



YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025





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Cover: Tatitlek, Alaska, is the community closest to the site of the grounding of the Exxon Valdez in 1989. Every spring, the community hosts the Peksulineq Festival, a celebration of the traditional culture of the Chugach Region.

Contents: Local mariners from Whittier, who are contracted by Alyeska to assist with cleanup in case of an oil spill, participate in an annual training, where they practice with equipment to stay ready to respond.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Top: Council staff and contractors pose on a beach near an environmental sample collection site.

Bottom: Staff member Jeremy Robida monitors equipment deployment during a 2025 drill.

The Council's mandates were created after the Exxon Valdez oil spill: prevent the return of the complacency that led to that disaster; advocate for oil spill prevention and strong response capabilities in case prevention measures fail; minimize environmental impacts of terminal facilities and associated tankers; and promote partnerships that build trust between citizens, industry, and regulators. 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 regulatory oversight of the Valdez Marine Terminal (page 8)
- Ensuring the adequacy of the secondary containment liners at the terminal (page 9)
- Protecting Alyeska's contracted fishing vessel response program (page 11)
- Monitoring oil spill drills and exercises (page 13)
- Monitoring species in our region (page 16)
- Engaging citizens in strategies and research related to oil spill preparedness and response (page 19)
- And much more

While the Council continues to carry out its work, we are facing escalating threats to many safety measures enacted in direct response to lessons learned. This includes a significant diminishment of staffing and resources at most of the regulatory agencies that oversee safety for the terminal.

We continue to follow up on issues covered by our 2023 report that noted these reductions, among other safety concerns. The subsequent report from the Government Accountability Office, released in 2025, warrants additional scrutiny and advocacy (see page 8 for more on these reports).

Our concerns in these areas are only increasing as cuts to personnel, resources, and budgets have escalated at both the federal and state level. Serious questions about the adequacy of critical safety oversight necessary to help prevent a catastrophic accident and devastating oil spill indicate that the complacency that played a part in the Exxon Valdez spill is returning.

In addition, Alyeska has announced a reorganization that will reduce its workforce by 60 positions system-wide, or 8%, by January 2026. A reduction in staffing is concerning on many levels, including that Alyeska

deferred development of a human factors program that was planned in response to our 2023 report noted earlier, citing a lack of staffing and resources.

Studies have shown that business reorganizations and staffing reductions have been directly linked to an increased risk of accidents and negative health outcomes for employees across all industries. This results from psychological strain on employees, loss of expertise, and operational changes that compromise safety protocols. It is unclear how Alyeska's reorganization will impact workloads including development of their pending human factors program during a time when the risk of human-caused accidents could rise.

After years of advocating for increased staffing and resources for the agencies that oversee safety for oil spill prevention and response systems, we are now faced with these agencies being asked to do more with even less.

This combination seems to be setting the stage for a dangerous path at a time when oil production is expanding in Alaska.

The Council is a voice for citizens – those who have the most to lose from a major oil spill. We provide those in our region with a platform to stand up for safety and push back on complacency at the highest levels. While we strive to understand the impacts of all these changes, we must remember why we were created: to hold the line to maintain the safest spill prevention and response system possible.



Robert Archibald
PRESIDENT
City of Homer



Donna Schantz
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PWSRCAC



WHO WE ARE



A coastal zone in our region seen on route to one of the sites tested through the Council's environmental monitoring program.

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 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 Cordova, Alaska, for an annual meeting of the Board of Directors in September 2025. 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 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.

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 near the Valdez Duck Flats. The Valdez Duck Flats weather buoy was pushed off station by ice in February 2025, and discussions are under way to potentially relocate it. The weather buoy located off of the Valdez Marine Terminal remains on station and



A tanker approaches Berth 5 at the Valdez Marine Terminal. Three tugs assist the tanker as it settles into place to load crude oil.

Circle: One of the Council's weather buoys monitors conditions near the Valdez Marine Terminal.



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.

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.

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.

Council staff provided support and were invited to give testimony at Alaska Legislature committee hearings for a resolution to urge the U.S. Congress and NOAA to address outages of their weather stations. The resolution passed both chambers in Spring 2025.

The Council is pleased to report that the Seal Rocks buoy and others in the region were repaired or replaced, and working properly in June 2025.

OPERATIONS AT THE TERMINAL

GAO Report Looks at Joint Pipeline Office

On June 12, 2025, the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, released their report examining the current status of the Joint Pipeline Office, or JPO.

The JPO is a group of federal and state agencies, formed after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, that oversees the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, including the terminal. The Council has been raising concerns about the diminishment of agency oversight at the terminal for over 15 years.

In 2023, Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan asked the GAO to conduct the assessment. The senators' request came about after a Council-sponsored report found that, among other issues, there had been a reduction in regulatory oversight of the terminal in recent years (see next section).

The Council was encouraged to see recommendations in the GAO report to clarify roles and responsibilities within the JPO. However, the report falls short of adequately characterizing the reduction in meaningful technical and comprehensive monitoring by the JPO that existed when they were first created.

