The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council serves communities and interest groups in the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Region, which takes in Prince William Sound, the northern Gulf of Alaska, lower Cook Inlet, and Kodiak Island.
Letter
from the President
and Executive Director

In December 1999, the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council celebrated its tenth birthday. The highlights of the year illustrate how much some things can change in a decade while others stay the same.

The tanker escort system in Prince William Sound continued to modernize with the addition of three powerful new Prevention and Response Tugs.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation issued new oil spill prevention and response plans for the tankers serving Valdez. The council worked with other interested groups to support the department in defending improvements in the new plans against appeals by the tanker companies.

We played an integral part in a first for Prince William Sound: an exercise by Exxon's shipping subsidiary, SeaRiver Maritime, to devise Geographic Response Strategies. In this case, the strategies were developed to protect subsistence resources and other sensitive areas near the village of Tatitlek.

Years of council-supported research into iceberg detection and avoidance culminated in a project to install a radar-based ice-detection system at Reef Island near Valdez.

A major scientific study about the risk of invasions by aquatic nuisance species via tanker ballast water was completed, and research continues into ways to minimize that risk.

We worked with Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. to find ways to improve the fire protection and response systems at the Valdez tanker terminal.

Our community-outreach efforts paid off, with a poll in late 1999 showing improved recognition and credibility for the council in areas of our region that had been relatively unaware of us and our work. Other internal developments included the transfer of the Executive Director's office to Valdez.

We chaired a session at the International Association of Public Participation annual conference on the need for citizen groups. This need was underscored by the requests for information and assistance we received from Scotland, France and Russia, as well as communities in the United States.

We filed a legal brief supporting the right of states to regulate oil tankers operating in their waters. We were disappointed when the U.S. Supreme Court held in the case that federal regulation of tankers generally overrides state authority. Happily, however, it does not appear the ruling will jeopardize the regulatory system built up here in Alaska since the Exxon Valdez spill.

We addressed the National Pipeline Reform Conference in Washington, D.C., discussing citizen oversight, how our group works, and what kinds of safety improvements we have seen in the past decade.

While there are frequent reminders of the need for groups like ours, this past year provided an unusually vivid example: the Erika oil spill off France's south Brittany coast. Unfortunately the spill area did not have a citizens' group like our council, which could have coordinated the communities and demanded more responsibility from government and industry.

The Erika spill is fresh evidence of how easy it is for a society to ignore the lessons of the past — such as France's own Amoco Cadiz spill of 1978 — and relax its guard against future ones. Our job at the citizens' council is to make sure a similar lapse back into complacency doesn't set Alaska up for another disaster like the Exxon Valdez spill.
Mission and Responsibilities

Citizens Promoting Environmentally Safe Operation of the Alyeska Terminal and Associated Tankers.

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council is an independent non-profit corporation guided by its mission: citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. terminal in Valdez and the oil tankers that use it.

Consistent with that mission, the council’s structure and responsibilities stem from two documents. The first is a contract with Alyeska, which operates the trans-Alaska pipeline as well as the Valdez terminal. Under this contract, the council receives funding for services to Alyeska and the public.

The second guiding document, enacted after the council was created, is the federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which required citizen oversight councils for Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet.

The council’s 18 member organizations are communities in the region affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, as well as aquaculture, commercial fishing, environmental, Native, recreation, and tourism groups.
Under the terms of its contract with Alyeska, the council reviews, monitors and comments on various aspects of the company’s operations:

- Oil spill response and prevention plans
- Environmental protection capabilities
- Actual and potential environmental impacts of terminal and tanker operations.

The council comments on and participates in monitoring and assessment of environmental, social and economic consequences of oil-related accidents. It provides input on actual or potential environmental impacts in or near Prince William Sound, and comments on the design of measures to mitigate the consequences of oil spills and other environmental impacts of terminal and tanker operations. The council also comments on and participates in the selection of research and development projects, as described later in this report.

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

The contract states that the council may work on other related issues not specifically identified when the contract was written.

The council was initially funded at $2 million per year. The funding is renegotiated every three years; current Alyeska funding is $2.5 million per year.

Although the council works closely with and is funded 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 . . .”

As the council for Prince William Sound pursuant to the Act, the council advises and makes recommendations on policies, permits, and regulations relating to the oil terminal and tankers. It monitors the environmental impacts of the terminal and tankers.

The council reviews the adequacy of oil spill prevention and contingency plans for crude oil tankers operating in Prince William Sound, and advises and makes recommendations on port operations, policies and practices. The council also recommends standards and modifications for terminal and tanker operations to minimize the risk of oil spills and other environmental impacts, and to enhance prevention and response capabilities.
Since 1989, several programs have been implemented to reduce the risk of a catastrophic oil spill in Prince William Sound or the Gulf of Alaska. Progress began with the tanker escort system and improvements to the U.S. Coast Guard's Vessel Traffic System. It continued with more weather buoys and other navigation aids, and requirements for safety management plans and training to address the human factor. Most recently, it is evidenced by broad support for installation of a radar system to inform the U.S. Coast Guard and tanker captains about ice in the tanker lanes. For more than a decade, the council has sponsored studies, lobbied for legislation, and worked with the oil shipping industry and government regulators to improve oil spill prevention. That commitment continues today.
escort strategies. Alaska’s regulations for “best available technology” analyses in oil spill prevention and response were applied for the first time during the recently completed tanker contingency plan renewal process. The council sponsored a multi-stakeholder workshop early in 1998, and the participants laid out the details for the technical analysis of the escort/rescue tug stationed at Hinchinbrook Entrance. In late 1999, the planholders were required, as a condition of state approval of the new plans, to complete the technical analysis to demonstrate that the Hinchinbrook tug could prevent a tanker grounding under adverse weather conditions. The citizens’ council observed field trials during the past year and reviewed and commented on reports and computer simulations. The council retains an expert consultant and continues to press for comprehensive technical documentation that clearly demonstrates the escort system can accomplish its mission at Hinchinbrook Entrance.

