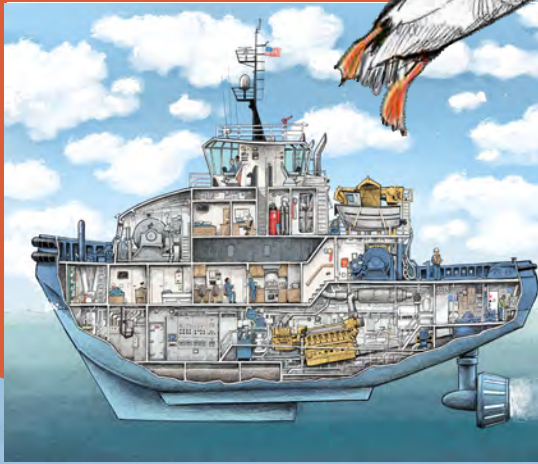




YEAR IN REVIEW



JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026



New Book Illustrates Safeguards in Prince William Sound

The Council recently partnered with artist, author, and fisherman Tom Crestodina to create "Protectors of Prince William Sound." This new book illustrates how and why local fishing vessels, escort tugs, pilot boats, tankers, and other technology work together to keep the marine ecosystems and coastal communities of Prince William Sound safe. This Year In Review features many of Crestodina's drawings from the new book, including this one, in Crestodina's signature style. More about the book on page 18.



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Cover Photo: Powerful escort tugs demonstrate their firefighting systems in front of the Valdez Marine Terminal. These tugs are part of Alyeska's Ship Escort Response Vessel System.

Contents Background Photo: The Auklet motors through Orca Inlet near its home port of Cordova.

Letter from the President & Executive Director

**CONGRESS FOUND THAT
COMPLACENCY WAS ONE OF THE
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS THAT
LED TO THE 1989 EXXON
VALDEZ OIL SPILL.**

It also determined that local
citizens needed to be
involved in decisions
related to the safe
transportation of oil
to combat that
complacency.



Kodiak fishing crews practice working with oil spill response equipment during Alyeska's annual training.

This led to the establishment of regional citizens advisory councils for Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet, as mandated in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. In the decades since the spill, both Councils have worked to advocate for the preservation and improvement of the prevention and response system in our regions. The core of much of the work done by the councils, and the heart of what we represent, centers on the importance of public participation. Our volunteers and staff log countless hours toward these goals.

In this report, you will find highlights from the past year, including:

- Advocating for adequate funding for the repair and maintenance of essential weather buoys in our region (page 7)
- Ensuring the adequacy of the secondary containment liners at the Valdez Marine Terminal intended to contain oil in case of a tank spill (page 8)
- Protecting Alyeska's contracted fishing vessel program, widely considered the backbone of the spill response system in our region (page 10)
- Monitoring oil spill drills and exercises to verify capabilities and response readiness (page 13)
- Monitoring both native and invasive marine species in our region (page 16)
- Launching the new book, "Protectors of Prince William Sound," with artist and author Tom Crestodina (see page 18)
- And much more

If compared to what was in place pre-1989, our region has made huge advances in oil spill preparedness and response. But even the best response in the world can not prevent damage once oil is spilled - it can only mitigate the impacts.

To prevent another disaster, three components must be in place. First, there must be unwavering commitment by industry to operational excellence and continuous improvement. Second, comprehensive regulatory oversight of the complex Trans Alaska Pipeline System, or TAPS, is essential. Finally, meaningful public participation is required to enhance and reinforce regulatory oversight.

We are now witnessing the comprehensive regulatory oversight system put in place as a direct result of lessons learned from the Exxon Valdez spill being scaled back to levels akin to pre-1989, when regulators were relying on industry to police itself. Regulatory staff on the ground are doing the best they can – sometimes juggling the work of 2-3 positions, without adequate resources. Gaps form when regulatory oversight is diminished, and oversight roles and responsibilities are unclear. This leads to safety systems, including prevention measures, suffering adverse consequences.

A catastrophic accident anywhere in TAPS, including the terminal and associated tankers, would not only cause serious, adverse impacts and harm to Alaska, but also to the energy needs of the United States. The Council is a conduit to engage the public in these important processes and decisions, and a voice for the people who will be most affected should there be another spill.

Prevention must be at the forefront to safeguard our local communities, economies, and environments. For that to happen, we must have comprehensive regulatory oversight that has adequate funding, staffing, and resources, and which recognizes the importance of public participation. The greatest successes in our history have happened when industry, regulators, and citizens came together towards our common goal of preventing another major oil spill. Now, more than ever, is the time to work to preserve the public's voice in these important decisions. The Council will continue to do everything in our power to make sure that happens.



Robert Archibald
PRESIDENT
City of Homer



Donna Schantz
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PWSRCAC

Who we are

THE COUNCIL IS A VOICE FOR CITIZENS IMPACTED BY DECISIONS MADE BY THE OIL INDUSTRY AND REGULATORS IN PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND.

Formed after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Council's 19 member organizations are communities impacted by the spill, as well as Alaska Native, aquaculture, commercial fishing, environmental, recreation, and tourism groups.

The Council's Board is made up of local citizens representing communities, organizations, and stakeholder groups that were affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.



The tanker Alaskan Frontier loads oil from the Valdez Marine Terminal.

THE COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE

The Council's structure and responsibilities stem from two documents:

1

The contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company.

Alyeska operates the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, including the Valdez Marine Terminal. This contract guarantees the Council's independence from industry while also providing the operating funds for the organization.

2

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

The Act requires citizen oversight councils for Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet. The councils promote partnership and cooperation among local citizens, industry, and government; build trust; and provide citizen oversight of the oil industry in their regions.



The Council gathered in Whittier, Alaska, for an annual meeting of the Board of Directors in September 2026. The Council's Board is made up of local citizens representing communities, organizations, and stakeholder groups that were affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council works to prevent pollution and other harm from the transportation of crude oil through Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska by monitoring, reviewing, and providing advice on:

Oil spill prevention and response plans prepared by Alyeska and shipping companies moving crude oil through the region

The environmental protection capabilities of Alyeska and the tanker operators

The environmental, social, and economic impacts of Alyeska and tanker operations

Government policies, permits, and regulations relating to the oil terminal and tankers

The Council regularly retains experts to conduct independent research and technical analysis on issues related to oil transportation safety.

The contract with Alyeska also calls for the Council to increase public awareness of the company's oil spill response, spill prevention, and environmental protection capabilities, as well as the actual and potential environmental impacts of terminal and tanker operations.