The Council anticipated that the GAO would identify potential gaps in regulatory oversight. Instead, they recommended the JPO review themselves. Considering the reductions in staffing, budgets, and resources, which have been going on for many years, we are concerned about the JPO's ability to adequately conduct this review.

The Council looks forward to further conversations with the Alaska Congressional Delegation, regulatory agencies, and industry to determine what the next steps might be, in the interest of supporting the JPO.

Risks and Safety Culture at the Valdez Marine Terminal

In 2023, the Council released a report titled, "Assessment of Risks and Safety Culture at Alyeska's Valdez Marine Terminal." This report was initiated in response to safety concerns brought to the Council by current and former Alyeska employees. The study found unacceptable safety risks at the terminal. Since that time, the Council has been monitoring the actions taken by Alyeska to improve the work culture and more effectively promote an atmosphere of safety.

The Council was encouraged by the report's initial reception. Since that time, Alyeska has undertaken substantial work to address the recommendations.

Alyeska has conducted internal reviews and contracted with a third party to audit various factors affecting safety at the terminal.

These efforts identified areas for improvement that Alyeska is working to address, including improved documentation of process safety management, additional training, a review of deferred maintenance, and enhanced evaluation of risks associated with work orders.

Alyeska is developing a program to help address human-related accidents and assessing recommended practices for establishing safety systems.

Alyeska also reported that they continue to develop and improve their employee concerns program.

The success of that effort is yet to be determined.

Though many of the safety issues have been addressed, the Council is still monitoring: recent loss of key staff with extensive institutional knowledge; gaps in regulatory oversight and monitoring remaining unaddressed; and continued reports from employees concerned about safety issues.



The GAO report can be found here:
www.tinyurl.com/GAO-Report-VMT



The report, including all recommendations, can be found on the Council's website:
www.tinyurl.com/Assessing-Risk-VMT

Circle: The Champion, one of the tugs built specifically for the Prince William Sound system, shows off its fire-fighting capabilities in front of the Valdez Marine 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 48 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 harm.

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" because this secondary containment system is in place, substantially reducing the amount of response personnel and equipment Alyeska must include in their plans to meet response planning standards.

ADEC recently required that Alyeska select a method to test the integrity of the liner. In 2025, the Council released a report summarizing the findings from a pilot study Alyeska had conducted in July 2024, and providing recommendations for Alyeska's larger scale testing plan.

In February 2025, ADEC issued rulings extending the timeline for Alyeska to determine the integrity of the liner, requiring inspections to begin no later than July 2026, and be completed by November 2028.



The Council's report on the pilot study can be found on our website: www.tinyurl.com/Liner-Study

Emissions Estimate From 2022 Terminal Tank Vent Incident

In 2022, vents on several crude oil storage tanks at the terminal were severely damaged or sheared off due to unmitigated snow load and ice accumulation. In 2025, to address concerns raised by the public, the Council released a study to better understand the volume of emissions that were released.

The preliminary conservative estimates range from 79 to 193 tons of volatile organic compounds and hazardous air pollutants released into the surrounding atmosphere from

February through March 2022. The report describes how these conclusions were developed.

These findings provide perspective on the incident's impacts on air quality for terminal employees and Valdez residents. This was done in the interest of satisfying our mandate to monitor the actual and potential environmental impacts of the operation of the terminal facilities.

Alyeska disagrees with the report's findings, but has not provided specific details for what they believe is incorrect. The Council remains open to reevaluating the findings of this report should Alyeska provide additional information.



Read the final report on our website: www.tinyurl.com/Emissions-Study

Changes to Firefighting Systems Reducing Use of PFAS at the Terminal

In the fall of 2024, Alyeska completed upgrades to the firefighting foam system on Berth 5 at the terminal after lengthy research, testing, and approval process. The new fluorine-free foam system was approved by the state fire marshal.

This marks the first of many firefighting foam systems to be upgraded. The Trans Alaska Pipeline System, or TAPS, is shifting away from using perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS, which are harmful to human health. While a recently passed state law banning the use of PFAS-containing firefighting foams carries a temporary exemption for the oil and gas industry, Alyeska has been working proactively to replace fluorine-containing foams for several years, long before the state law passed.

Conversion of the remaining systems will take several years.



A photograph of a small boat on a body of water, pulling a long yellow oil spill boom. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains covered in snow under a clear blue sky. The text 'PLANNING & PREPARING FOR AN OIL SPILL' is overlaid in large white letters on a black rectangular background.

PLANNING & PREPARING FOR AN OIL SPILL

A small vessel pulls oil spill boom during an exercise in 2025.

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.

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 Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan for the Prince William Sound shippers, commonly referred to as the “Tanker Plan,” had a major amendment approved in June 2024, to address regulatory changes made in 2023.