The Alert is one of a new class of powerful tanker escort vessels called Prevention and Response Tugs, or PRTs.

Two tugs are also in close escort as tankers pass from the Sound through Hinchinbrook Entrance into the Gulf of Alaska. During the past two years, the escort system has been continually improved with new equipment and strategies. Three new Prevention and Response Tugs, the Alert, the Aware and the Attentive, began service in Prince William Sound during 2000. These 10,000 hp tugs will work with the powerful tractor tugs added to the fleet in 1999 to further enhance tanker safety. The council has observed and reviewed results from a number of training exercises and field trials conducted by Alyeska and continues to review and comment on proposed

Enhanced Tractor Tugs, or ETIs, represent another new class of escort vessel in Prince William Sound. Here, an ETI is tethered to the stern of the SeaRiver Bonedig as it heads out of the Sound with a load of North Slope crude.
**Human Factors**

Human error was identified as a cause of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in 1989. Indeed, human error is considered the root cause of the vast majority of marine casualties. The council has studied local, regional, national, and international efforts to address this issue, including the International Maritime Organization's and U.S. Coast Guard's requirement for company and vessel safety management plans. These plans became mandatory in July 1998, and the council is designing a project to examine the differences and similarities among the PWS oil shipping companies' plans. The objective of this project is to determine if certain components of safety management plans have proven more effective at reducing the number of accidents than others and to develop recommendations to the shipping companies for plan improvements.

**Ice Detection and Avoidance**

In 1989, the *Exxon Valdez* went off the standard course to avoid ice in the tanker lanes of Prince William Sound. That course change was followed by a series of human errors, and the rest is history. In 1994 an inbound tanker collided with an iceberg in Prince William Sound and sustained serious hull damage. In 1997 the Prince William Sound Risk Assessment study concluded that the presence of ice in the tanker lanes was the most significant oil spill risk that had not been addressed since the 1989 disaster. Since then, the council has sponsored a three-year study of Columbia Glacier that concluded that calving of icebergs will continue and accelerate during at least the next three decades.

In 1998 the council sponsored several sonar and radar tests trying to find a way that tankers could better detect and avoid icebergs. In the fall of 1999 a UHF radar prototype was installed on an island near the tanker lanes to see if that technology could provide real time information to mariners and regulators. A promising report on that technology test led the council to continue its efforts in this area.

In early 2000, when ice strayed into areas covered by a Coast Guard radar station, it became evident that conventional radar systems can detect floating ice. The council is taking the lead in a major project co-sponsored by state and federal agencies, the oil industry, and academic and research institutions. A plan is in place to install a conventional radar system near the tanker lanes to provide the Coast Guard Vessel Traffic System with real time information about ice conditions. The Coast Guard will use this information to make sail/no sail decisions. In addition, the installation will provide a platform for testing of technologies to refine radar images and improve communication of the information to mariners and the Coast Guard.
The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 requires all tankers plying U.S. waters to have double hulls by the year 2015, with phase-out schedules based on the size and age of individual ships. Three older double hull tankers serve in the TAPS fleet, but no new tankers with double hulls have been added since the passage of the Oil Pollution Act. Three Millennium class tankers designed and ordered by ARCO Marine (now owned by Phillips Petroleum) are under construction. The council continued its strong support of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990's requirement for replacing single hull tankers with double hull tankers and has encouraged the other two major North Slope oil shippers to expedite replacement schedules. We supported the Coast Guard's decision that changing the hull configuration will not change a tank vessel's retirement date and opposed attempts to modify the Oil Pollution Act.

The council continues to monitor the structural and mechanical integrity of the aging fleet of tankers transporting crude oil from Alaska and has worked closely with the U.S. Coast Guard to understand the inspection and certification programs. The council congratulated SeaRiver Maritime in 1999 for receiving the highest possible rating by the State of Washington for tanker safety. In December 1999 the council recognized ARCO Marine for that company's contributions to environmental safety in Alaska.
Researchers prepare to lower a device called a "grab" into the waters of Sheep Bay near Cordova. The grab collects sediment samples for the council's Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program.
Non-Indigenous Species

In March 2000 the council accepted a final report on a two-year research project conducted by the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, leaders in the investigation of biological invasions. The study was a follow-up to the 1997 pilot study and was co-sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; National SeaGrant Program; Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.; the U.S. Coast Guard; the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation; the TAPS oil shipping companies; and the council.

The study concluded that biological invasions of Prince William Sound are of concern because of the abundance and diversity of plankton delivered in ballast water of tankers and because many of the domestic source ports for Valdez-bound tankers have already been invaded by non-native species.

Sampling and laboratory analysis of ballast water discharged in Prince William Sound found at least 14 non-native species, all arriving from San Francisco Bay or Long Beach.