OUR FUNDING

The Council was initially funded at \$2 million a year. The funding is renegotiated every three years; current Alyeska funding is approximately \$4.37 million a year.

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

Preventing an Oil Spill

PREVENTING AN OIL SPILL IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

The spill prevention system in Prince William Sound is among the best in the world. The Council works to keep it that way by reviewing all aspects of the system.



Two escort tugs accompany each laden tanker through Prince William Sound. The tugs are powerful enough to slow, turn, or stop a tanker. They also carry equipment to begin an immediate response in case of a spill.

MONITORING WEATHER

The harsh environment in Alaska impacts safe crude oil transportation. The Council studies wind, waves, currents, and other environmental factors that can affect the ability to prevent, respond to, contain, and clean up an oil spill.

Understanding Weather and Sea Currents in Our Region

The Council supports two weather stations in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. Information is collected via the Prince William Sound Weather Station Network, developed and maintained by the Prince William Sound Science Center, and co-funded by the Council. Data is available through the Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS).

Port Valdez Weather Buoys

The Council maintains two weather buoys in Port Valdez, which have been collecting data for six years: one near the terminal, the other formerly near the Valdez Duck Flats. The Valdez Duck Flats weather buoy was pushed off station by ice in February 2025. The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee has supported moving the buoy near Naked Island, further out in central Prince William Sound. The buoy has been refurbished and is ready to be transported to its new deployment location later in 2026. The weather buoy located off of the Valdez Marine Terminal remains on station and operational.

These buoys measure ocean currents, wind, and waves, among other conditions. The Council also maintains a CTD (conductivity, temperature, and depth) sensor at the Kelsey Dock. The Council works with AOOS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) PORTS® (Physical Oceanographic Real Time System) to share the data.

This information helps support environmental monitoring, oil spill contingency and response planning, trajectory modeling, and the safe transportation of oil in Port Valdez.



The public can access **weather station data, buoy information, Valdez PORTS®,** and other weather related resources at the Council's website: www.tinyurl.com/Wx-Monitoring

NOAA Weather Buoy Outages

In recent years, the Council has been voicing support for NOAA's National Data Buoy Center to receive additional funding for timely repairs to Seal Rocks (Station 46061) and the other important weather buoys in the Gulf of Alaska. Seal Rocks has been plagued by outages and data problems since December 2023, and was only briefly functional in fall 2024. After the repair or replacement of several buoys in the region, the Seal Rocks buoy was working properly in June 2025, before losing use of its wind speed sensor in June 2026.



The varying weather conditions in Prince William Sound can affect operations.

The Seal Rocks buoy collects and transmits data about weather conditions near Hinchinbrook Entrance. Outbound laden tankers are not allowed to transit Hinchinbrook Entrance when winds exceed 45 knots or seas exceed 15 feet. Wind and wave data from this buoy is the primary source of information that the U.S. Coast Guard uses to make critical navigation safety decisions for these tankers.

The Council is currently looking at whether an additional weather station could be established in the vicinity of Seal Rocks to aid in reliable reporting of conditions in the area. We will continue to advocate for adequate funding to repair and maintain these important safety assets.



A secondary containment system surrounds the oil storage tanks to hold oil in case of a spill.

OPERATIONS AT THE TERMINAL

Ensuring the Adequacy of Secondary Containment Liners

The terminal's crude oil storage tanks are surrounded by a secondary containment system. In the event of a spill, this system acts as a bathtub, preventing the oil from leaking into the surrounding environment.

The containment cells that make up the system are nearly 50 years old. They are lined with a special type of asphalt, which can become brittle with age and is susceptible to physical and chemical degradation. Inspecting the liner is difficult, as it is covered with two to five feet of gravel fill. According to Alyeska, removing the fill to inspect and repair the liner would be expensive and could cause additional damage.

Over the years, when gravel fill has been removed to visually inspect the liner, holes or cracks have been

found about 20% of the time. For two decades, the Council has voiced concerns to Alyeska and regulators about the condition of the liner.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, or ADEC, grants Alyeska a 60% "prevention credit" based on the integrity of the secondary containment system in place, substantially reducing the amount of response personnel and equipment Alyeska must include in their plans to meet response planning standards.

ADEC has required Alyeska to demonstrate that the liner is sufficiently impermeable to prevent leaks as a condition of approval for the Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan ([See page 10](#)) and Alyeska chose a hydro-test for this demonstration. This involves flooding the dike cells with water and then measuring water loss over a period of time. Depending on the results of the tests, ADEC will decide if the liner meets the regulatory standards or not. These tests are scheduled for late summer and fall of 2026 and 2027, with initial results expected later this year.

Inspection and Repairs to Tank 93

The Council completed a review of the maintenance practices for ballast water storage tank number 93 at the Valdez Marine Terminal, and provided recommendations for improvements to help minimize the risk of an oil spill from the tank. The report noted that while Alyeska has made some positive improvements to prevent corrosion, some concerns remain with how corrosion rates are monitored and calculated.



More details are available in the final report on our website: www.tinyurl.com/Tank-93-Report

Review of Tank Inspection Timelines

The Council also commissioned a review of historic inspection documents and reanalyzed reported corrosion rates to determine the accuracy of Alyeska's planned inspection scheduling for the oil and ballast water storage tanks at the VMT. Changes to the way corrosion rates are calculated, and consequently modified inspection schedules, were recommended.



