

# THE OBSERVER

September 2012 Volume 22, No.4

*A publication of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council*

## Council review of tanker oil spill contingency plan shows some areas needing improvement

The council is concerned that parts of a proposed new oil spill contingency plan don't show enough detail or demonstrate the industry's ability to fully respond to a spill as required by Alaska regulations.

During a recent public review of the Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan, the council submitted comments regarding its concerns.

The council focused the second round of public review comments on five key areas of concern:

- The council questions whether adequate numbers of vessels and personnel with the necessary level of training are available to respond to a tanker oil spill, and whether specific types of vessels are appropriate for given tactics or needs.
- The availability of enough crew and boom to meet containment and recovery requirements in open water areas is not clear.
- Inadequate resources are dedicated to

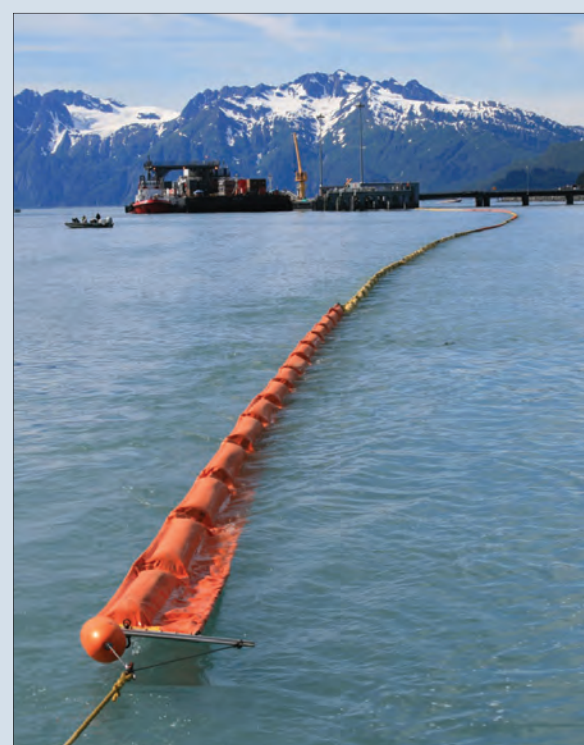
nearshore task forces and their support.

- Inadequate resources are dedicated to the protection of sensitive areas and to the support of sensitive area efforts.
- Additional information is needed to show that enough empty tankers and barges will be available to hold the mixed oil and water collected from a spill.

The tanker contingency plan is jointly created and adopted by the crude oil shippers who operate in the Sound: Alaska Tanker Company; BP Oil Shipping Company; Polar Tankers, shipping arm of Conoco Phillips; SeaRiver Maritime, shipping arm of Exxon Valdez; and Tesoro Alaska Company. This group of companies is collectively known as the Response Planning Group.

The plan is reviewed and updated every five years. The last time the plan was renewed was 2007.

See page 7, **PLANS**



Oil spill boom protects Valdez Duck Flats during a spill response exercise in Prince William Sound on August 29. Read more about this exercise and highlights of other recent council activities on page 6. Photo by Alan Sorum.

### What could be affected by spilled oil in your community?

Recently, we asked our readers to share photos of bodies of water, land, wildlife, people, or anything else that could be affected by spilled oil in their communities.

See more reader photos on pages 4 and 5.

Photo by Dave Janka of Cordova of *Pisaster ochraceus*, or sea stars, at low tide, May 23, 2012, on the East side of Eleanor Island in Prince William Sound.



### Inspections of some oil storage tanks conducted this summer

The council has been closely following recent issues involving crude oil storage tank inspections at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

This summer, storage tanks 13 and 14 were opened, cleaned, and internally inspected. Reports on the internal inspections of these tanks are expected within the next several months.

Alyeska has decided to take Tank 16 out of service. To maintain the tank in service a full internal inspection was required to be completed no later than September 30, 2012. Tank 16 is one of four tanks located in the area known as the "West Tank Farm" and was the last remaining

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AK Chamber of Commerce - AK Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Assoc. - Chenega Bay - Chugach Alaska Corp. - Cordova - CDFU - Homer - Kenai Peninsula Borough - Kodiak - Kodiak Island Borough - Kodiak Village Mayors - OSREC - Port Graham Corp. - PWS Aquaculture Corp. - Seldovia - Seward - Tatitlek - Valdez - Whittier

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Volunteer Spotlight

# Science committee volunteer interested in environmentally responsible industry engineering

The long term environmental impacts of industry on the environment have long been of major interest to Debasmita “Debu” Misra, a member of the council’s Scientific Advisory Committee since 2008.

“My heart lies there,” he said.