Tests found that exchanging ballast water at sea can reduce, but not eliminate, the number of plankton reaching the Sound. Ballast water exchange occurs well offshore, when tankers flush out the ballast water taken on in ports and replace it with water from the open ocean. Most Valdez-bound tankers, however, do not exchange ballast water at sea because of an exemption in the National Invasive Species Act for tankers arriving from domestic ports. Only those arriving from foreign ports are required to make the exchanges. Some west coast states and ports have enacted legislation requiring ballast water exchange or other measures, and the council will continue to develop recommendations for Alaska policies and regulations.

The findings of the study, completed in 2000, were presented at a workshop in Anchorage in late March. The workshop was co-sponsored by the California SeaGrant program, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the council. It included presentations by scientists, government agencies, shipping companies, environmental groups and local citizens and provided an opportunity to exchange information and ideas about technology and ballast management practices that might reduce the risk of biological invasion.

During the summer of 2000, the council and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sponsored a Smithsonian environmental monitoring program in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska to determine if the green crab or other known nuisance species have established themselves.

The council also participates in a number of regional and national groups established by the National Invasive Species Act. We present the Alaska perspective and monitor efforts in other ports to develop a better scientific understanding of how aquatic species arrive in ballast water and what can be done to combat it. Early this year, Bill Lindow, a council board member from Cordova, was one of 25 people selected by Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt to serve on the federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee, set up under an executive order by President Clinton.
Of the six U-shaped devices on this tanker loading berth at the Alyeska terminal, the four in the middle are for loading oil while the two at the ends are for capturing vapors.

**Control of Tanker Loading Vapors**

The council began efforts in 1990 to minimize air pollution in Port Valdez, especially emissions of crude oil vapors forced out of tankers as they load at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The council was an active participant in the development of EPA rules that required vapor control systems on two of the four loading berths. The start-up of that system in March 1998 marked a major accomplishment for government, industry, and local citizens. The system has operated efficiently for more than two years with significantly lower uncontrolled loading than allowed by the rule, greatly reducing the amount of hydrocarbons released into the air at the terminal.

The council has made several recommendations to Alyeska aimed at environmental efficiency and safe operation of the tanker vapor control system at the Valdez terminal. In addition to the recommendations from two consultant reports completed in 1998 and 1999, the council continues to monitor implementation of recommendations resulting from Alyeska's comprehensive management review of the tanker vapor control system completed in October 1999. The council retains a team of experts who scheduled a site visit during the summer of 2000 to verify that our concerns are being addressed.

During the past year, the council has called for strict procedures for testing oxygen levels in the oil-tank vapors of tankers arriving in Port Valdez, at least until all safety recommendations have been implemented. In addition, based on public and media statements by British Petroleum about future North Slope oil production, the council has continued to push for vapor controls on a third berth at the terminal because of the possibility that future loading requirements will exceed the capacity of the two berths now equipped with vapor control systems.
Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Project

For the seventh year the council monitored sites in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska for hydrocarbons in the water, sediment and mussel tissues. Samples are collected in summer and late winter. Previously, nine sites were monitored but this year the council began sampling at a tenth site, near Hinchinbrook Entrance.

The project was designed to provide benchmarks for assessing trends and potential impacts from normal oil transportation operations and spills. The annual reports for this project are shared with government agencies and research institutions, and the data is often integrated with other environmental studies.

An overview of the project was presented in January 2000 at an Anchorage workshop on restoration of environmental resources damaged by the Exxon Valdez spill. The council has been commended for the high quality of science embodied in this region-wide monitoring program.

Based on public concerns about water quality in Port Valdez and the results of a October 1999 workshop sponsored by the council, the project was amended to add sediment sampling at two of the original sites near the Valdez tanker terminal. This additional sampling is to continue through 2001.

A NOAA monitoring effort during the summer of 2000 provided an opportunity for the council to share bottom sediment samples to see if analysis might answer questions about the scientific significance of naturally occurring coal deposits in Prince William Sound. This cooperative effort will lead to improved knowledge of reference oils and better scientific interpretation of future monitoring results.

These sediment samples were collected near the outlet of Alyeska's Ballast Water Treatment Facility. Such samples are used to measure the facility's environmental impacts.
Activities

Scientific Response Plan

Or several years the council has promoted the development of a scientific contingency plan to guide initial scientific efforts following a major spill. While encouraging industry and government agencies to coordinate their sampling and monitoring plans and protocols, the council has begun work on an addendum to the council’s Emergency Response Plan. The addendum will outline steps to be taken to utilize resources available through the Long Term Environmental Monitoring Program to collect samples and make recommendations for monitoring protocols.

Ballast Water Treatment Facility/Federal Discharge Permit

The council maintains a program to monitor environmental impacts of the Ballast Water Treatment Facility at the Valdez Marine Terminal. The five-year pollution discharge permit for the Valdez Marine Terminal was last renewed in 1997. Compliance with the permit is monitored by the Ballast Water Treatment Facility Working Group, comprised of representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Ayleska, and the citizens’ council. The council supports the state conservation department’s leadership of the working group and has expressed concern during the past year about the level of funding and resources made available to the department for this important role. In preparation for the 2002 discharge permit renewal and in response to public concerns expressed through the council’s Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee, proposals are being requested for a Port Valdez Water Quality Monitoring project. The primary objective of the project is to determine if hydrocarbons are present in the water column outside the permitted mixing zone at concentrations harmful to marine life. Proposers are being asked to present plans that include the use of caged mussels, specially designed plastic strips, and large volume water samples. Launch of the water quality monitoring project is planned for early 2001.

