



**September 2020
Status Report**

3100 – Public Information Program

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

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

3410 – Fishing Vessel Program Community Outreach

Objectives: For bringing the realities of oil spill response tactics, equipment, and planning to life for citizens within Exxon Valdez oil spill region communities, the fishing vessel community outreach program is a perfect venue. Each fall and spring SERVS holds fishing vessel program training in the following communities: Cordova, Valdez, Whittier, Seward, Homer, and Kodiak. The on-water portion of the training, in partnership with Alyeska/SERVS, shows real-time capabilities of oil spill response equipment and tactics. This project contracts a local tour boat that will allow interested students, members of the public, and media to learn about oil spill response.

Accomplishments since last report: This event will be held in spring 2021, contingent on the SERVS fishing vessel training occurring and the feasibility of hosting a large public gathering at that time.

3500 – Community Outreach Program

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

Accomplishments since last report: PWSRCAC booth was exhibited, a presentation was given, or the council participated in the following events as part of community outreach:

- 18 May Prince William Sound Natural History Symposium, *Virtual*

3530 – Youth Involvement

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

Accomplishments since last report:

- Field programs scheduled for summer 2020 were postponed until 2021.
- New projects for FY2021 have been selected. Priority was given to projects that are adapting to the current times, such as distance learning programs.

3560 – Exxon Valdez Project Jukebox

Objectives: This project will fund adding up to five profiles with interviews to UAF’s Project Jukebox website. By preserving the oral accounts of individuals impacted by the spill, and displaying these stories online via Project Jukebox, the Council may further promote environmental safeguards to help prevent and respond to future oil spills in the Prince William Sound. Further, the Exxon Valdez Project Jukebox assists in the promotion of all Council activities to a growing digital audience.

Accomplishments since last report: Staff and IEC are evaluating interviews to determine which are most appropriate for inclusion in Project Jukebox.

3600 – Public Communications Program

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

The Observer: Print and email versions of the Observer newsletter are produced three times per year.

Annual Report: Initial coordination with the graphic design contractor on the 2019-2020 annual report began in July. Staff have been developing content and the first draft has been submitted to the contractor. The final report is anticipated to go to print in early November.

3610 – Web Best Available Technology

This project helps ensure the Council’s websites and web presence uses the best and most up-to-date technology available by funding new features, repairs, and upgrades to the Council’s websites. This includes regular maintenance and technical upgrades as well as upgrades to such aspects as user experience and branding.

Updates to the Resource Library on the www.pwsrcac.org website are in the planning stages, with the website contractor expected to begin technical updates in late September. This work will support a searchable/filterable database for educational lesson plans, among other improvements. This project is also supporting technical assistance for an OSPR project: 7901 Web-based RSC Resources.

Website data: Website usage for www.pwsrcac.org is tracked through Google Analytics for information such as numbers of visitors, location of visitors, how the visitor found the site, which pages are visited most often, how much time is spent on particular pages, whether the visitor was engaged enough to visit more than one page and much more. Below is an overview for the three months prior to this report (data from 10/24/2019 to 3/24/2020) compared to the previous six months (3/24/2019-10/24/2019):

	5/13/2020 to 8/13/2020	2/10/2020 to 5/12/2020
Total sessions (a session is the period of time a user is actively engaged with the website)	3,702	4,205
Total users (total number of individual visitors to the site during the time period - this differs from total <i>sessions</i> because an individual may have visited the site more than once during the period)	2,933	3,090

Pages per session (an <i>average</i> number of individual pages that are opened during each session - more than “1” in this category typically means that a visitor was engaged enough in the content to visit more than one page)	1.87	2.01
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Top content from May 2020
1. May Board meeting documents
2. Exxon Valdez oil spill
3. About staff & Board members
4. Youth Involvement RFP
5. Regulatory Reform

Top content from June 2020
1. Peer listening updated for COVID-19
2. About staff & Board members
3. Exxon Valdez oil spill
4. RFPs
5. Regulatory reform

Top content from July 2020
1. Accounting Technician job posting
2. RFPs
3. Exxon Valdez oil spill
4. About staff & Board members
5. Regulatory reform

This is a basic overview. Google Analytics tracks data about many different aspects of the website. Please contact Project Manager Amanda Johnson if you would like more details.