Debasmita Misra

Even though he was far away in St. Paul, Minnesota, at the time, Misra paid close attention to the impacts of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The Alaska spill was of interest because a pipeline had ruptured in nearby Bemidji, Minnesota, in 1979

spilling an estimated 315,000 gallons. After the initial cleanup, an estimated 110,000 gallons of crude oil remained in the ground. Oil still lingers in the subsurface today, and the area is still used for evaluating oil spill cleanup strategies.

Misra grew up in Bhubaneswar, India, where he attended the Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology. After graduation, he decided to explore the world. He left India for Thailand, where he earned a master’s degree in water resources engineering at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok.

He next attended the National University

of Ireland in Galway for graduate studies in engineering hydrology. At the same time, he had applied to universities in the U.S. A year later he was accepted at the University of Minnesota, where he went on to earn his doctorate in biosystems and agricultural engineering in 1994.

Before reaching Alaska, Misra held several positions, including petroleum engineer in Oklahoma, professor of geological and mechanical engineering at Michigan Technological University, and technical lead at a nuclear power plant in Wisconsin. But he wanted to return to the world of academia and research.

In 2002, Misra accepted a position teaching geological engineering at the University of Alaska Fairbanks’s College of Engineering and Mines.

“The reason that I chose Alaska was because of the interest I had in cold regions research,” he said

In addition, for the last three years, Misra has taught petroleum engineering part-time at Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology in Abuja, Nigeria.

“I love the people and the place,” Misra said. “I like to engage myself with students and learn more about them, so it has been a very rewarding experience for me.”

Misra is excited about working with the citizens’ council.

“I really feel that I am so lucky to be with a group of people who are so knowledgeable,” Misra said of the council’s science committee, “I have enjoyed every bit of the discussions so far.”

“The different backgrounds [of committee

members] helps me to understand some of the problems.”

He is particularly interested in long-term environmental monitoring and the effects of lingering Exxon Valdez oil.

Misra would like to see more of the council’s project work done in-house by committee members rather than by contractors. He said that taking a more hands-on role and actually conducting some of the analysis could help support the results.

“We can go to a meeting and say ‘I know.’”

His daughter, Manisha Misra, a high school student, is working with an expert from the university on a small experiment looking at the toxicity and degradation of dispersants. He is looking forward to learning from her results.

Misra said it is important to encourage young people in science and volunteerism.

“If younger folks do not volunteer and take up that responsibility, then we are losing our voice as citizens.”

Misra said that working with the council is important to him to provide input on the environmental impact of industry.

“We need a clean environment,” Misra said, “We need to have a more responsible industry that doesn’t pollute anything for my children or my grand-children.”

“I know I have one voice, but the Prince William Sound council is a combined voice of citizens,” he said. “We have a voice that is keeping the elected officials on track and the companies on track, and that is something that is a unique thing that I have been involved with.”

# Cordova director Faulkner nationally recognized for leadership

Patience Andersen Faulkner, who represents Cordova District Fishermen United on the council board, has been named as an honoree for the prestigious Ecotrust Indigenous Leadership Award for 2012.



Patience Andersen Faulkner

The award is given each year to one awardee and four honorees “who show extraordinary dedication to their culture and who work to improve the economic and environmental conditions of their homelands and people.”

According to Ecotrust’s website, Faulkner was nominated “for her grassroots leadership, teaching and fostering of native culture and community health in her hometown of Cordova, Alaska.”

The organization also cited Faulkner’s work centering on “the idea that strong, revitalized native communities steeped in indigenous culture are the cornerstones for resilience in an ever-changing world.”

Faulkner has helped native communities and local organizers across the country. After the Exxon Valdez oil spill, Faulkner helped create the peer listener training program, which teaches

listening skills that allow community members to counsel each other in the wake of a technological disaster. Program materials were used after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and again in the Gulf of Mexico after the BP Deepwater Horizon oil disaster in 2010.

Faulkner was nominated by the council along with Kris Peterson, pastor of Bayou Blue Presbyterian Church in Louisiana and Nikki Crowe of the 13 Moons Fond du Lac Tribal College Extension Program in Minnesota.

Letters of support came from Mark Swanson, executive director of the council; Albert Naquin, chief of the Isle de Jean Charles Tribe of Louisiana; Tim Kerner, mayor of Jean Lafitte, Louisiana; Shirley Laska, professor emerita of sociology and founding past director of the Center for Hazards Assessment, Response and

Technology at the University of New Orleans; Rosina Phillipe of Grand Bayou Village, Louisiana; Theresa Dardar and Chief Chuckie Verstin of the Pointe Aux Chiens Tribe, Louisiana; and Louise Fortmann, professor of natural resource sociology at University of California, Berkley.

Fellow Alaskan Jonathan Andrew Waterhouse of Anchorage was also honored, for his work to restore and preserve the Yukon River watershed.

The five winners will be honored at a celebration dinner in Portland, Oregon on November 13. The first place award recipient will receive \$25,000. Faulkner and the other three honorees will each receive \$5,000.