Another concern identified by the Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee involves the age of the Valdez Marine Terminal and problems with maintenance and repairs throughout its history. The council has retained a consultant to identify and prioritize deferred maintenance items at the terminal that have the potential to affect the environmentally safe operation of the facility. The first phase of the project will focus on the Ballast Water Treatment Facility and its several components. Site visits will take place during the summer of 2000, and a report with recommendations will be presented to the council in the fall.

Periodic monitoring of oily ballast water fed to the treatment facility from arriving tankers was suspended in late 1999, primarily because repeated monitoring found no unexpected chemicals in the incoming ballast. The program began in 1992 after allegations that hazardous waste could be transferred from refineries outside Alaska to the Valdez facility in tanker ballast water. The council will depend on Ayleska sampling now required by the permit to verify that no unexpected hazardous substances are being discharged.

Weather and Oceanography

The council provided funding for the Cordova-based Prince William Sound Science Center’s Observation Oceanography and Model Validation project. Data from this project will help us understand the effect of tides and sea currents on tankers and tug capabilities. In addition, the data will assist with development of oil spill trajectories for response planning. To increase knowledge and understanding of oceanography, the council’s staff and volunteers coordinate regularly with the science center. They also attend conferences and seminars, including NOAA’s GNOME current trajectory modeling training class in November 2000.
Oil Spill
Preparedness and Response

A work crew tends containment boom during an oil spill drill near the village of Taitilek in June 2000.
Oil Spill Contingency Plans

One of the council's core responsibilities under its contract with Alyeska and the Oil Pollution Act is to provide citizen input on the plans that detail how government and industry would respond to an oil spill. The council reviews contingency plans, as they are called, for the Valdez Marine Terminal and for tankers transporting North Slope crude oil through Alaska waters.

State Terminal and Tanker Contingency Plans

Alaska regulations require renewal of oil spill prevention and response plans for tankers and facilities like the Valdez Marine Terminal on a three-year cycle. During the past year, renewal processes were going on for both the Prince William Sound oil tankers and the Valdez terminal. There were several stages to the tanker and terminal plan reviews with comments being provided at each stage and often in between on specific issues. The council depends on the efforts of a project team composed of staff, volunteers and consultants to accomplish this work. The contingency plan project team

STEVE LEWIS, a council board member from Seldovia, participated in the review of contingency plans for the tankers that move oil out of Valdez. He met weekly during the past year. Some reviews of statewide planning issues have been done jointly with the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council.

Final public comments on the tanker plans were submitted to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation in June of 1999. After the Department's review of the council's and other public comments, a conditional approval was issued in November. Thirty days later, three of the five shipping companies appealed the department's decision, and the council prepared to intervene with broad support from communities and interest groups in the region. The council supported the conditions of approval and the department's discretion to raise standards from those accepted in previously approved plans. The council also commended the Department for its hard work and urged the shipping companies to withdraw their appeals, which they did in early March 2000.
The council continues to serve on a number of multi-stakeholder working groups to address the tanker contingency plan conditions. The Scenarios working group will review and refine the parts of the plan designed to demonstrate how, under specified conditions, the plan would be implemented in response to a worst-case oil spill. The council has signed a memorandum of agreement, along with several state and federal resource agencies, that provides guidance for the development of geographic response strategies for Prince William Sound and the outer Kenai Peninsula. The best available technology analysis for the Hinchinbrook Entrance escort tug is being carried out as a condition of contingency-plan approval, and the council has been engaged with the review of documents and by observing sea trials.

The council concluded in May 2000 that the lengthy review process for tanker oil spill prevention and response plans led to positive results. The plans are better, the process has improved, and the oil spill response capabilities are better demonstrated. A team from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the oil shipping companies, and the council has begun a "lessons learned" process to determine if procedural improvements can be made before the start of the next three-year review cycle.

The Valdez Marine Terminal contingency plan renewal application was submitted by Alyeska in July 1999 and was put out for public review in September. The council worked closely with the Department of Environmental Conservation and Alyeska during a period of time when additional information was requested and public concerns were addressed. The conditional approval issued by the Department in May addressed most of the council's comments. The council is represented at monthly meetings to review progress on meeting the conditions and serves on several working groups addressing issues such as tactics for containment of oil on land, protection of sensitive areas and development of a risk assessment. The Valdez Marine Terminal review was especially positive with an open stakeholder process where Alyeska, agencies and the public worked closely in an informal and productive manner.

### Out-of-Region Equipment Survey

The State of Alaska tanker contingency plans require identification of oil spill response equipment that would be brought to Prince William Sound to respond to a catastrophic oil spill. In 1996 the council sponsored a survey to verify the availability and accessibility of the equipment identified in the plans. In June 2000 a contractor was selected to again survey response equipment available from oil spill response organizations, the Coast Guard, Navy Supervisor of Salvage, and other identified sources. The contractor will assess whether there has been a net gain or loss of response equipment and trained personnel since the 1996 report. The final survey report is scheduled for completion in December 2000.

### Alaska Unified Plan and Subarea Plans

State and federal agencies outline government requirements for oil spill response in the Alaska Unified Plan and in the more location-specific subarea plans. Council
representatives routinely attend the quarterly meetings of the Alaska Regional Response Team, which oversees the Unified Plan. As part of a special meeting, the council’s Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee members attended a response team meeting in Cordova during the summer of 1999. The council also participates in committee meetings for the three subareas in our region: Prince William Sound, Kodiak, and Cook Inlet.