The five-year renewal of the oil spill contingency plan for the terminal was approved in November 2024. ADEC set several conditions of approval that must be met, 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 9). After subsequent decisions from ADEC, the Council is still determining how best to address concerns and is actively monitoring Alyeska’s plans to test the liner’s integrity.

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.

New Coast Guard Cutter Arrives in Valdez

In 2023, the U.S. Coast Guard announced that the Island-class cutter Liberty, based in Valdez, would be decommissioned with no plans for replacement. The Council urged the Coast Guard to replace the vessel. In



Responders practice with equipment during an oil spill exercise in 2025.

2024, the Council continued to advocate for a new cutter for Valdez, per a request from Sen. Dan Sullivan.

On July 11, 2025, the cutter Blacktip arrived in Valdez to replace the Liberty. The Blacktip is an 87-foot Marine Protector-class patrol boat. It will conduct various missions in Alaska, including maritime law enforcement and security; marine safety, including supporting safe oil transportation through Prince William Sound; and search and rescue operations.

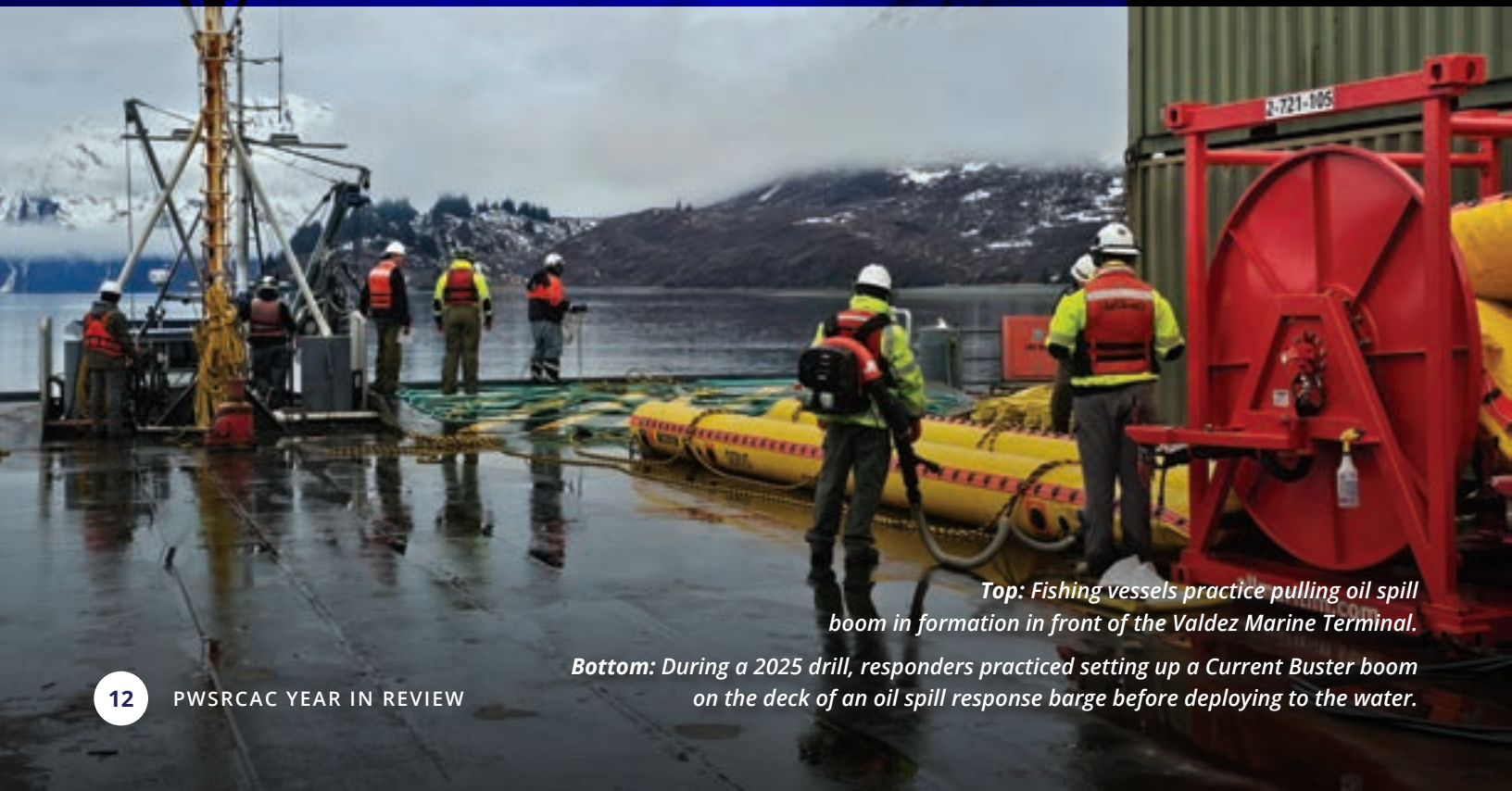
Protecting Alyeska’s Contracted Fishing Vessel Response Program

In 2023, the U.S. Coast Guard issued instructions requiring Certificates of Inspection for vessels that tow boom and other response equipment during oil spill drills and actual incidents. These instructions were in response to a provision in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act. Unfortunately, this included the fleet of vessels contracted by Alyeska’s Ship Escort Response Vessel System, or SERVS, to help in oil spill response. Most of these vessels were built for purposes other than oil spill response, such as commercial fishing.