Read more about the award and Faulkner’s nomination on Ecotrust’s website: <http://bit.ly/FaulknerAward>

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From the Executive Director

# Good maintenance and thorough inspectability are keys to longevity and reliability of Alyeska system

This summer Alyeska celebrated 35 years of operating the trans-Alaska pipeline and the tanker terminal in Valdez. Representatives of the oil companies that own the pipeline recently gathered in Valdez to meet with community leaders and stakeholders to celebrate this milestone and the associated careers of some of Alyeska’s longest-serving employees and to highlight the long-term employment opportunities the system has provided to the community. The other point of the celebration was to publicly affirm the owners’ intentions to continue to operate the pipeline safely and profitably well into the future.

What if the pipeline does operate successfully for another 35 years? What is needed to reach that laudable goal?

What is needed is a rock-solid maintenance strategy coupled with a comprehensive ability to inspect and validate the condition and maintainability of critical equipment and infrastructure.

The pipeline itself is quite inspectable, but significant components of the Valdez tanker terminal and some of the pump stations are not. They were not built or configured for easy inspectability or maintainability. They were configured to protect against external threats like avalanches, earthquakes and extreme weather.

The bulk of crude oil piping on the terminal is either wrapped in insulation or buried underground or under cement, making external inspection difficult. And the inability to run conventional instrumented pigs through the terminal piping makes internal inspections exceedingly difficult as well.

If the pipeline and terminal are to operate successfully and safely into the future, protection from the extreme elements will need to continue, but inspectability and maintainability will have to change for the better.

Recently, two spots of intensive corrosion approaching 70 percent of the original wall thickness were discovered and repaired on sections of crude oil piping at the terminal’s tanker loading berths. Alyeska found these as part of an on-going three-year maintenance program to look at piping in locations that are hard to inspect. These corrosion areas, though likely

not indicative of overall conditions, did involve pressurized crude oil piping over water and were quite difficult to access for inspection. So the corrosion remained hidden and undetected under protective insulation for more than three decades. The problem with hidden corrosion is that “you don’t know what you don’t know”.

There are similar concerns about the asphalt-lined spill-containment cells around the crude oil storage tanks at the terminal. The material used for the liners can degrade over time with soil settlement, freeze-thaw cycles, or long-term exposure to the dissolving action of hydrocarbons from old spills. The asphalt liners are covered with a layer of soil that protects them but also makes them difficult to inspect and maintain. The last several excavations to inspect the liners revealed damage to these liners. There is some possibility that the excavations themselves caused the damage. What is needed is an ability to inspect and maintain these liners with sufficient rigor and confidence to ensure their continued serviceability.

In some pipelines and other high-reliability systems, the practice is to replace anything that could wear out or break down well before it is likely to do so. This replace-before-breakdown model is expensive and can disrupt system operations if there is no redundancy or excess capacity to compensate for the temporary unavailability of equipment taken out of service for replacement.

However, compared to the astronomical dollar cost and reputation damage of a catastrophic spill or the high cost of unexpected shutdowns caused by some other reliability failure in the absence of a spill, this “planned replacement” strategy can make good business sense. Lots of individuals and businesses handle their information technology and vehicle reliability concerns in exactly this way.

To date this has not been the maintenance strategy at Alyeska. The good news is that technological advances in the engineering disciplines—specifically in the areas of pigging and non-destructive testing—are now allowing inspection of previously uninspectable and repair of previously unrepairable oil infra-

structure.

Alyeska is looking for ways to increase the inspectability and maintainability of critical oil-handling assets on the terminal and the pipeline. The council looks forward to the speedy adoption and implementation of best practices and configuration changes that will reduce the uncertainties and risks of uninspected infrastructure.

We support the pipeline owners’ vision that the pipeline and terminal can be run safely and reliably into the future, but with the cautionary proviso that they cannot be run safely under the current inspection regime.

After 35 years in service, oil-handling components that have never been inspected or received routine maintenance must be treated with a high degree of suspicion and receive a correspondingly high priority for risk reduction measures. We want a high-reliability pipeline and terminal that are environmentally safe, provide long-term career employment opportunities, and serve as an economic engine for our communities and the state long into the future.

Significant investment and more comprehensive inspection procedures are urgently needed today to achieve that vision. Inaccessible and uninspectable corrosion at Pump Station 1 shut down the pipeline last year. More recently, significant corrosion on the berth piping at the Valdez tanker terminal was caught and corrected in time. For reliability into the future, inspectability and rigorous maintenance practices are the key.

After all, when it comes to hidden corrosion, you don’t know what you don’t know.

• Mark Swanson is executive director of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council.