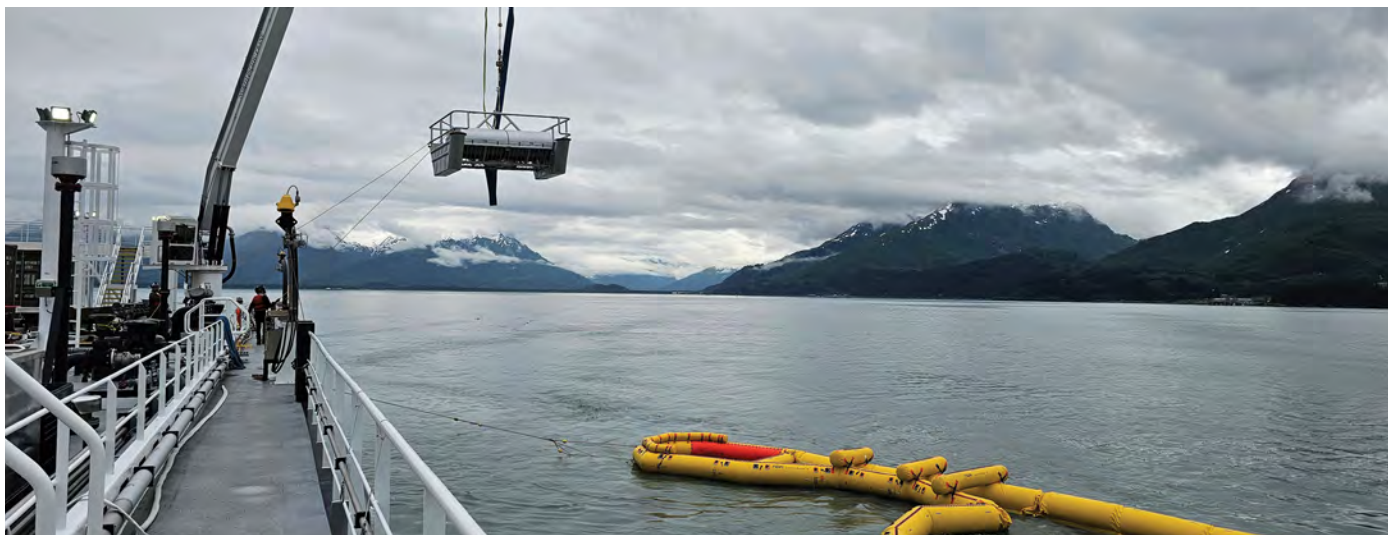
The report is available on our website: www.tinyurl.com/tank-timelines

Planning & Preparing for an Oil Spill

THE COUNCIL WORKS HARD TO HELP PREVENT SPILLS.

It also monitors and supports the extensive planning required to ensure an efficient and effective response if a spill occurs.

An oil tanker sits at berth at the Valdez Marine Terminal.



Crews practice working with skimmers and oil collection boom.

OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY PLANS

Alyeska and the companies who ship oil from the Valdez Marine Terminal are required by state and federal law to prepare detailed oil spill contingency plans for spill prevention and response. On behalf of the public, the Council monitors changes to these plans and provides comments and recommendations to improve them.

Significant resources are devoted to help ensure the plans remain adequate.

Alaska regulations require these plans to be renewed every five years. Any changes between those renewals require amendments. Major amendments require a public review process.

The 5-year renewal of the Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan for the Prince William Sound shippers, commonly referred to as the “Tanker Plan,” began in 2026, as the current plan expires in 2027. This plan covers nine separate shipping companies who ship crude oil from the Valdez Marine Terminal and transit through Prince William Sound. This is an increase since the last renewal, during which there were only five plan holders involved.

The five-year renewal of the oil spill contingency plan for the terminal was approved in November 2024. The Council continues to monitor and provide input on ADEC’s conditions of approval that must be met connected to this approval, including further analysis of the secondary containment liners installed under the crude oil storage tanks at the terminal’s East Tank Farm.

The integrity of those liners continues to be a pressing concern for the Council ([See page 8](#)).

ISSUES AFFECTING SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

In addition to providing input on contingency plans, the Council tracks other issues that could impact prevention and response.

Protecting Alyeska’s Contracted Fishing Vessel Response Program

Alyeska’s Ship Escort Response Vessel System, or SERVS, contracts with local fishing vessels to help with oil spill response. Most of these vessels were built for purposes other than spill response, such as commercial fishing. These vessels are a vital part of the system that protects Prince William Sound.

A workgroup that included the Council, industry, and other stakeholders collaborated to develop a solution for a 2023 law that would have excluded many local fishing vessels from participating in SERVS’ program. The vessels would have had to pass inspections for tasks that they were not designed for. The workgroup promoted language, included in the FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), that resulted in exemptions from these inspection requirements for qualified vessels engaged in training or responding to oil spills in Alaska.

Many organizations participated in the working group in addition to the Council, including: Alyeska Pipeline

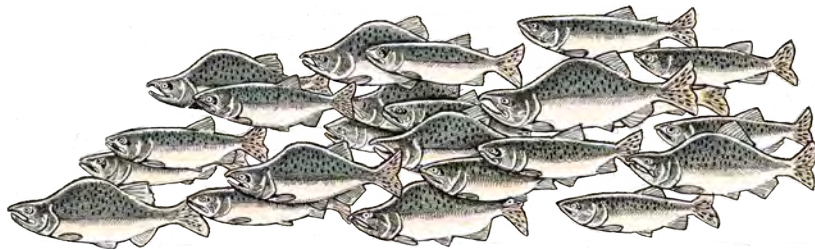
Service Company, Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council, Washington State Maritime Cooperative, Alaska Chadux Network, the American Waterways Operators, Cook Inlet Spill Prevention & Response, Inc. (CISPRI), and Southeast Alaska Petroleum Response Organization (SEAPRO). Leading up to the bill's passage in December 2025, the Alaska Congressional delegation was instrumental in helping to promote the solution among their Washington, D.C., colleagues.

Local Vessels are the Backbone of the Spill Prevention and Response System in the Sound

When the Exxon Valdez oil spill happened in 1989, the response was delayed. Much of the damage could have been lessened if clean-up efforts had started immediately. One of the most important lessons from that devastatingly destructive oil spill was that local fishing crews were able to help with a quick response.

The local fishing crews who joined the 1989 response realized that pulling oil spill boom was similar to pulling fishing nets. They also knew the region's waters well and were aware of dangers like shallow areas or changing tides that could leave a vessel stranded, among other hazards.

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990, enacted largely in response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill, includes a provision that requires response plans for tank vessels operating in Prince William Sound, or a facility permitted under the Trans Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act to provide for "(3) training in oil removal techniques for local residents and individuals engaged in the cultivation or production of fish or fish products in Prince William Sound;" and "(4) practice exercises not less than 2 times per year



which test the capacity of the equipment and personnel required under this paragraph."

In the years since the spill, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company formalized this relationship, developing a program to make sure they have a contracted fleet of vessels that are trained, on-call, and immediately available to support a response in case of another major oil spill. Today, Alyeska holds contracts with approximately 350 of these vessels. They invest in training for crew members every year to make sure they are always ready to respond.

Alyeska trains the crews, under SERVUS, to handle oil spill response equipment, tow oil spill boom in proper formation, and tow the small barges used to store the oil and water mix that is recovered during an oil spill response. They are skilled in deploying, operating, and maintaining this equipment. If another real event were to occur, Alaska's fishing crews are ready to respond.