If implemented, these inspections would pose significant challenges, potentially delaying a response. Additionally, many of the vessels have not been subject to this type of inspection before and the modifications needed to be issued a certificate would likely exclude many from the SERVS program altogether. The Council has been participating in a workgroup to help develop a legislative solution or exemption that would allow the current fleet to remain in operation.



ALWAYS READY TO RESPOND



Top: Fishing vessels practice pulling oil spill boom in formation in front of the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Bottom: During a 2025 drill, responders practiced setting up a Current Buster boom on the deck of an oil spill response barge before deploying to the water.

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.

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 2024 through June 2025, seven spills were reported by Alyeska. The spills totaled just over 7.5 gallons of various substances, including oil. Approximately two gallons were aqueous film-forming firefighting foam (mostly spilled to asphalt, with about a cup going to water) and approximately five gallons were oily water that spilled due to a loose hose fitting. The remainder of the spills were relatively small amounts of petroleum products like hydraulic fluid or motor oil.

In November 2024, the escort tug Challenger was struck by lightning while escorting the tanker Alaskan Legend south of the Valdez Narrows. The strike knocked out some electrical systems on the tug but the engines, navigation equipment, and radios remained operational. The tug was escorted back to Valdez for repairs before being cleared for duty again. There were no spills, leaks, or injuries caused by the incident.

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 2024 is available on our website: www.tinyurl.com/Drills-2024

Major Annual Spill Exercises

Council staff attended 15 drills, exercises, and training events this past year, including:



Trainings and deployments to protect sensitive areas in Port Valdez



Two larger scale exercises by Polar Tankers/ConocoPhillips and Andeavor LLC/Marathon



Annual spill response trainings for fishing and other contracted vessels in Cordova, Homer, Whittier, and Valdez



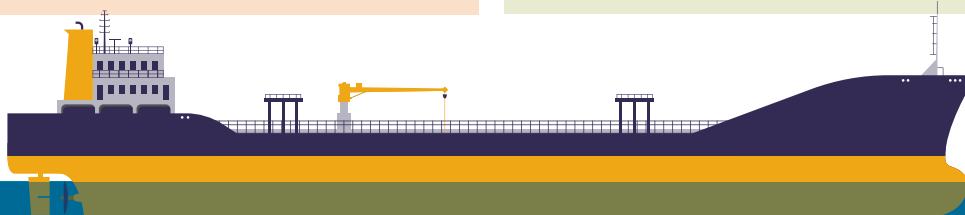
Two emergency towing exercises in central Prince William Sound



Five open-water response exercises



Two terminal-based spill response exercises, including a demonstration of their state-of-the-art oil wildlife stabilization units





PROTECTING OUR REGION

Homer sits on the shores of Kachemak Bay. The communities of Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek can be found tucked among the distant fjords across the bay. Even though this area is 200 air miles from the grounding of the Exxon Valdez, these areas were all impacted by the oil spill.



Per directives in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the Council monitors terminal operations and maintenance 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.

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 2024, samples were collected in Port Valdez and on the northern Gulf of Alaska coast.

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.

In 2024, a pilot study identified 23 metals found in sediments near two monitoring sites in Port Valdez. The study noted that sediments near the terminal held higher amounts of metals than the reference site at Gold Creek. The analysis showed that some of the metals could be above the threshold for negative effects. Further monitoring and analysis are recommended.



The summary report can be found on the Council's website: www.tinyurl.com/Trace-Metals

Circle: Council interns Samaya Faber and Liz Heidbrink deploy equipment to monitor for invasive species at the dock in Cordova.

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.

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

In September 2024, the Council released a report describing a survey conducted in 2023, looking for non-indigenous species, or NIS, in Prince William Sound. Three species of concern were detected in this study. Two of the three have not been detected in Prince William Sound in previous studies. This brings the total number of benthic marine invertebrate NIS in the Sound to seven.



Find out more about these species in the report: www.tinyurl.com/Marine-Invasives-PWS

Vessel Biofouling

In May 2025, the Council released a report assessing the likelihood of NIS biofouling on vessels arriving within our region. Biofouling refers to the process by which organisms attach to the hull of a vessel.

The report compared the risk posed by six classes of large commercial vessels that visit the region: tankers, cruise

ships, container ships, cargo ships, bulk carriers, and roll-on/roll-off cargo vessels. This study will help focus future research and monitoring efforts.