Mark Swanson

From Alyeska Pipeline

# Alyeska trains year-round for emergency spill response

Just as top athletes train rigorously for Olympic competition, Alyeska Pipeline’s employees and contractors practice year-round to be among the world’s elite spill prevention and response forces. Through numerous drills and exercises, with equipment on hand and ready to mobilize when needed, Alyeska can ensure that the right strategy and team is in place and ready to go.

Major exercises in Valdez typically involve more than 200 people, and pipeline exercises involve more than 70 people. Stakeholders from Prince William Sound and other pipeline communities are invited to participate through regional stakeholder committees.

Response readiness depends on training that goes beyond drills and exercises. Alyeska works with community partners to develop their response capability. In Prince William Sound, Alyeska’s Ship Escort/Response Vessel System,

or SERVS, contracts with more than 400 vessels in Valdez, Cordova, Whittier, Homer, Seward and Kodiak to employ local residents in oil spill response.

“Many responders are part of the fishing industry and like Alyeska’s employees, many vessel owners and crews live and work in Southcentral Alaska,” said Andres Morales, SERVS director. “We have a common interest in protecting these waters, and the area knowledge and ownership they bring to the table is critical to our shared success.”

In Interior Alaska, Alyeska has long-standing agreements with Rampart and Stevens Village along the Yukon River to provide spill response support personnel. Teams from both villages train quarterly with Alyeska personnel and equipment and provide responders for oil spill exercises. These individuals also support response capabilities all along the pipeline.

“The village response teams provide an extremely high level of expertise, local knowledge, and teamwork. They are one of the first groups called out during an emergency response,” said Wes Willson, Emergency Preparedness and Compliance Manager.

In all, Alyeska conducts more than 110 oil spill and emergency preparedness exercises per year – one every 3.3 days. These include at least one large-scale exercise in Prince William Sound each fall, multiple vessel and response equipment deployments, and unannounced drills initiated by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Coast Guard. At least three pipeline exercises each year are classified as “Combined Resource Exercises” and involve several response bases. These exercises and drills are conducted with state and federal agency participation.

• Submitted by Alyeska Communications



# What could be affected by spilled oil in your community?

Recently, we asked you, our readers, to send us your photos depicting subjects from your communities that could be affected by a crude oil spill.

We ended up with a wonderful variety of shots from our talented readers. Thank you to everyone who sent photos!

Map of photo locations: <http://goo.gl/maps/V6B0G>



Photo by Joel Rosenblatt of York, Pennsylvania, taken near the hatchery in Valdez one day when thousands of pinks were trying to get over the weir near Solomon Gulch falls.

Joel described the scene: "Here again, the 'Circle of Life' played out. Behind the salmon in Valdez Harbor, sea lions were chomping on them. At the weir, seagulls were feeding on the weak ones and lastly, if the salmon were to get over the small obstacle, a black bear and her cubs were feasting on them. The ones that made it got to spawn give birth to successive generations."



Photo by Tyler Bales of Anchorage, Alaska, of a yelloweye rockfish was taken near Seal Rocks in Prince William Sound.



Photo by Theresa Bales of Anchorage, Alaska of a fishing boat in the Whittier harbor.



Photo by Jamie Acton Embley of Anchorage, Alaska, of sea lions on July 7, 2012, taken while halibut fishing near Montague Island.





Photo by Dave Janka of Cordova, Alaska, of ice in Heather Bay in Prince William Sound.

Dave says: "Ice is from Columbia Glacier, grounded at low tide on November 28, 2011. Our charter vessel 'Auklet' is in the background. David Rosenthal is on the beach sketching. The glacier was at this location in 1983 when Annette and I were married there on April 30 on the beach in the background. It has retreated some 9 miles to the north since then."



Photo by Roger Green of Hope, Alaska, of the mouth of Resurrection Creek at Hope at dusk. Roger says these fisherfolk were going after pink salmon which had just started to run into the creek.



Photo by Mary Wasche of Eagle River, Alaska, of Matt and Natalie Wasche holding a side-stripe shrimp and sea urchin near Whittier during the Summer of 2011.



Photo by Alan Sorum of Valdez, Alaska, of The Alaskan Spirit fishing the Valdez Narrows.