The Council is proud of our participation in the workgroup that helped preserve this world-class program. This effort is a prime example of the work done by both regional citizens advisory councils to fulfill our mandates to foster partnership and cooperation among local citizens, industry, and government; build trust; and provide citizen oversight of the oil industry in our regions.



Fishing crews play a vital role in oil spill preparedness because they know their local waters better than anyone else.



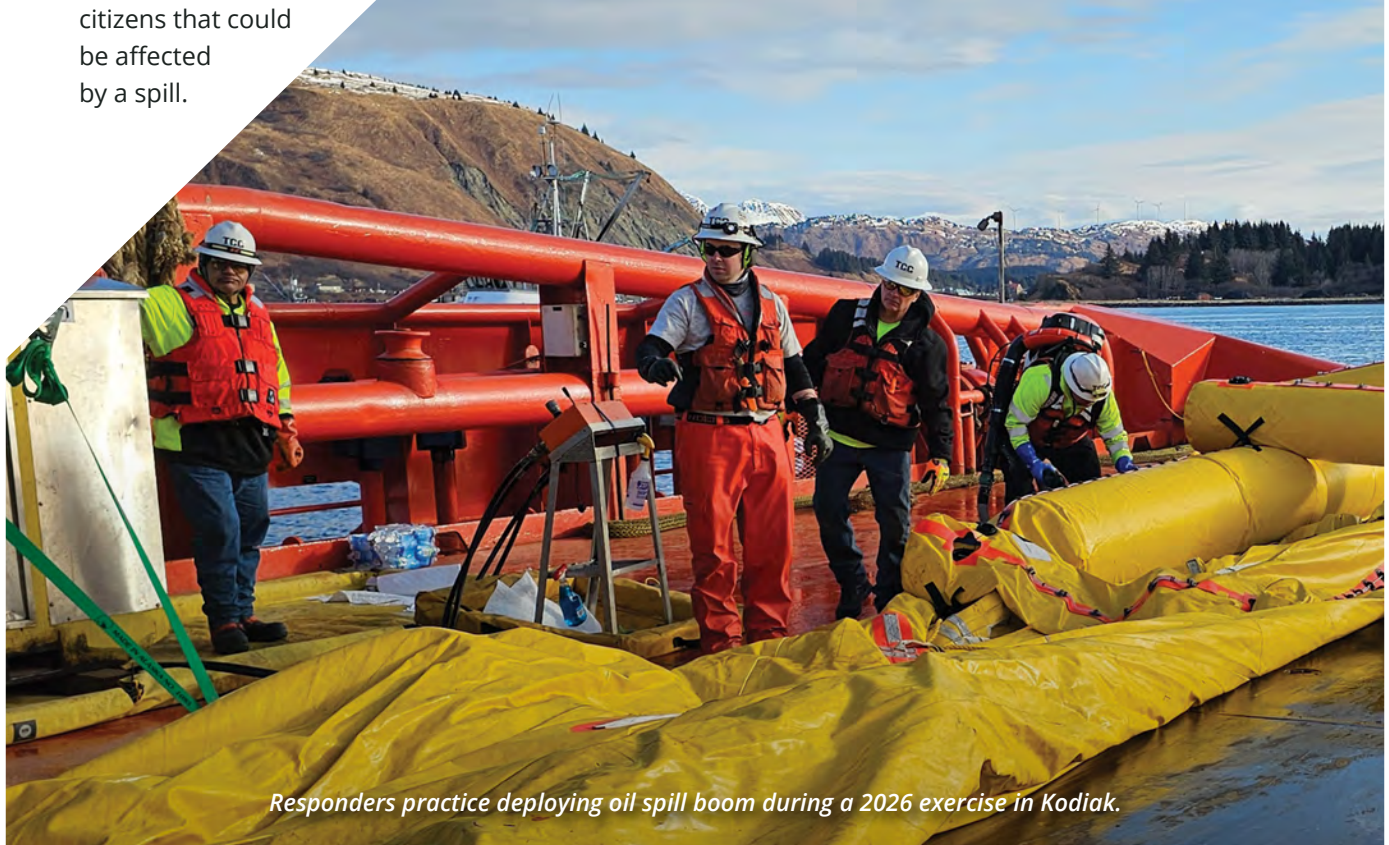
Always Ready to Respond

THE COUNCIL, INDUSTRY, AND REGULATORS WORK HARD TO PREVENT OIL SPILLS, BUT THE RISK CANNOT BE ELIMINATED ENTIRELY.

A rapid and effective response takes more than carefully written and reviewed contingency plans. It requires equipment, trained people, practice, and a management system to implement the plan.

The Council monitors the operational readiness of Alyeska's Ship Escort Response Vessel System, or SERV, and the tanker companies.

The Council works hard to stay prepared as an independent monitor and as a voice for citizens that could be affected by a spill.



Responders practice deploying oil spill boom during a 2026 exercise in Kodiak.

OIL SPILLS AND INCIDENTS

The Council monitors spills and other incidents that occur from the Valdez Marine Terminal and tanker operations. Fortunately, because spill prevention efforts in Prince William Sound are among the best in the world, significant events are rare. More common are minor spills, usually a teaspoon or less, related to normal daily operations. The Council tracks these incidents and provides advice where possible to prevent small problems from becoming larger issues.

From July 2025 through June 2026, nine spills were reported by Alyeska. The spills totaled just under 13 gallons of various substances. Approximately 12 gallons of crude oil spilled to containment. The remainder of the spills were relatively small amounts of petroleum products like hydraulic fluid, motor oil, or Vaseline.

In August 2025, a TCC crewmember was pinned between a workboat and a tug while doing some work, but sustained no injuries other than slight bruising. In June 2026, some work was being performed at the VMT on a section of piping that had been drained and cleaned

in preparation for inline inspection. During a process involving cold-cutting, there was a flash fire inside that section of the pipe. The fire was quickly extinguished and a full investigation is taking place. Neither of these incidents were associated with any spills or leaks.

MONITORING DRILLS AND EXERCISES

The Council observes and monitors spill response drills, exercises, and trainings that test aspects of the oil spill contingency plans for the terminal and tankers. Some are small (focusing on specific pieces of equipment or tactics), but a few are large, involving one hundred or more personnel and a large amount of response equipment.

These events help to ensure responders are ready and able to act quickly in the event of an actual spill.