Read more about these risks in the final report: www.tinyurl.com/Biofouling-Tankers

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 September 2024, the Council released a report that combined 14 years of data showing areas where marine birds tend to gather in the spring. Primary areas identified for prioritized protection were Hinchinbrook Entrance, the head of Port Valdez, the Knowles Head anchorage area, and the Southwest Passages.



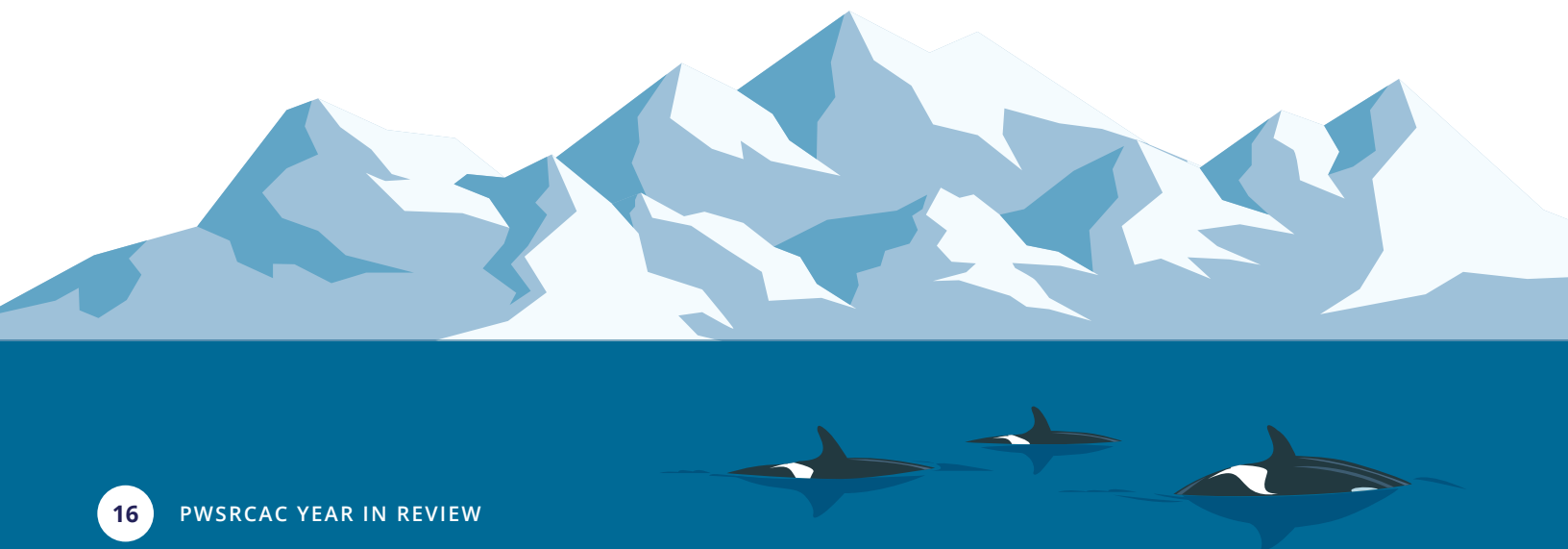
Details about these bird hotspots are in the final report: www.tinyurl.com/Hotspots-Spring

In May 2025, the Council released a report on new surveys conducted in September and November 2024, in and around the tanker escort zone and the terminal. These fall surveys found the densest bird populations in Port Valdez and Hinchinbrook Entrance. Fewer birds were observed in November, and the species composition shifted dramatically. This was the first of four proposed years of surveys during the fall and early winter.

Data from spring and fall surveys have been incorporated into NOAA's online spill response planning tool, the Environmental Response Management Application.



Learn more in the final report: www.tinyurl.com/Surveys-Winter





Left: Contractor Morgan Powers collects samples of sediments for testing.

Right: The monitoring team collects mussel samples to examine for effects from the nearby oil terminal.

Possible Marine Invasive Species:



EUROPEAN
GREEN CRAB



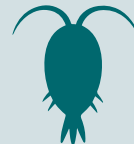
TUNICATES



BRYOZOANS



BARNACLES

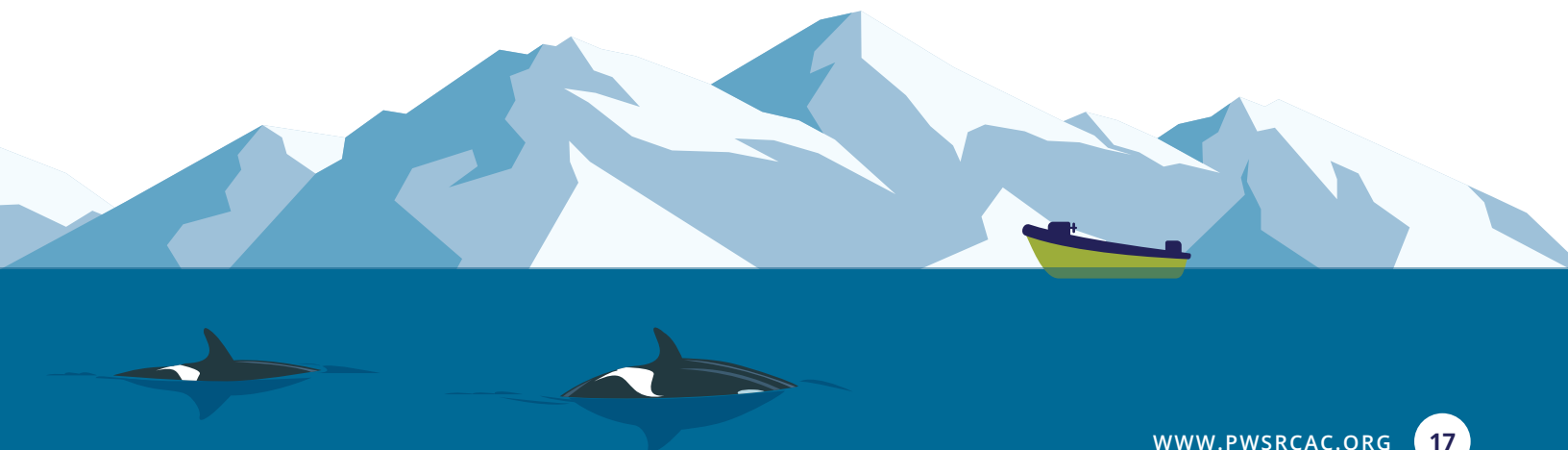


COPEPODS



SNAILS

& OTHER MARINE INVERTEBRATES





Board member Jim Herbert and staff member Maia Draper-Reich were part of the team of judges at this year's Alaska Tsunami Ocean Sciences Bowl.

INVOLVING CITIZENS IN OVERSIGHT



Board member Robert Beedle and Information and Education Committee member Kate Morse joined Outreach Coordinator Maia Draper-Reich at the Council's booth at the Salmon Jam community event in Cordova.

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.

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 in-person and virtual events, such as:



Hosting booths at Copper River Salmon Jam in Cordova, Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle, Alaska Forum on the Environment in Anchorage, and ComFish in Kodiak



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

The Council also organized and hosted events such as:



A hands-on learning event in Kodiak for families and youth



An educational boat tour in Whittier for community members including local leaders, legislators, students, and partner organizations and agencies to learn about how Alyeska trains local vessel crews to help clean up oil



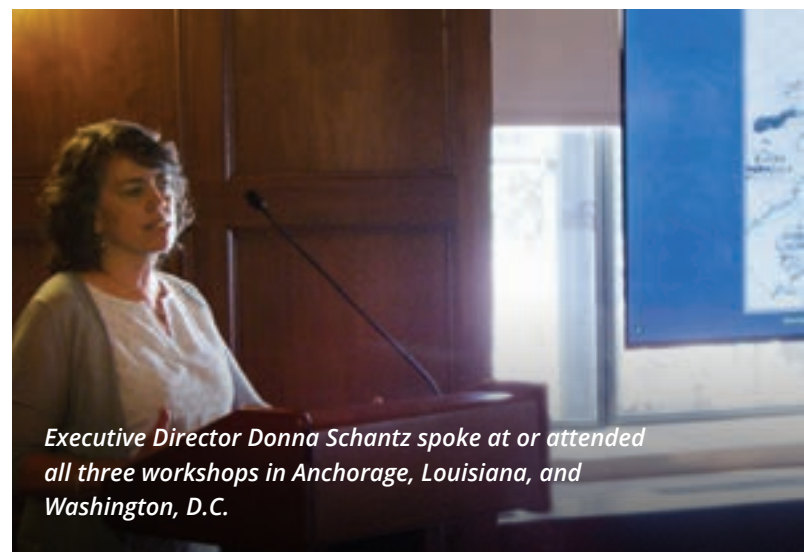
Our annual "Science Night" held in Anchorage and streamed online featuring topics relevant to our region and work; this year, partners hosted watch parties in Cordova, Homer, and Valdez

Council Participates in Annual Subsistence Memorial Gathering

In March 2025, the Council was honored to co-organize and co-facilitate a workshop at the annual Subsistence Memorial Gathering in collaboration with the Chugach Regional Resources Commission and Alaska Sea Grant. This event acknowledges the resilience and traditions of the Chugach region and its people in the wake of the tragic Exxon Valdez spill that profoundly impacted communities and ecosystems. Over 100 people participated in the workshop helping to shape future research and community engagement.

Gulf-Alaska Knowledge Exchange Workshop

Council staff engaged in a three-part workshop series hosted by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Gulf Research Program that brought together individuals from Alaska and the Gulf Coast. The workshop aimed to engage these two regions, having experienced the Exxon Valdez and BP Deepwater Horizon oil spills, to share experiences, knowledge, strategies, and best practices related to oil spill preparedness and prevention. Staff participated in many ways, including providing the keynote address at the first workshop held in Anchorage in October 2024; on a panel at the second workshop in Thibodaux, Louisiana, in December 2024; and a presentation at the third workshop in Washington, D.C., in March 2025.