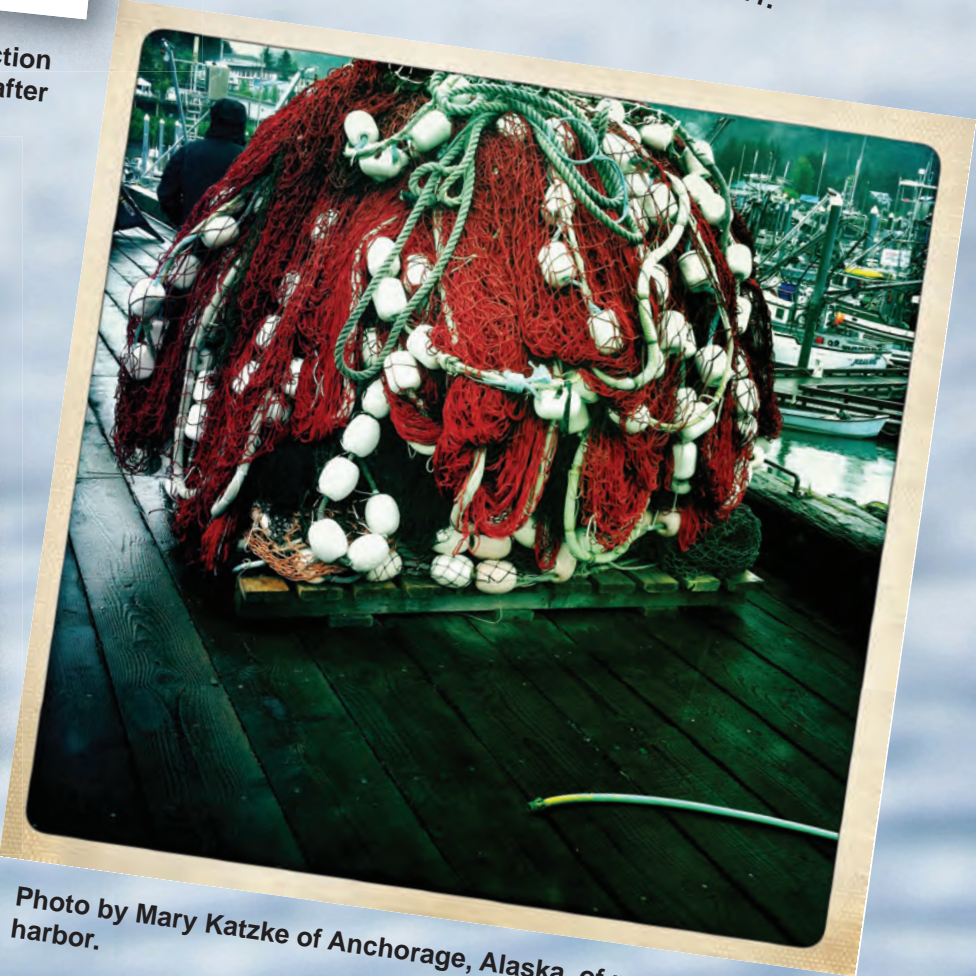


Photo by Mary Katzke of Anchorage, Alaska, of nets in Cordova harbor.



# Highlights of council activities

**Valdez Marine Terminal drill**  
Several staff members participated in a drill at the Valdez Marine Terminal on July 12.

The drill focused on waste management, oiled wildlife and decontamination tactics. The scenario involved an imaginary release of 90,000 barrels of North Slope crude oil from piping near the tanker loading area.

**Council studying corrosion at terminal**

The council has begun a new project to review Alyeska’s corrosion management program. In late July, council staff and the contractor heading up the project began reviewing documents interviewing Alyeska staff to narrow down assets needing further review in person. In August, staff, the contractor, a cathodic protection expert and a coatings expert conducted a review at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The group observed corrosion mitigation activities associated with the

actual oil-handling assets at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

**Valdez Marine Terminal spill response exercise**

On August 29, several staff members were on hand to cover an exercise held at the terminal. The exercise tested several oil spill response tactics in the terminal contingency plan, including:

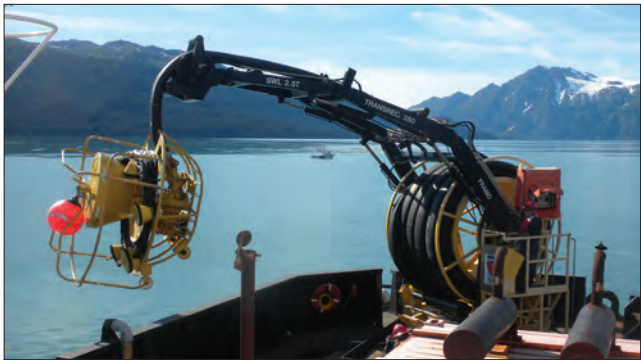
- Use of the Valdez Star and the Allison Creek barge for recovery and storage of spilled oil
- Placing oil spill boom around sensitive areas, Valdez Duck Flats and a nearby fish hatchery in the Port of Valdez
- Deployment of TransRec and GrahamRec skimmers from one of the large barges.

The scenario for the exercise imagined a power outage and failed piping on the causeway where tankers are loaded with North Slope crude oil. A fictional 90,000 barrels of oil were spilled into water.



Storage tank barges such as the Allison Creek, pictured here during the August 29 spill response exercise, are used to store the oil and water mix recovered after an oil spill. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

A TransRec skimmer is lifted by crane from a spill response vessel into the water during the August 29 spill response exercise. Photo by Tom Kuckertz.