**SENSITIVE AREAS**

The identification and protection of environmentally sensitive areas that could be affected by an oil spill in Prince William Sound or the Gulf of Alaska has been a high priority for the council for more than a decade. The council actively participates in the Statewide Sensitive Area Work Group.

For several years the council has promoted the development of geographic response strategies based on programs developed in the states of Washington, Oregon, and California. The term refers to protecting sensitive sites, such as a subsistence clamming beach, from spilled oil brought in by wind, tide or current.

During the past year, the council provided support to the communities of Chugach Bay and Tatitlek, and co-sponsored the development of 20 Geographic Response Strategies for central Cook Inlet. The Central Cook Inlet Geographic Response Strategy Work Group process was the subject of a presentation at the June 2000 Arctic Marine Oil Spill Programme conference in Vancouver, BC.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has required development of Geographic Response Strategies for Prince William Sound and the outer Kenai Peninsula as a condition of the department’s approval of the shipping companies’ latest oil spill response plans. The council participates in a multi-stakeholder working group charged with developing those plans and was a major player in a June 2000 exercise sponsored by SeaRiver Maritime to
develop Geographic Response Strategies in and near Tatitlek, one of the council’s member villages.

In March 2000, based on recommendations from the Contingency Plan Project Team and the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee, the council sent a letter to Alyeska supporting the company’s proposal to install permanent anchors to facilitate rapid deployment of protective boom for the Valdez Duck Flats, acknowledged as one of the most environmentally sensitive areas near the terminal.

**Drill and Incident Monitoring**

The council retains an independent drill monitoring contractor who observes and reports on oil spill response drills, exercises, and training programs, as well as actual spill incidents. The council’s staff and volunteers also participate in drills, exercises, and training. They are guided by the council’s Emergency Response Plan, which defines roles and responsibilities. The council’s objectives during an oil spill drill or actual response are to observe what happens, verify information, inform our constituents, and provide local knowledge to incident commanders. The major drills monitored by the council during the past year include the following:

- **Valdez Marine Terminal Worst Case Discharge Drill, September 1-2, 1999.** The drill included both tabletop and field deployment elements.

- **NOFI Current Buster High Speed Recovery System Demonstration, October 1999.** Demonstration for the council’s staff, contractors and volunteers of Alyeska’s new NOFI system for oil recovery in swift water conditions.

- **Copper River Delta Flats Exercise, April 2000.** This exercise tested the viability of tactics identified for geographic response strategies.

- **BP Unannounced Drill, April 12, 2000.** The council’s Emergency Response Team responded to an unannounced drill called by BP to exercise its away team for Prince William Sound. A concurrent Alyeska unannounced exercise was held in Port Valdez.

- **U.S. Coast Guard Annual Homer VOSS Exercise, April 24-28, 2000.** This annual Cook Inlet exercise included a nearshore task force deployment, infrared camera training, and a geographic response tactics field exercise. VOSS stands for “Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System,” and refers to the chartering of fishing vessels.

An oil-recovery device called a rope mop skimmer is deployed during a drill in Kachemak Bay in April 2000.
Activities

The village of Tatitlek participated in a June 2000 drill to develop Geographic Response Strategies for the area. Its skyline is dominated by a picturesque Russian Orthodox church.

to operate oil skimmers during spill cleanup.

- **SeaRiver Maritime**
  **Prince William Sound Geographic Response Strategies Exercise, June 6-8, 2000.** SeaRiver Maritime developed and field-tested Geographic Response Strategies. The exercise focused on the north-east part of Prince William Sound near the village of Tatitlek. The council participated in the planning for this exercise and provided several field observers during the exercise. Final reports were to be published in late summer 2000, but early indications were that the exercise was a major success for many reasons, primarily the degree to which local people were involved in the process of selecting sites to be protected and providing information about local conditions to be considered.

The Drill Monitoring Contractor Annual Report for calendar year 1999 was accepted by the Board in March 2000. The report and a letter commending Alyeska for improvements since the 1998 report were sent to Alyeska, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, and Coast Guard. The council was particularly pleased that Alyeska conducted more regular exercises than the year before and applied “lessons learned.”

The council is routinely notified of any oil spill incident at the terminal or involving tankers or escort vessels.

In January 2000, two members of the council staff traveled to France to examine the effects of the Erika oil spill and meet with Syndicat Mixte, a French oil-spill group similar to the citizens’ council.

**Dispersants**

The council’s position on chemical dispersants as an oil spill response tool remains cautious, supporting their use in Prince William Sound or the Gulf of Alaska only after skimming and other mechanical methods that actually remove spilled oil from the water are evaluated and ruled out. During the past year, the council has continued to seek out partnership opportunities for dispersant research to determine the effectiveness and potential environmental impacts of chemical dispersants and dispersed oil.

In December 1999 the council completed a report entitled “A Review of Existing Research and Recommendations for Future Studies.” Another report was completed for the council in March 2000 focusing on the potential for photoenhanced toxicity of spilled oil. That report was sent to government agencies and research institutions urging them to consider that variable in future dispersant studies. The council also hosted a photoenhanced toxicity workshop in December, 1999 with Dr. Mace Barron as our invited speaker and participation by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Coast Guard, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Department of the Interior, Cook Inlet Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the University of Alaska.