Executive Director Donna Schantz spoke at or attended all three workshops in Anchorage, Louisiana, and Washington, D.C.

Circulating Science

In the past year, Council staff or contractors published two peer-reviewed papers in the Proceedings of the 2024 International Oil Spill Conference on long-term environmental monitoring and building collaborative social science to understand the impacts of spills, and a peer-reviewed paper in the journal "Environmental Science: Advances" on the oiled ballast water treatment process at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The Council's long-term environmental monitoring was presented at the Pacific Northwest Chapter meeting of the Society of Environmental Toxicology & Chemistry and with a poster at the Alaska Marine Science Symposium. A presentation on invasive species risk from biofouling in our region was shared at the Alaska Invasive Species Conference.

THE OBSERVER NEWSLETTER

Our regional newsletter covers Council activities, developments in the oil transportation industry, and news about policy and operational issues related to marine oil transportation in Prince William Sound.



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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.

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 in Cordova, John Paul Pogson in Kodiak, and Kat Pugh in Valdez, each implemented invasive species monitoring protocols during the 2024 summer season and their 2024-2025 school year.

During the spring semester in 2025, the Council hosted Timothy Derbidge, a student at Prince William Sound College, for an internship working with our Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Project. Timothy assisted with the annual field work and completed a data analysis project.

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: www.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.

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

- Senate and House bills that would maintain an adequately funded prevention program for the state and its ability to respond to major oil spills
- Support for the Government Accountability Office review of the Joint Pipeline Office's regulatory oversight of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System including the Valdez Marine Terminal (see page 8)
- A permanent regulatory or legislative remedy to the potential Coast Guard vessel inspection regulations for the Alyeska/SERVS fleet of vessels that form the backbone of a response to an oil spill in Prince William Sound (see page 11)
- Concerns about contamination from perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, stored at the terminal (see page 9)
- Support for NOAA's National Data Buoy Center to receive additional funding for timely repairs to key weather buoys in our region (see page 7)
- Support for 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.



Our dedicated volunteers donate many hours to further our mission through committee meetings, research, public outreach, and other activities.



ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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.

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
- 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, Seldovia
- Gordon Scott, Girdwood

* Member of Board of Directors | As of June 30, 2025

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: Gordon Terpening, Homer
- Robert Archibald, Homer*
- Max Mitchell, Homer

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
- Davin Holen, Anchorage
- John Kennish, 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*
- Harold Blehm, Valdez
- Matt Cullin, Anchorage
- Mikkel Foltmar, Anchorage
- Steve Goudreau, Valdez

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, 2025.

BOARD OFFICERS:



Robert Archibald
PRESIDENT
City of Homer



Amanda Bauer
VICE PRESIDENT
City of Valdez



Bob Shavelson
SECRETARY
*Oil Spill Region
Environmental Coalition*



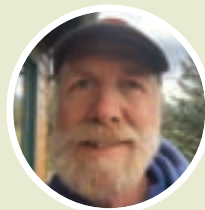
Mako Haggerty
TREASURER
Kenai Peninsula Borough



Ben Cutrell
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
*Chugach Alaska
Corporation*



David Janka
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
City of Cordova



Jim Herbert
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
*Oil Spill Region
Recreational Coalition*

BOARD MEMBERS:



Robert Beedle
*Cordova District
Fishermen United*



Mike Bender
City of Whittier



Mike Brittain
City of Seward



Nicholas Crump
*Prince William
Sound Aquaculture
Corporation*



Wayne Donaldson
City of Kodiak



Luke Hasenbank
*Alaska State Chamber
of Commerce*



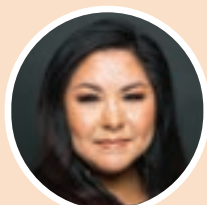
Elijah Jackson
*Kodiak Village Mayors
Association*



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*



Aimee Williams
Kodiak Island Borough



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:
W. Scott Pegau

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

STAFF:

Executive Director

- Donna Schantz

Executive Assistant

- Jennifer Fleming

Project Manager Assistants

- Nelli Vanderburg
- Jaina Willahan

IT/Administrative Assistant

- Suparat Prasannet

Project Managers

- Mercedes "Sadie" Blancaflor
- 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, (C) center, (R) right, (BG) background

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P4: Danielle Verna

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P6-7: Jeremy Robida

P7: Austin Love

P8: Jennifer Fleming

P9: Roy Robertson

P10, 11, and 12: Jeremy Robida

P14-15: Danielle Verna

P17: (L) Danielle Verna

(R) Jeremy Robida

P18: (T) and (B) Courtesy Maia Draper-Reich

P19: Courtesy National Academies of Science

P21: (L) Amanda Johnson, (R) Courtesy Maia Draper-Reich

P22: Danielle Verna

P24: (L) Jeremy Robida (R) Courtesy Nelli Vanderberg and (C) Nelli Vanderberg

P25: (T) Cathy Hart (C) Maia Draper-Reich

PAPERS & REPORTS

2022 Tank Pressure/Vacuum Pallet Damage: Crude Oil Storage Tank Headspace Gas Assessment (report and letter). Taku Engineering and Citizens' Council. December 2024 and February 2025. Document numbers: 500.431.241201. TakuCalcHeadspace and 500.105.250211. APSCTakuHSCalc