## OIL STORAGE TANKS: Some inspections completed this summer

Continued from page 1

tank in service in that part of the terminal. Tanks 15, 17, and 18 were previously taken out of service. These tanks will not be allowed to store crude oil without upgrades.

With tank 16 out of service, a total of 14 tanks will be in service at the terminal once tanks 13 and 14 return to service after their inspections. Each tank holds approximately 20 million gallons of North Slope crude oil.

As indicated in the May 2012 Observer, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation revoked a previously approved waiver to extend the inspection on Tank 5. This waiver was revoked due to the cathodic protection system not functioning properly.

Cathodic protection systems help slow down the rate at which corrosion may occur.

The department’s decision to revoke the waiver requires that

Tank 5 be removed from service and internally inspected before December 31, 2012.

Alyeska has since submitted another request for a two year deferral of the internal inspection. This new request is based on upgrades to corrosion control and integrity monitoring systems on Tank 5. The new request also cites actions previously requested by regulators that have now been completed by Alyeska. As the Observer went to press, a decision has not yet been made on this new request.

Concerns about the length of time between inspections and questions about the rate at which tank structures are corroding have been significant issues for the council in recent months. Read more in previous editions of The Observer.

- July 2012: <http://bit.ly/July-TankInspections>
- May 2012: <http://bit.ly/May-TankInspections>

# Students learn about role of escort tugs and council during expedition

**By KATE MORSE**  
Copper River Watershed Project

The role of tanker escort tugs in Prince William Sound, how hatcheries work, how to drive a skiff, the history of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, how tides and currents bring marine debris to the Alaskan coast...these are just a few of the many lessons learned by the 2012 Prince William Sound Marine Stewardship Expedition participants. In June, eight middle school students from communities throughout Chugach National Forest region embarked on a trip from Whittier to Valdez, exploring and learning about the

people, wildlife, and history of the Sound. Hands-on experiences like collecting scientific data, cleaning up marine debris, and discovering lingering oil from EVOS made lasting impressions on participants that will influence their future career paths as well as their stewardship of Alaska’s natural resources.

This program was made possible with support from Alaska Geographic, Chugach National Forest, Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, Prince William Sound Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council, REI, and the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies.



Learning about careers in the U.S. Coast Guard was one of the highlights for many of the participants. Photo courtesy of Chugach Children’s Forest.

Students take a closer look at Prince William Sound plankton through a microscope. Photo courtesy of Chugach Children’s Forest.



## Do you have an idea for a new council project?

The council is inviting your suggestions for projects that would support our mission.

We strive to achieve our mission of promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers through many avenues.

One is to foster collaborative partnerships involving industry, government agencies and citizens. We have learned that such part-

nerships lead to good policies, better response capabilities, safer transportation of oil, and improved environmental protection.

Your suggestions can help us achieve our goals on behalf of you, the citizens we represent.

For details on what we need from you and how to submit a project proposal, visit our website: [www.pwsrccac.org/ProjectIdeas.html](http://www.pwsrccac.org/ProjectIdeas.html)

## Council Board Meetings

The citizens’ council board of directors meets three times annually. The January meeting is held in Anchorage, the May meeting in Valdez, and the September meeting is rotated among the other communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Here is the tentative board meeting schedule for the coming year:

January 17-18, 2013: Anchorage

May 2-3, 2013: Valdez

September 19-20, 2013: Homer

Board meetings are open to the public, and an opportunity for public comments is provided at the beginning of each meeting. Agendas and other meeting materials are available on the council web site at [www.pwsrccac.org/about/boardintro.html](http://www.pwsrccac.org/about/boardintro.html). Or, contact either council office: Anchorage, 907-277-7222, or Valdez, 907-834-5000.



# PLANS: Some areas need improvement

Continued from page 1

A draft updated plan was submitted to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for a “sufficiency review” in October 2011. This review was to determine whether the plan contained sufficient information for the next step of the process, the public review. The department found that the draft plan needed additional information before going to the public. The industry group revised and re-submitted the plan, and the state deemed it satisfactory on February 3, 2012.

The department conducted the first public review period in February and March 2012. The council submitted comments and requested additional information be added to the plan. The department collected comments from the public and formally submitted the requests for additional information to the shippers on April 9.

On August 2, the industry

group’s responses to these initial questions and comments were distributed. The second round of public review ran from August 6 to August 17. The council again submitted comments and requested more information.

While some of the industry group’s responses addressed the council’s concerns and added some clarity, the council believes that many areas still do not provide enough detail.

The department will offer a final public comment period before the plan is finalized. The process will be complete by November 2012.

The contingency plan for the Valdez Marine Terminal expires in May 2013 and will start its review phase in the near future. Alyeska Pipeline Service Company manages this plan, and expects to reformat the entire plan for the renewal. The council participates in an ongoing workgroup focusing solely on this plan, and intends to submit comments during that renewal process.