The council routinely monitors and comments on the use of chemical oil spill dispersants in our region. The council remains cautious about the use of dispersants for two main reasons:

- The efficacy of dispersants stockpiled in our region (Corexit 9527) on Alaska North Slope Crude has not been demonstrated to our satisfaction.

- Studies have reached different findings, from which we conclude that many dispersant-related environmental threats to the marine ecosystem and human health have not been adequately investigated.
The council is sponsoring a laboratory test to evaluate the efficacy of the dispersant Corexit in the environmental conditions found in our region. The study should be complete in early 2001.

**Fire Protection**

The council continued its work to improve marine firefighting capabilities in Prince William Sound by sponsoring an October 1999 firefighting symposium in Valdez, AK. The training event was similar to one sponsored by the council in 1997. Some 31 land-based firefighters from council member communities received training in battling shipboard fires during the 1999 symposium. The symposium included a full-scale exercise based on a simulated engine-room fire aboard the BP-chartered oil tanker *Overseas New York*. In addition, officials of the Coast Guard, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and Alaska State Troopers met to discuss the idea of an “Away Team” to manage battles against shipboard fires in Alaska ports. Besides the council, symposium sponsors include Alyeska, oil shipping companies, the Coast Guard, Crowley Marine Services, the State of Alaska, the Prince William Sound Community College, and the City of Valdez.

Plans are under way for the 2001 symposium. In conjunction with the 1999 symposium, a template for developing fire response plans for small harbors was finalized. Since then, the template has been customized for several coastal communities within the council’s region.

In September 1999 the council became aware of several deficiencies with the fire response system at the Valdez Marine Terminal. Alyeska was addressing the problems with the State Fire Marshal’s office in response to complaints submitted in April 1999. The council and its Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee reviewed reports and observed tests being conducted to meet the Fire Marshal’s requirements. Concerns about Alyeska’s ability to respond to a tank fire were heightened when it was announced in November 1999 that reliability of the submerged foam delivery pipes in the 18 crude oil storage tanks was compromised by the presence of sludge. The piping had been found clogged when tanks were being cleaned during the 1999 summer season.

The council hired two fire system and response experts to assess Alyeska’s protection system and urged the Joint Pipeline office to impose stringent requirements. January and June 2000 site visits by the council’s consultants generated reports and recommendations for improvements, including training, interim contingency plans, strict enforcement of prevention measures, and replacement of outdated fire response equipment and turnout gear.
In June 2006, Father Peter Chris led Chenega Bay residents in a ceremony in memory of those lost during and since the Good Friday Earthquake of 1964. Tsunami waves from the earthquake destroyed the village of Chenega, which was later re-established as Chenega Bay on a different site and is now a member village of the council.
Community Impacts

For several years the council has sponsored studies to develop coping strategies for the social problems created by a large technological disaster, like the Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska in 1989. In early 1999 the council published “Coping with Technological Disasters: A User Friendly Guidebook,” which is based on the results of those studies.

During the past year, the guidebook has been presented at community meetings and conferences throughout the council’s region and the state of Alaska. Copies of the guidebook have been requested by government agencies, organizations, and individuals all over Alaska, the U.S. and internationally. It was provided to citizens groups in France following the Erika spill in December 1999 and was requested by the community of Littleton, Colorado following the school shooting there and by Alaska Airlines shortly after a major airplane crash.

The council is continuing a program to distribute the guidebook and provide training to communities in our region. Workshops have been held in Seldovia, Seward, and Kenai. A council board member and community volunteer used the guidebook as a tool following the devastating avalanches in Cordova in the spring of 2000.

The guidebook is available free on the council's web site, and work has begun on a series of peer listener training videos.

The council’s Scientific Advisory Committee and Community Impacts Planning project team have been selected to receive the States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force Legacy Award 2000.

Community Outreach

The council devotes a full-time staff position to fostering relations with the 18 communities and interest groups that make up its membership. The Community Liaison visits communities in the region, attends member group functions, gives presentations, and encourages citizen involvement in the council’s work.

Over the last year the council staff members made outreach trips to the following communities: Cordova, Homer, Kenai, Kodiak, Seldovia, Seward, Valdez, Whittier, Chenega Bay and Tatitlek. Staff members attended special events of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce and the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association.

Also, staff members attended two trade shows for commercial fishing groups, Kodiak ComFish and FishExpo in Seattle. In addition, staff members attended the annual meeting and trade show of the Alaska Municipal League to reach elected officials in the council region and participated in the Alaska Forum on the Environment.

Over the winter, the council’s outreach efforts included presenting papers on citizen participation at the International Association for Public Participation Conference in Banff, Canada; at the National Pipeline Reform Conference in Washington D.C.; and at a meeting of the Washington...
French volunteers used buckets, scrapers and shovels to clean a beach drenched in oil from the Erika spill.

The council regularly attends conventions and trade shows to discuss oil-spill issues. Here, former Alaska Gov. Jay Hammond chats with Executive Director John Devens and others at the council booth at the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce annual meeting in September 1999.

Deputy Director Marilyn Leiland talks with a visitor to the council booth at Fish Expo in Seattle in November 1999.

State Senate Environmental Quality and Resource Committee in Seattle, WA. In January 2000, the Syndicat Mixte (a French organization similar to the citizens’ council) hosted council staff members during a visit to Brittany, France. Staff members toured sites polluted by the Erika oil spill and gave a presentation on the citizens’ council at a meeting of the Syndicat’s General Assembly.

Publications

The council increases public awareness on a wide range of issues pertaining to crude oil transportation through printed and electronic publications.