2024 Sediment Metals Report: A pilot study of the Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program (report). Fjord & Fish Sciences. January 2025. Document number: 951.431.250101. FFSltempMinerals

2024 Summary Report & Technical Supplement: Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program (reports). Fjord & Fish Sciences. December 2024 and February 2025. Document numbers: 951.431.241201. FFSltempSummary and 951.431.250201. FFSltempTechSup

Assessing the likelihood of non-indigenous species biofouling on vessel arrivals within the Exxon Valdez oil spill region (report). Alaska Pacific University. May 2025. Document number: 952.431.250501. Biofouling

Comments and RFAI on Oil Search (Alaska), LLC dba Santos; SeaRiver Maritime LLC; and Teekay Services Limited Crude Oil Tank Vessel Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plans (letters). Citizens' Council. March, April, May, and June 2025. Document numbers: 651.105.250319. SANTOSrfaiCmts, 651.105.250428. TeeKayCmts, 651.105.250514. SeaRiverRFAICmts, and 651.105.250618. SANTOSrfaiCmts

Final Comments on Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan, #4057 (letter). Citizens' Council. October 2024. Document number: 651.105.241011. CmtsFinalVMTPlan

Marine Bird Hotspots in Prince William Sound (report). Prince William Sound Science Center. July 2024. Document number: 900.431.240701. PWSSCBirdHotSpot

Marine Bird Winter Surveys in Prince William Sound (report). Prince William Sound Science Center. March 2025. Document number: 900.431.250312. WinterBirdSurvey

Port Valdez Weather Buoy Analysis 2019 – 2023 (report). Prince William Sound Science Center. September 2024. Document number: 653.431.240901. PtVdzWxBuoyData

Prince William Sound RCAC Annual Drill Monitoring Report 2024 (report). Citizens' Council. January 2025. Document number: 752.431.250101. DrillMon2024

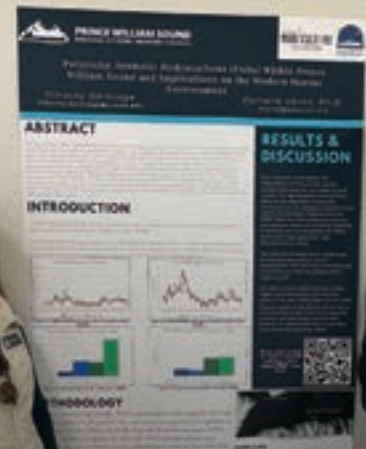
Recommendation for minor regulatory revisions to facilitate public review of oil discharge prevention and contingency plans (ODPCP) (letter). Citizens' Council. February 2025. Document number: 651.105.250213. RecsRegRevision

Regional Evaluation of Non-indigenous Marine Species in Prince William Sound (report). Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. August 2024. Document number: 952.431.240805. SERCRegionEval

Request for clarification on regulatory oversight of tank bottom processing at Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's Valdez Marine Terminal (letter). Citizens' Council. July 2024. Document number: 500.105.240703. JPOtankprocess

Request of inclusion of the proposed statutory provision regarding Vessels of Opportunity to the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2024 (H.R. 7659) (letter). Citizens' Council, Alyeska, Cook Inlet Citizens' Council, Washington State Maritime Cooperative, Alaska Chadaux Network, American Waterways Operators, Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response, Inc., and Southeast Alaska Petroleum Response Organization. October 2024. Document number: 440.105.241004. CGauthActVOO

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 (report and letter). Joseph Scalia IV, PhD and Craig H. Benson, PhD, PE, NAE, and Citizens' Council. January and May 2025.



Intern Tim Derbidge (right) gave a presentation on the Council's Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program at a science symposium in 2025.

Document numbers: 500.431.250122. BensonELLrvwPS and 500.105.250530. ScaliaELLapsCDEC

Support for Senate Bill 174 and House Bill 191 (letters). Citizens' Council. April 2025. Document numbers: 952.105.250429. SB174NISCncl and 952.105.250429. HB191NISCncl

Support for SJR 12, "Urging the United States Congress and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to address outages of National Data Buoy Center stations." (letter). Citizens' Council. March 2025. Document number: 653.105.250318. DunbarSJR12

Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Emissions from the Snow Removal Incident at the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's Valdez Marine Terminal East Tank Farm in Early 2022 (report and letter). Ranajit Sahu, Ph.D. and Citizens' Council. December 2024 and May 2025. Document numbers: 557.431.241201. SahuVOCemisIncld and 557.105.250522. APSCsahuVOC

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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