## What is an oil spill contingency plan?

An oil spill contingency plan is an extensive document prepared to help plan for an oil spill. It contains details on how the planholder would organize a response and set up a chain of command. The plan also contains detailed descriptions of emergency actions and spill response techniques.

The plan currently under review consists of: the Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan, also known as the “core plan”; the Ship Escort/Response Vessel System’s (SERVS) Technical Manual; and a set of plans specific to each company’s tankers.

The core plan describes oil spill prevention and response activities and procedures common to all tankers, and is mainly used by those in charge of the response. The technical manual is used mostly by responders in the field, and includes tactics for using equipment to collect spilled oil.

Oil spill response drills and exercises in the Sound are based on the contingency plan. These drills help verify and test elements of the plan.

Contingency plans must be updated, reviewed, and approved every five years. This cycle allows for advances in science and technology to be introduced into the plans and allows local citizens an opportunity to voice concerns and propose changes.

During the first step in the cycle, industry develops a draft version of the plan, and submits it to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for approval. The department reviews the plan to determine if there are any areas where more details are needed to verify prevention and response capabilities. The plan then goes through a series of public review periods and modifications before the final plan is approved.



## ABOUT THE COUNCIL’S ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Much of the council’s work is done through permanent volunteer committees made up of board members, technical experts, and citizens with an interest in making oil transportation safer in Alaska.

These standing committees work with staff on projects, study and deliberate current oil transportation issues, and formulate their own advice and recommendations to the council’s full board of directors.

Our committees provide an avenue for public participation in the council’s work.

The council has five technical committees that provide advice and recommendations to the council’s board of directors.

### Terminal Operations & Environmental Monitoring:

The Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring (TOEM) Committee identifies actual and potential sources of episodic and chronic pollution at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

#### Members:

- Chair: Bob Benda, Valdez
- Harold Blehm, Valdez
- Ken Adams, Cordova
- Amanda Bauer, City of Valdez\*
- Jo Ann Benda, Valdez
- Stephen Lewis, Seldovia\*
- George Skladal, Anchorage

### Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems:

The Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems (POVTS) Committee monitors port and tanker operations in Prince William Sound. POVTS identifies and recommends improvements in the vessel traffic navigation systems and monitors the vessel escort system.

#### Members:

- Chair: Bob Jaynes, Valdez
- Kari Anderson, Seward
- Duane Beland, North Pole
- Cliff Chambers, Seward
- Bill Conley, Valdez
- Pat Duffy, Valdez\*
- Jane Eisemann, Kodiak\*
- Pete Heddell, Whittier
- Wes Lundberg, Valdez
- Orson Smith, Seward

### Scientific Advisory:

The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) sponsors independent scientific research and provides scientific assistance and advice to the other council committees on technical reports, scientific methodology, data interpretation, and position papers.

#### Members:

- Chair: Dr. John Kennish, Anchorage
- Co-Chair: Dr. Mark Udevitz, Anchorage
- Dr. John French, Seward\*
- Dr. Roger Green, Hope
- Dorothy M. Moore, Valdez\*
- Dr. Debasmita Misra, Fairbanks
- Dr. Dave Musgrave, Palmer
- Dr. Paula Martin, Soldotna

### Oil Spill Prevention and Response:

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) Committee works to minimize the risks and impacts associated with oil transportation through strong spill prevention and response measures, adequate contingency planning, and effective regulations. The committee reviews oil spill response plans (contingency plans); monitors state and federal laws and regulations; monitors and participates in oil spill drills; and investigates developments in prevention, containment, response, and cleanup technology.

#### Members:

- |                                   |                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Chair: John French, Seward*       | Joe Jabas, Anchor Point   |
| Co-Chair: John LeClair, Anchorage | Walter Parker, Anchorage* |
| Gerald Brookman, Kenai            | Gordon Scott, Girdwood    |
| David Goldstein, Whittier         | John Velsko, Homer*       |

### Information and Education:

The Information and Education Committee (IEC) supports the council’s mission by fostering public awareness, responsibility, and participation through information and education.

#### Members:

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Chair: Patience Andersen  | Mary Katzke, Anchorage   |
| Faulkner, Cordova*        | Ruth E. Knight, Valdez   |
| Co-Chair: Kate Alexander, | Savannah Lewis, Seldovia |
| Cordova                   | Allen Marquette, Cordova |
| Jane Eisemann, Kodiak*    | Lanette Oliver, Valdez   |
| Cathy Hart, Anchorage*    | Mary Wasche, Eagle River |

\*council director



Community Corner

# Travel to Port Graham meeting includes stops in Seldovia and Nanwalek

By **LINDA ROBINSON**  
Council Outreach Coordinator

Every year, council staff attempt to get out and meet with our member entities.