The Observer, a free quarterly newsletter, is distributed throughout Prince William Sound, the northern Gulf of Alaska, lower Cook Inlet and the Kodiak Archipelago. The Observer is also sent on request to interested citizens elsewhere, as well as to regulators and industry.

The Observer covers council activities, developments in the oil transportation industry and news about policy and operational issues related to marine oil transportation. Major oil spill drills are usually covered, and Alyeska is
Government Relations

The council monitors state and federal actions, legislation and regulations that relate to terminal or tanker operations, or to oil spill prevention or response.

While the state of Alaska was developing its position on BP Amoco's proposed acquisition of ARCO, the council repeatedly contacted Gov. Tony Knowles to request that state approval of the deal include provisions to improve the safety of the crude-oil transportation system through Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska.

During the Alaska Legislature's 2000 session, the council contacted public officials on several issues:

- The council wrote legislative leaders on a proposed measure to revise state laws and regulations so as to encourage development of a natural gas pipeline from the North Slope to tidewater. The council asked legislators to ensure that nothing in the measure inadvertently compromised the existing regulatory system for the trans-Alaska crude oil pipeline and Valdez tanker terminal.

- After two legislators began discussing the possibility of dismantling the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the council wrote the legislators asking to be involved if hearings were held on the subject.

invited to submit a column for each issue. In the course of preparing articles for The Observer, the council frequently invites feedback from appropriate industry and regulatory personnel.

Once a year, the council summarizes its work in an annual report such as this one.

In addition, the council uses electronic mail and its Internet site (see inside back cover) to provide information about its activities and about oil transportation issues to Alaska citizens and to the world.

In May, the council completed a 14-minute video about its origins, mission and activities. This video, titled "A Noble Experiment: The Story of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council," will be shown at conferences and other events attended by the council, and will be distributed free to member entities for use in informing their constituents about the council.
The ARCO Endeavour, now owned by Phillips Petroleum, will be the first new double-hull tanker to enter service in Prince William Sound in many years.

- The Legislature devoted much time and attention to a proposed measure that would have imposed contingency-planning requirements and financial responsibility standards on carriers of non-crude petroleum products, such as cruise ships, large fishing vessels, and the Alaska Railroad. The council wrote lawmakers to support the measure, while also urging that it be examined carefully to ensure it did not inadvertently relax existing standards for crude-oil tankers. When the measure passed, the financial-responsibility provisions were retained but the contingency-planning requirements were removed. The bill did, however, set up a task force to work on the issue of contingency plans for non-crude carriers over the legislative interim. The council wrote lawmakers and the state Department of Environmental Conservation requesting a seat on this task force.

In addition, the council in January 2000 co-hosted a legislative reception in Juneau with communities from Prince William Sound. While in Juneau, board and staff members met with legislators representing the council region on its mission and its positions on issues before the Legislature.

### Federal Relations

In November 1999, the council submitted an Amicus Curiae brief in the U.S. Supreme Court case Intertanko v Gary Locke, et al. on behalf of Locke and the State of Washington. The case tested the powers of states to regulate oil tanker operations. In March 2000, the Supreme Court ruled against Washington state, holding that federal regulation of tankers generally overrides authority of states to set standards. The Court referred other Washington state rules back to a lower federal court for further review.

The council continues to monitor the phase-in of the federal requirement for double-hull tankers in U.S. waters and submitted comments on the Coast Guard’s Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to clarify regulations for determining phase-out dates for single hull tank vessels under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

### Recertification

The Coast Guard certifies the council as the federally approved citizens’ advisory group for Prince William Sound, pursuant to the Oil Pollution Act. The council has been the certified group since 1991.

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.

As part of its review, the Coast Guard considers comments from industry, interest groups, and citizens. The council fulfills the requirement for an industry-funded citizens advisory group, but it was established before the law was enacted.

Until 1999, recertification was handled at the Coast Guard’s national headquarters in Washington, D.C. Then recertification authority was delegated to the Coast Guard’s Alaska headquarters in Juneau, which issued the council’s first Alaska-based recertification in April 2000.
Board of Directors
as of June 30, 2000

Executive Committee

William M. Walker
PRESIDENT • City of Valdez

Margy Johnson
VICE PRESIDENT • City of Cordova

Marilyn Hedde
SECRETARY • City of Whittier

Jo Ann McDowell, Ph.D.
TREASURER • City of Valdez

Stephen Lewis
MEMBER AT LARGE • City of Seldovia

Dennis Lodge
MEMBER AT LARGE • City of Seward

Stan Stephens
MEMBER AT LARGE
AK Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Assoc.

Other Directors

John Allen
Ibelle Corp
Tuttle Village RA Council

Patience Andersen-Taubner
Cordova District Fishermen United

Phori Baretta
Chugach Alaska Corp.

Jim Neat
Kokul Village Mayors Assoc.

Wayne Coleman
Kodiak Island Borough

Tom Copeland
Oil Spill Regional Environmental Coalition

Tom Jensen
All State Chamber of Commerce

Blake Johnson
Knik Peninsula Borough

Bill Lindow
Prince William Sound Aquarium Corp.