For more details, the Annual Drill Monitoring Report for 2025 is available on our website: www.tinyurl.com/PWS-drills-2025

Major Annual Spill Exercises

Council staff attended 12 drills, exercises, and training events this past year, including:

Trainings and deployments to protect sensitive areas in Port Valdez

Large annual Prince William Sound shippers' exercise conducted by Fairwater Tankers Alaska LLC

Annual spill response trainings for fishing and other contracted vessels in Cordova, Kodiak, Seward, and Whittier

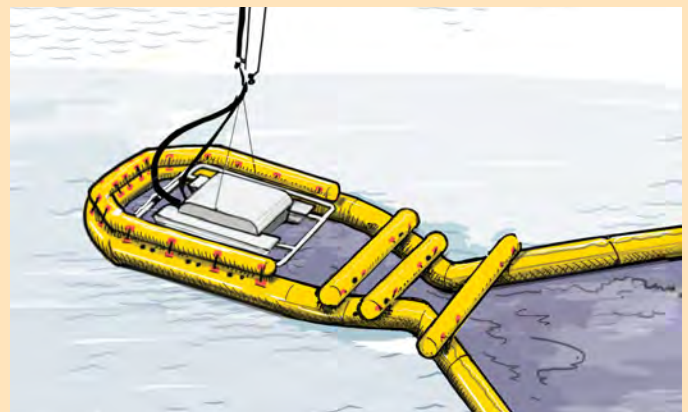
Two open-water response exercises

One emergency towing exercise in central Prince William Sound

Annual Valdez Marine Terminal incident management team exercise and equipment deployment

Valdez Marine Terminal nearshore skimmers deployment

Oiled sea otter rehabilitation training



Development of Oil Spill Response Strategies for Copper River Area

The Council completed a project to update Geographic Response Strategies, or GRS, for the Copper River Delta Flats. GRS are map-based oil spill response plans tailored to protect specific environmentally sensitive areas. The Copper River Delta is considered critical habitat for the State of Alaska. It supports numerous fisheries and is one of the largest bird migration stops in the entire Western Hemisphere. It is also a challenging operational area with high energy beaches, shallow tidal waters and ever-changing channels, barrier islands, and braided river drainages.

For this project, a workgroup composed of representatives from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), the U.S. Coast Guard, resource trustees, Cordova nonprofit organizations, local Cordova fishermen, and the Council convened to develop nine new GRS and a tactics guide specifically tailored to the unique area. Due to the Council's focus on spills from oil transportation through Prince William Sound, the work of this project focused on responding to oil migrating into the area from tankers transiting the region.

The materials developed through this project have been provided to the Prince William Sound Area Committee, and ADEC, which manages GRS. Once the Area Committee has approved the material, it's anticipated to be available on ADEC's GRS webpage.



A report, available on our website, summarizes the workgroup process:
www.tinyurl.com/GRS-CRDF



The Copper River Delta and Flats is a unique and rich habitat. This 700,000-acre estuary made up of an intricate web of tidal flats, marshes, freshwater ponds, braided river channels, and barrier islands.



A Kodiak fishing crew practices pulling oil spill boom in formation during annual spill response training.

Analysis of Alaska North Slope Crude Oil

The Council completed an analysis of the physical and chemical properties of a sample of 2024 Alaska North Slope, or ANS, crude oil. The Prince William Sound tanker operators provide a sample to the Council every five years in conjunction with contingency plan renewal cycles, to track changes in the oil's properties and how those changes might impact mechanical oil spill response measures. Changes in oil properties can also impact the effectiveness of non-mechanical response options such as in-situ burning and dispersants.

The analysis noted that the sample's composition is more similar to the previous sample analyzed in 2019, than samples taken in 2015 and earlier. ANS crude oil has been trending lighter (or less viscous) since around 2010, and its properties are consistent with a "medium" weight oil. Compared to previous samples, the current composition is less prone to emulsify, less dispersible as the oil weathers, and less adhesive to shorelines.



More details are available in the final report on our website:
www.tinyurl.com/Analysis-ANS-crude

Protecting Our Region

PER DIRECTIVES IN THE OIL POLLUTION ACT OF 1990, THE COUNCIL MONITORS TERMINAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE.

This is done to help minimize the risk of spills and reduce the facility's discharge or emissions of water and air pollution to the lowest reasonable levels.

The Council conducts scientific research on risks to the environment from tanker and terminal operations, documents levels of pollution, and explores new technologies.

The Council sponsors internships in several communities to help monitor for invasive European green crab.

LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

Every year, the Council collects environmental samples from within the Exxon Valdez oil spill region and has them chemically analyzed for contamination related to the operation of the terminal and associated tankers. In 2025, samples were collected at four sites in Port Valdez.

Sampling includes gathering mussels, collecting marine sediments, and deploying passive sampling devices in the water at a combination of sites that are near current oil industry activities, sites that were polluted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and reference sites. The results show that there is currently a low risk of effects on the environment.

The current report and technical supplement provide data and results from the 2025 sampling excursions in Port Valdez for this program, now in its 32nd year.



The report can be found on the Council's website:
www.tinyurl.com/LTEMP-2025-Report

MONITORING SPECIES IN OUR REGION

Monitoring for Marine Invasive Species

Each summer, the Council monitors for invasive species that may be introduced by tankers transiting to and from the terminal. These tankers visit ports outside Alaska, where they can inadvertently pick up invasive species in ballast water or on their hulls. If these species become established here, they can harm native species by competing for space and food, and disrupting habitat. In 2025, the Council contracted the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, or SERC, to conduct a survey for invasive species throughout Kachemak Bay and to hold a workshop for local scientists to trial eDNA methods for detecting invasive species. Additionally, SERC staff sampled ballast water of tankers arriving at the Valdez Marine Terminal in May 2026. Results from these surveys will be available in the coming year.

The two biggest concerns are the European green crab, a voracious predator currently spreading northward throughout southeast Alaska, and tunicates, which can cover and suffocate native organisms. Additional threats include bryozoans, barnacles, copepods, snails, and other marine invertebrates.



The Council uses multiple methods to monitor for a variety of invasive species. Top: Setting traps for European green crab. Bottom: PVC plates are placed in the water and periodically collected and examined for the presence of invasive species.

Surveys of Marine Bird and Mammal Species

The Council continued its work monitoring species in Prince William Sound that could be impacted by an oil spill. In May 2026, the Council released a report on a second year of surveys conducted in September and November 2025, in and around the tanker escort zone and the terminal. The new report summarizes the survey's findings and recommendations for continued monitoring.