The weather is apparently always beautiful in Kachemak Bay. When Mark Swanson and I traveled to the area on July 27 to attend a shareholder meeting of the Port Graham Corporation, it was sunny and warm for the second year in a row.

In attendance was board member Diane Selanoff. Mark updated the corporation's board on recent council activities and listened to concerns from community members.

The first stop on our tour of Kachemak Bay was Seldovia, about a 15 minute flight southeast from Homer. Seldovia was one of the original communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and thus holds a seat on our council. Steve Lewis represents the City of Seldovia on our board and Savannah Lewis sits on our Information and Education committee.

Seldovia's year-round population is 243, which increases in the summer with seasonal residents, tourist and commercial fishermen. Seldovia is also home to the Native Alaskan Seldovia Village Tribe.

Once entirely built on waterfront boardwalks, Seldovia still has a picturesque section of the old walkway alongside the Seldovia Slough.

There is a public school, currently attended by 47 students in grades kindergarten through grade 12, where we recently assisted with an Oil Spill Discovery Lab. Read more about this lab in the July edition of The Observer: <http://bit.ly/SeldoviaSpillLab>

From Seldovia we flew to Nanwalek. Formerly English Bay, Nanwalek has a population of 276. It is southwest of Seldovia, and east of Port Graham. It was originally the site of a Russian trading post. Many current residents are of Russian and Native Alaskan lineage. Subsistence is a large part of the culture, with salmon and seals being primary. The school has about 76 students.

As we approached Nanwalek, our pilot told us about the unique runway. A high berm sits on the west side, an "abrupt mountain face" (according to FAA) sits at the East end of the runway, and it's curved. You can see a video of this unique landing strip on YouTube: <http://bit.ly/NanwalekLanding>

From Nanwalek, it was a quick hop over the mountain to Port Graham. Port Graham, a

traditional Alutiiq village with a fishing and subsistence lifestyle, is home to about 169 residents. Diane Selanoff represents Port Graham on the council. Port Graham has one school. Twice, a hatchery/cannery was built and then destroyed by fire. While we were there we could see salmon



Linda Robinson

jumping out of the water returning to their home. These communities are incredibly busy in the summer. Small planes were coming and going throughout the day delivering people and groceries and in Port Graham, a wedding cake and flowers for a wedding the next day.

## Whittier to be monitored for invasive green crabs

Mark Swanson and I also made another visit to Whittier this summer. We met with Marilyn Heddell who represents the City of Whittier on the council, and Pete Heddell, member of the Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems committee. They introduced us to the Whittier school's principal Stephanie Burgoon. Not only did Burgoon agree to monitor for invasive green crab in Whittier, she told us about a hydroponic greenhouse she helped set up in the local high school. Students tend the plants and provide produce to community members. The council looks forward to working with Burgoon to further our environmental education goals.

For a video created by Burgoon's students about this project, visit YouTube: <http://bit.ly/WhittierHydroGarden>.

## How could the lack of an invasive species committee affect Alaska?

Recently the council co-funded a project called "Managing Invasive Species: How Much Do We Spend?" with the University of Alaska Anchorage's Institute of Social and Economic Research. Alaska is the only state on the west coast that does not have a state invasive species committee. This study was undertaken to determine losses that could be caused by the introduction of non-indigenous marine species.

"Coordinating limited resources will become more critical in the future," the report states.

"Because the problem is at an early stage – compared with other areas of the country – Alaska has opportunities to develop cost-effective solutions and create institutions to coordinate a multitude of stakeholders."

To see this report go to <http://bit.ly/ManagingNIS>

# PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council is an independent, non-profit corporation formed after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill to minimize the environmental impacts of the trans-Alaska pipeline terminal and tanker fleet.

The council has 19 member organizations, including communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and groups representing Alaska Native, aquaculture, environmental, commercial fishing, recreation and tourism interests in the spill region.

The council is certified under the federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990 as the citizen advisory group for Prince William Sound, and operates under a contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. The contract, which is in effect as long as oil flows through the pipeline, guarantees the council's independence, provides annual funding, and ensures the council the same access to terminal facilities as state and federal regulatory agencies.

*The council's mission: Citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers.*

## Board of Directors

Pres.: Dorothy Moore - City of Valdez  
Vice Pres.: Pat Duffy - Alaska State Chamber of Commerce  
Secretary: Thane Miller - Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp.  
Treasurer: Marilyn Heddell - City of Whittier

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Jane Eisemann - City of Kodiak  
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Patience Andersen Faulkner - Cordova District Fishermen United  
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Walter Parker - Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition  
Diane Selanoff - Port Graham Corporation  
David Totemoff - Chugach Alaska Corporation  
Roy Totemoff - Community of Tatitlek  
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