Paul McCollum
City of Homer

Darrell Isomoff
Chenega Bay Corp

Thomas Walters
City of Kodiak

Ex-Officio Members
(Non-Voting)

Steve Provant
Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Susan Harvey
Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Mark Bank
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game/
Habitat Division

Al Pomier
Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources

Jim Harris
Alaska Div. of Emergency Services

Commander
Peyton Coleman
Coast Guard Marine Safety Office,
Valdez

John Whitney
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Gary Thomas
Oil Spill Recovery Institute

Doug Muder
U.S. Department of the Interior

Carl Lautenberger
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Chuck Frey
U.S. Forest Service
Committees

Our standing committees advise the Board of Directors and council staff on projects and activities. Committee volunteers also assist the staff on individual projects. The advisory committees are made up of interested citizens, technical experts, and members of the council board. Committee volunteers are selected through an annual application process. They are appointed to two year terms and may serve consecutive terms.

A.J. Paul of Seward is a long-time member of the council’s Scientific Advisory Committee.

OSPR

Oil Spill Prevention/Response Committee

Jerry Brookman
Kodiak — Chair

Paul Andrews
Homer

Tom Copeland
COUNCIL DIRECTOR
Cordova

Jon Dahlman
Seward

Natasha Edwards
Gradwoood

Sail Evanoff
Chenega Bay

Joe Jakas
Valdez

Karl Pulliam
Seldovia

Gordon Scott
Gradwoood

Tom Tompette
Ketchikan

POVTS

Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems Committee

Bill Conley
Valdez — Chair

Tex Edwards
Anchorage

(Neil) Vince Kelly
Valdez

Linda Lee
Valdez

Dennis Lodge
COUNCIL DIRECTOR
Seward

Eric Lopez
Valdez

SAC

Scientific Advisory Committee

Richard Tremaine
Anchorage — Chair

Peter Armato
Seward

Jig Carrier
King Salmon

Bill D’Atri
Anchorage

Gary Lawley
Anchorage

Michelle Hahn O’Leary
Cordova

A.J. Paul
Seward

Loren Tuttle
Seward

Charles Kelley
Cordova

John Williams
Cordova
Publications and Presentations

Presentations and Papers by Staff, Volunteers and Contractors


PREVENTION IMPROVEMENTS IN PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND, John Deven (presenter) and Leann Ferry, 9/10/1999. Conference on Navigation Safety in Cook Inlet, Homer, Alaska.

OVERVIEW OF THE "COPING WITH TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTERS" GUIDEBOOK. Lisa Ka‘aithue, 9/22/1999. 50th Arctic Science Conference of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Denali, Alaska.


CASE STUDY: CITIZENS MAKING OIL TRANSPORTATION SAFER AROUND THE WORLD. John Deven (moderator), Leann Ferry (panelist), John Allen (panelist), 11/15/1999. International Association for Public Participation Annual Conference, Banff, Canada.


PRESENTATION TO SEDOVA CITY COUNCIL ON CITIZENS' COUNCIL ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY THE DISASTER GUIDEBOOK AND TANKER CONTINGENCY PLAN APPEALS. Leann Ferry, Tim Robertson, Steve Lewis, 1/12/2000. Seldovia City Council, Seldovia, Alaska.


HOW THE GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE STRATEGIES PROCESS WORKED FOR COOK INLET. Tim Robertson, 6/13/2000. Arctic Marine Oil Spill Programme, Environment Canada, Vancouver, B.C.

Contact the council's Anchorage office to obtain copies.

Reports

SITE SPECIFIC OIL SPILL RESPONSE PLANS FOR SENSITIVE RESOURCES NEAR THE VILLAGE OF CHENEGA. John Deven/Joe Banta, 8/6/1999

1998-99 IN REVIEW. (Annual report of the council). Citizens' council, 10/1/1999

UHF RADAR PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND FIELD PROGRAM FINAL REPORT. (Installation of UHF & X-Band radar prototypes for the detection of small icebergs at Busby Island, Prince William Sound). Ė-CORE, 11/1/1999

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL 1998-1999 LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING PROGRAM REPORT. (Program was designed to provide measurements of hydrocarbon concentrations at sites within Prince William Sound). Kinetic Laboratories Incorporated, 11/8/1999
Publications and Presentations

Reports continued

U.S. Supreme Court Amicus Curiae Brief in Intertanko vs. Gary Locke. (RCAC asked the Court to uphold the State of Washington's efforts to protect its environment and peoples through oil spill prevention legislation). Gross and Burke, 11/19/1999.


Press Releases Sent to Newspapers and Broadcasters


Citizens' Group Welcomes Decision by Oil Shippers To Withdraw Appeals of Oil-Spill Plans, March 2000.

New Members Join Board of Citizens' Oversight Group, March 2000.

Coast Guard Recertifies Citizens' Group, Says It Is Open To Simpler Process, April 2000.

Guest Editorials sent to Alaska newspapers

Despite Problems, Valdez Terminal: Safer, Healthier
Executive Director John Devens, August 1999

Man-Made Disaster Guidebook Available
Executive Director John Devens, August 1999

French Tanker Accident Provides Refresher Course in Oil-Spill Lessons
Executive Director John Devens, March 2000

Contact the council's Anchorage office to obtain copies.
Staff and Offices

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Office Manager: ANDREA ARCHER
Public Information Manager: STAN JONES
Community Liaison: LEANN FERRY
Financial Operations Manager: LINDA ROBINSON
Information Systems Manager: DAPHNE JENKINS
Project Managers: JOE BANTA, LISA KA’AHUE, BECKY LEWIS, BARRY GREEN
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Project Managers: RICA SALVADOR, DAN GILSON, TOM KUCKERTZ
Administrative Assistant: JENNIFER FLEMING

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