The report is available on our website:
www.tinyurl.com/bird-survey-2025



Data from all surveys have been incorporated into NOAA's online spill response planning tool, the **Environmental Response Management Application**:
www.tinyurl.com/ERMA-PWS-birds

Involving Citizens in Oversight

THE COUNCIL CULTIVATES RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS MEMBER ENTITIES, WHICH INCLUDE COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE

REGION affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, as well as Alaska Native, aquaculture, commercial fishing, environmental, recreation, and tourism groups.



A strong outreach program helps increase citizen engagement in the Council's work. Partnerships with organizations such as the Cook Inlet Regional Citizen's Advisory Council is an important part of that work.



New Book Illustrates Safeguards in Prince William Sound

In May 2026, the Council launched a new book that showcases the equipment, technology, training, local expertise, and skilled personnel that keep Prince William Sound safe from an oil spill.

“Protectors of Prince William Sound” is the result of a partnership with Tom Crestodina. Crestodina is an Alaska fisherman based in Bellingham, Washington, and also the author and artist of the popular “Working Boats: A Look Inside Ten Amazing Watercraft” and its sequel that was released this year.

For the Council’s new book, Crestodina created intricate cutaway drawings of tankers, escort tugs, fishing vessels, and other equipment in his signature whimsical drawing style. Readers can explore these drawings to learn about the vessels, equipment, and systems that prevent and respond to oil spills in Prince William Sound. While the text is written at a 6th–8th grade reading level, the book is engaging for students and adults of all ages.

The Council is providing free copies of the book for residents of the Exxon Valdez oil spill region (one per household while supplies last) during community visits throughout the year.

In the spring, the Council hosted a series of book launch events to share the new book with stakeholders, community members, and youth in the region. Launch events in the Council’s regional communities will continue in the coming year.



Download a free e-book from the Council’s website: pwsrac.org/protectors

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Throughout the year, staff and volunteers visit communities in the Council’s region to host receptions, deliver presentations, and participate in events that increase citizen engagement in our work.

The Council’s outreach efforts included participation at a variety of events, such as:



Hosting booths at SalmonFest in Ninilchik, Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle, Alaska Forum in Anchorage, the Alaska Mariculture Conference in Anchorage, the Annual Subsistence Memorial Gathering in Anchorage, and ComFish in Kodiak



Participating in the **Ocean Sciences Festival** in Cordova



Sponsoring and participating as officials for the **Alaska Tsunami Ocean Sciences Bowl** in Seward



Sponsoring the **Prince William Sound Natural History Symposium** in Whittier, presenting at the event, and assisting in its hybrid facilitation



Hosting **educational walking tours in Kodiak** for community members including local leaders, legislators, students, partner organizations, and agencies to observe and learn about how Alyeska trains local vessel crews to help clean up oil



Hosting our annual **“Science Night”** held in Anchorage and streamed online, which featured topics relevant to our region and work; this year, partners hosted watch parties in Cordova, Kodiak, and Valdez



Hosting a **training for Valdez** based guides and tour boat operators

THE OBSERVER NEWSLETTER

Our newsletter covers Council activities and issues related to marine oil transportation in Prince William Sound.



Subscribe by email at:
www.tinyurl.com/TheObserverPWS

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATIONS TO PROTECT PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

Funding Youth Education Programs

The Council supports our partners' youth programs on topics related to the Council's mission. These hands-on programs teach all ages about oil spill prevention and response, citizen oversight, response capabilities in Prince William Sound, and more. The Council was grateful to receive additional funding for youth programs this year from the Saltchuk Giving Committee.



Interns Help Council Achieve Our Mission

The Council recruits interns to complete projects that incorporate career development opportunities. Interns in the Council's region, Samaya Faber and Liz Heidbrink in Cordova, and John Paul Pogson in Kodiak, each implemented invasive species monitoring protocols during the 2025 summer season and their 2025-2026 school year.

Lesson Plans Available for Educators

The Alaska Oil Spill Lesson Bank is a free resource for teachers and other educators to source environmental and oil spill-related lessons for a variety of age groups.



The Council maintains the Alaska Oil Spill lesson bank available online:
pwsrcac.org/lessons

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The Council monitors state and federal administrative and agency actions, legislation, and regulations that

relate to terminal and tanker operations, or to oil spill prevention and response.

To help track developments and formulate legislative priorities and responses, the Council retains a state lobbyist and federal legislative monitors under contract.

One of the biggest issues the Council worked on this past year was protecting Alyeska/SERVS' contracted fishing vessel response program in legislation. Particular thanks go to Suzanne Cunningham of Alyeska for her leadership of the working group ([see pages 10-11](#)), and to Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, and Congressman Nick Begich of the Alaska Congressional delegation, who helped promote the solution among their Washington, D.C., colleagues. In particular, Congressman Begich, who was able to insert the language into the House's version of the bill, leading to its passage in December 2025.

During the past year, the Council's Legislative Affairs Committee also focused on:

- Supporting for NOAA's National Data Buoy Center in receiving adequate funding for timely repairs to key weather buoys in our region ([see page 7](#))
- Addressing concerns regarding the U.S. Coast Guard merchant mariner credential requirements for certain non-operating individuals
- Addressing potential funding limitations for the Spill Prevention and Response Division of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Supporting legislation to establish an Alaska Invasive Species Council to help manage invasive species across agencies and jurisdictional boundaries

RECERTIFICATION

The U.S. Coast Guard certifies the Council as the federally-approved citizens advisory group for Prince William Sound, pursuant to the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. Under the annual recertification process, the Coast Guard assesses whether the Council fosters the general goals and purposes of the Act and is broadly representative of the communities and interests as envisioned in the Act.

The Council has been the certified group since 1991.

Advisory Committees

OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS DONATE MANY HOURS TO FURTHER OUR MISSION THROUGH COMMITTEE MEETINGS, RESEARCH, PUBLIC OUTREACH, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

Five standing committees advise the Board of Directors and Council staff, and assist on individual projects. These committees are made up of interested citizens, technical experts, and members of the Council's Board.



The Council's volunteers and staff tour the Valdez Marine Terminal each year.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

MISSION: Support the Council's mission by fostering public awareness, responsibility, and participation through information and education

- **Chair:** Cathy Hart, *Anchorage*
- **Vice Chair:** Ruth E. Knight, *Valdez*
- Trent Dodson, *Kenai*
- Jane Eisemann, *Winthrop, WA*
- Amanda Glazier, *Valdez*
- Andrea Korbe, *Whittier*
- Kate Morse, *Cordova*
- Aimee Williams, *Kodiak**

OIL SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

MISSION: Minimize the risk and impacts associated with oil transportation through research, advice, and recommendations for strong and effective spill prevention and response measures, contingency planning, and regulations

- **Chair:** Jim Herbert, *Homer**
- **Vice Chair:** Matt Melton, *Anchorage*
- Robert Beedle, *Cordova**
- Mike Bender, *Whittier**
- Mike Brittain, *Seward**
- David Goldstein, *Whittier*
- Tim Robertson, *Keauhou, HI*
- Gordon Scott, *Girdwood*

PORT OPERATIONS AND VESSEL TRAFFIC SYSTEMS

MISSION: Monitor port and tanker operations, identify and recommend improvements in the vessel traffic navigation systems, and monitor the vessel escort system in Prince William Sound

- **Chair:** Amanda Bauer, *Valdez**
- **Vice Chair:** Robert Archibald, *Homer**
- Richard Frost, *Homer*
- Gordon Terpening, *Homer*
- Max Mitchell, *Homer*

* Member of Board of Directors | As of June 30, 2026

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY

MISSION: Promote the environmentally safe operations of the terminal and tankers through independent scientific research, environmental monitoring, and review of scientific work

- **Chair:** Sarah Allan, *Homer*
- **Vice Chair:** Wei Cheng, *Anchorage*
- Wayne Donaldson, *Kodiak**
- Roger Green, *Ontario, Canada*
- Davin Holen, *Anchorage*
- John Kennish, *Anchorage*
- Joel Kopp, *Anchorage*
- Dorothy Moore, *Valdez**
- W. Scott Pegau, *Cordova*

TERMINAL OPERATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

MISSION: Identify actual and potential sources of episodic and chronic pollution at the Valdez Marine Terminal

- **Chair:** Tom Kuckertz, *Anchorage*
- **Vice Chair:** Amanda Bauer, *Valdez**
- Kevin Berry, *Anchorage*
- Mike Brittain, *Seward**
- Matt Cullin, *Anchorage*
- Mikkell Foltmar, *Anchorage*
- Steve Goudreau, *Valdez*
- Katherine Harrison, *Valdez*



Volunteer Ruth Knight worked with staff member Peter Casey to promote the Council's mission at the Alaska Forum.

Board & Ex Officio Members



EACH MEMBER ENTITY CHOOSES ONE REPRESENTATIVE TO OUR BOARD. THE LONE EXCEPTION IS VALDEZ, WHICH HAS TWO REPRESENTATIVES.

The Board meets three times a year. The January meeting is in Anchorage, the May meeting is in Valdez, and the September meeting rotates among other member communities in the oil spill region.

Members are current as of June 30, 2026.

BOARD OFFICERS:



Robert Archibald
PRESIDENT
City of Homer



Amanda Bauer
VICE PRESIDENT
City of Valdez



Jim Herbert
SECRETARY
*Oil Spill Region
Recreational Coalition*



Mako Haggerty
TREASURER
*Kenai Peninsula
Borough*



Robert Beedle
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
*Cordova District
Fishermen United*



David Janka
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
City of Cordova



Aimee Williams
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Kodiak Island Borough

BOARD MEMBERS:



Ailie Baker
Chugach Alaska Corporation



Mike Bender
City of Whittier



Mike Brittain
City of Seward



Nicholas Crump
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation



Wayne Donaldson
City of Kodiak



Lois Epstein
Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition



Luke Hasenbank
Alaska State Chamber of Commerce



Elijah Jackson
Kodiak Village Mayors Association



Melvin Malchoff
Port Graham Corporation



Dorothy M. Moore
City of Valdez



Angela Totemoff
Tatitlek Corporation & Tatitlek IRA Council



Michael Vigil
Chenega Corporation & Chenega IRA Council

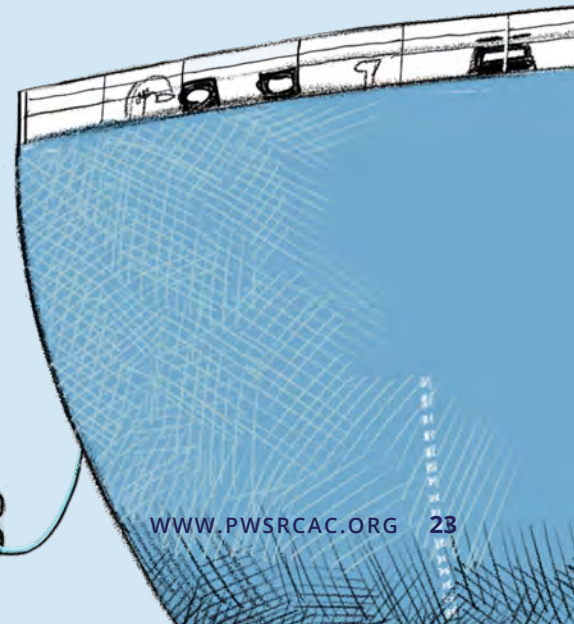


Dr. Kirk Zinck
City of Seldovia



EX OFFICIOS:

- AK Dept. of Environmental Conservation:
Ytamar Rodriguez
- AK Dept. of Fish & Game/
Habitat Division:
Jonathan Kirsch
- AK Dept. of Natural Resources:
Anthony Strupulis
- Bureau of Land Management:
Greg Bjorgo
- National Oceanic &
Atmospheric Administration:
Liza Sanden
- Oil Spill Recovery Institute:
Heather Parker
- Div. of Homeland Security
& Emergency Management,
Alaska Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs:
Dave Reilly
- U.S. Coast Guard/Marine
Safety Unit Valdez:
CDR Sarah Rousseau
- U.S. Dept. of the Interior:
Lisa Fox
- U.S. Environmental Protection
Agency:
Torri Huelskoetter
- U.S. Forest Service:
Steve Namitz



Staff

Executive Director:

- Donna Schantz

Executive Assistant:

- Jennifer Fleming

Project Manager Assistants:

- Nelli Vanderburg
- Peter Casey

IT/Administrative Assistant:

- Suparat Prasannet

Project Managers:

- Robbin Capers
- John Guthrie
- Amanda Johnson
- Roy Robertson
- Jeremy Robida
- Linda Swiss
- Danielle Verna

Outreach Coordinator:

- Maia Draper-Reich

Director of Administration:

- Hans Odegard

Director of Communications:

- Brooke Taylor

Director of Finance:

- Ashlee Hamilton

Director of Programs:

- Joe Lally

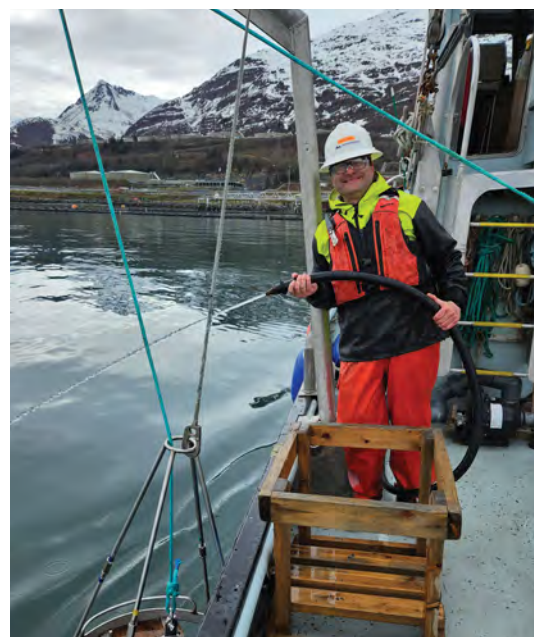


PHOTO CREDITS:

(T) top, (B) bottom, (L) left, (R) right

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Contents: Amanda Johnson
P 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, & 12:
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P 5, 8, 9, & 19: Amanda
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P 14: (T) Jeremy Robida
(B) Amanda Johnson
P 15: Danielle Verna

P 16: Nelli Vanderburg
P 17 & 22: Courtesy Maia
Draper-Reich
P 20: Courtesy Amanda
Johnson

P 21: Maia Draper-Reich
P 24, (L) David Janka
(R) Danielle Verna

Papers & Reports

Annual Drill Monitoring Report for 2025 (report). Citizens' Council. January 2026. Document number: 752.431.260101. DrillMon2025

Comments and RFAI on Repsol Trading USA LLC Tank Vessel Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (letter). Citizens' Council. August 2025. Document number: 651.105.250820.RepsolCmts

Comments and RFAI on SeaRiver Maritime LLC Charter Tank Vessel Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (letter). Citizens' Council. September 2025. Document number: 651.105.250905.SeaRiverRnd2

Comments and RFAI on the PWS Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (letter). Citizens' Council. March 2026. Document number: 651.105.260331.ADECrfaiTkrPln

Comments on ADEC's Request for Informal Comments on 18 AAC 50 Air Quality Regulations (letter). Citizens' Council. September 2025. Document number: 557.105.250926.DECaqRegs

Comments on ADEC's Request for Informal Comments on 18 AAC 75 Regulations for Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Prevention (letter). Citizens' Council. October 2025. Document number: 651.105.251008.DECreqcmtA4

Comments on Request for Information on Multi-Service Vessels and Vessels of Opportunity (USCG-2025-0248) (letter). Citizens' Council. December 2025. Document number: 703.105.251201.USCGvooFedReg

Comments on Teekay Services Limited Tank Vessel Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan # 25-CP-5292 (letter). Citizens' Council. October 2025.

Document number: 651.105.251013. TeekayCmts

Comments on the Prince William Sound Area Contingency Plan (letter). Citizens' Council. July 2025. Document number: 651.105.250731.AreaPlanCmtDEC

Copper River Delta and Flats Geographic Response Strategy Development (report). Nuka Research. May 2026. Document number: 654.431.260501.NukaCRDFgrs

Letter to Alaska Congressional Delegation Regarding Further Action Needed by GAO (letter). Citizens' Council. July 2025. Document Number: 440.105.250721.AkDelGAOrsp

Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program 2025 Summary Report (summary and report). Fjord and Fish Sciences. December 2025. Document numbers: 951.431.251201.FFSltmpSummary and 951.431.251201.FFSltmpTechSup

Long-term hydrocarbon monitoring in Prince William Sound and northern Gulf of Alaska (letter). Citizens' Council. February 2026. Document number: 951.105.260204.ACOEsampleInfo

Marine Bird Winter Surveys in Prince William Sound (report). Prince William Sound Science Center. February 2026. Document number: 900.431.260226. WinterBirdSurvey

Request for Joint Pipeline Office clarification on regulatory oversight for the Incinerator A and B Replacement Project at Alyeska's Valdez Marine Terminal (letter). Citizens' Council. August 2025. Document number: 500.105.250821.JPOincinClarify

Review of Ballast Water Tank 93 Out-of-Service Inspection Report and Tank

Repairs (report). Taku Engineering. July 2025. Document number: 500.431.250701. TakuTk93s

Review of the 2024 Alaska North Slope Oil Properties Relevant to Environmental Assessment and Prediction (report). Spill Science. June 2025. Document number: 500.431.250601.MFrwwANSprops

Support for Maintaining the Financial Solvency of the Prevention Account Within the Oil and Hazardous Substance Release Prevention and Response Fund (letters). Citizens' Council. March 2026. Document numbers: 270.105.260325.HFCprevnFund and 270.105.260408.SFCprevnFund

Support for Senate Bill 174 to establish an Alaska Invasive Species Council (letter). Citizens' Council. May 2026. Document number: 952.105.260522. DunleavySB174

Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan #23-CP-4057 – Request for Extensions to Confer Process (letter). Citizens' Council. October 2025. Document number: 651.105.251029.DECconferExtend

VMT Crude Tank 9 Timeline (technical memorandum and letter). Taku Engineering. December 2025 and January 2026. Document numbers: 500.431.251226.TakuTk9Timeline and 500.105.260119.TakuTk9Timeline

VMT Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan, ADEC Plan # 23-CP-4057; Comments on Alyeska's Final Report entitled "VMT-East Tank Farm Secondary Containment System Rationale and Acceptance Criteria for Hydro-Test," and related materials (technical memorandums and letters). Taku Engineering, Geosyntec Consultants, Craig H. Benson, PhD, PE, NAE, and Citizens' Council. November 2025, December 2025, January 2026, and March 2026. Document numbers: 500.431.251124.TakuHydroMemo, 500.431.251118.GeosyntHydroMemo, 500.431.251116.BensonHydroMemo, 500.105.251201.DECHydroTestRsp, 500.105.260128.DECscaHydroRatnl, and 500.105.260309.ADECReHydroRatnl

This is a sample of the reports, papers, and other materials produced or compiled by the Council in the past year. Please contact the Council for additional information and/or copies of materials.



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