3620 – Connecting with Our Communities

Objectives: This project will fund adding up to five profiles with interviews to UAF’s Project Jukebox website. By preserving the oral accounts of individuals impacted by the spill, and displaying these stories online via Project Jukebox, the Council may further promote environmental safeguards to help prevent and respond to future oil spills in the Prince William Sound. Further, the Exxon Valdez Project Jukebox assists in the promotion of all Council activities to a growing digital audience.

Accomplishments since last report: Staff coordinated with Helvey Communications on several deliverables for the FY19 and FY20 contracts. Both contracts have been extended to the end of the FY21 fiscal year (June 30, 2021) due to delays associated with COVID-19. Potential logo adjustments will be presented to the Board at the September meeting for possible action. If an adjustment is adopted by the Board, a plan for the slow rollout of the updated logo selected. There are a number of other deliverables connected to the logo decision as well.

3903 – Youth Internship

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

Summary: Recruitment for this position will start in September. This year’s focus will be to launch the revised Alaska Oil Spill Curriculum.

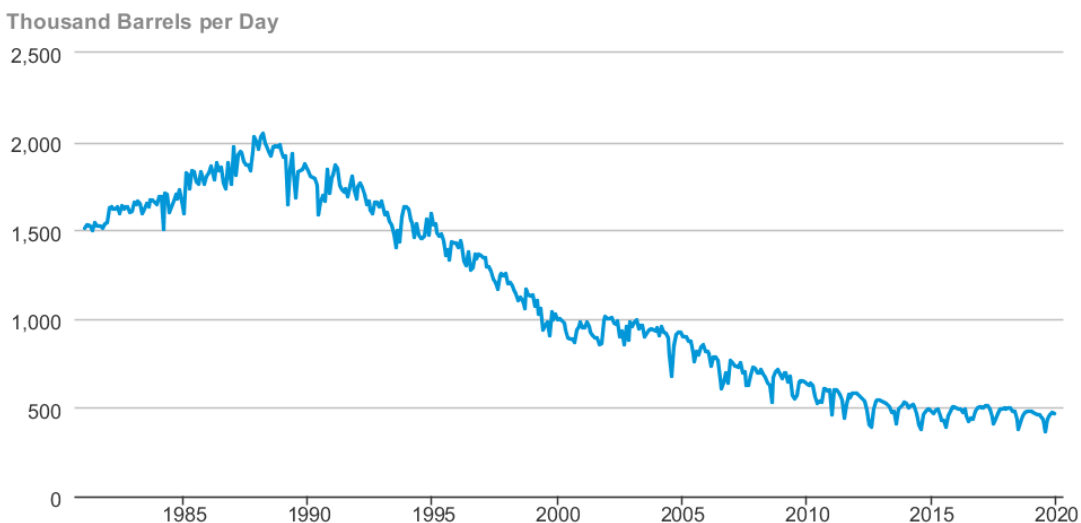
5000 – Terminal Operations Program

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

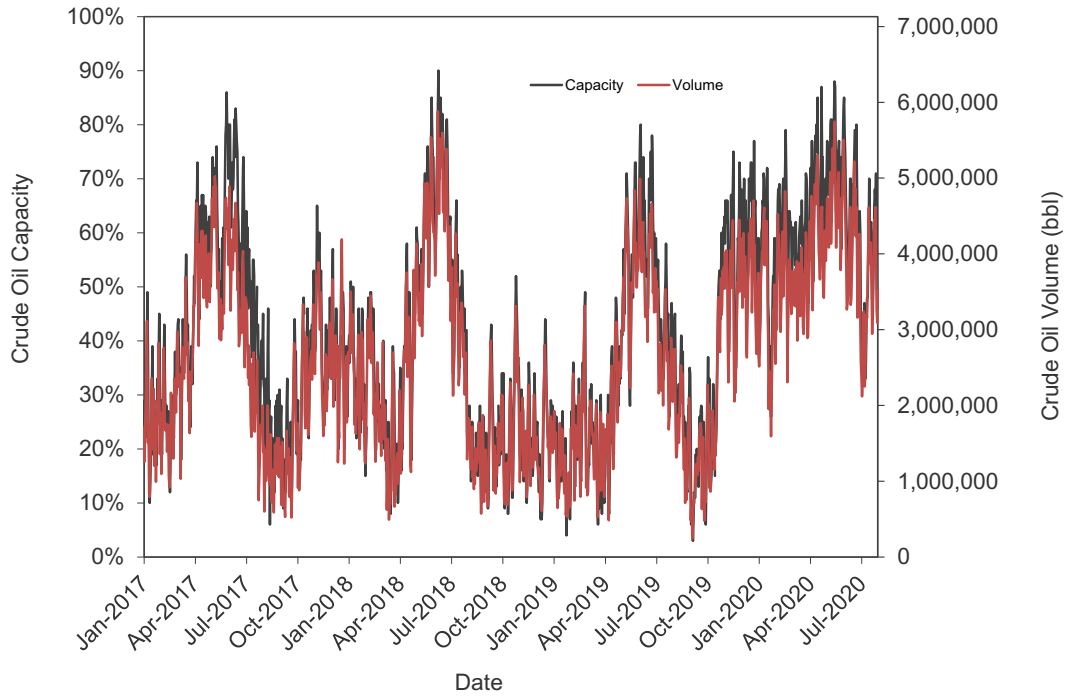
Accomplishments since last report: Monitored spills associated with operation and maintenance of the terminal, crude oil laden tanker ship tug escorts, 2020 VMT projects, and water quality of effluent discharged from BWTF and sewage treatment facility.

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

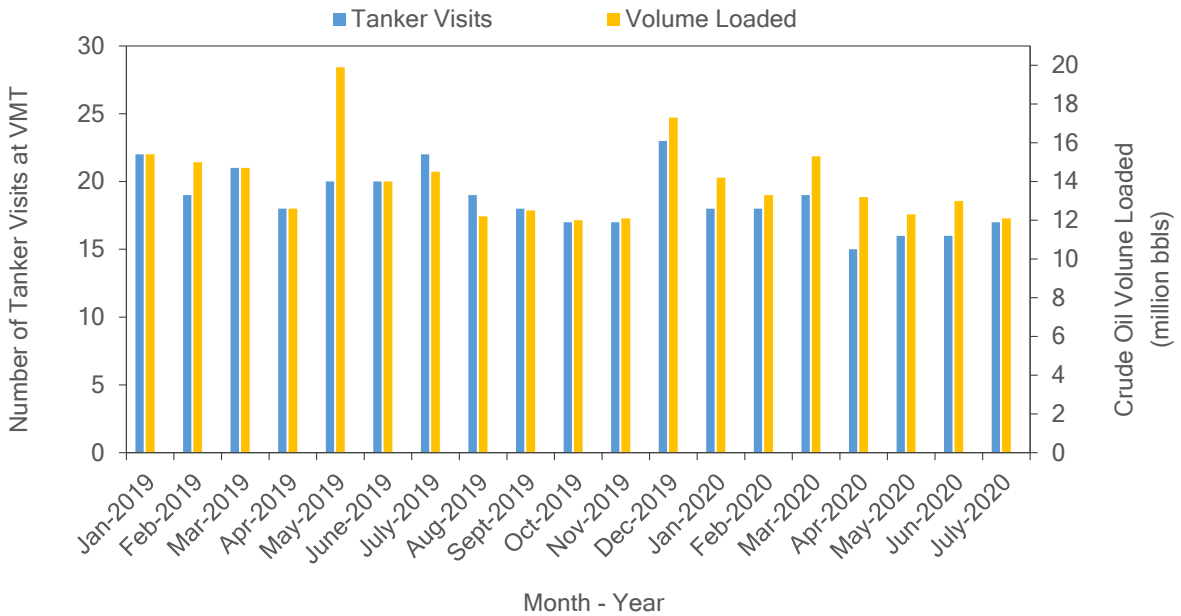
- **Trans-Alaska Pipeline Throughput, Thousand Barrels per Day** (Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration)



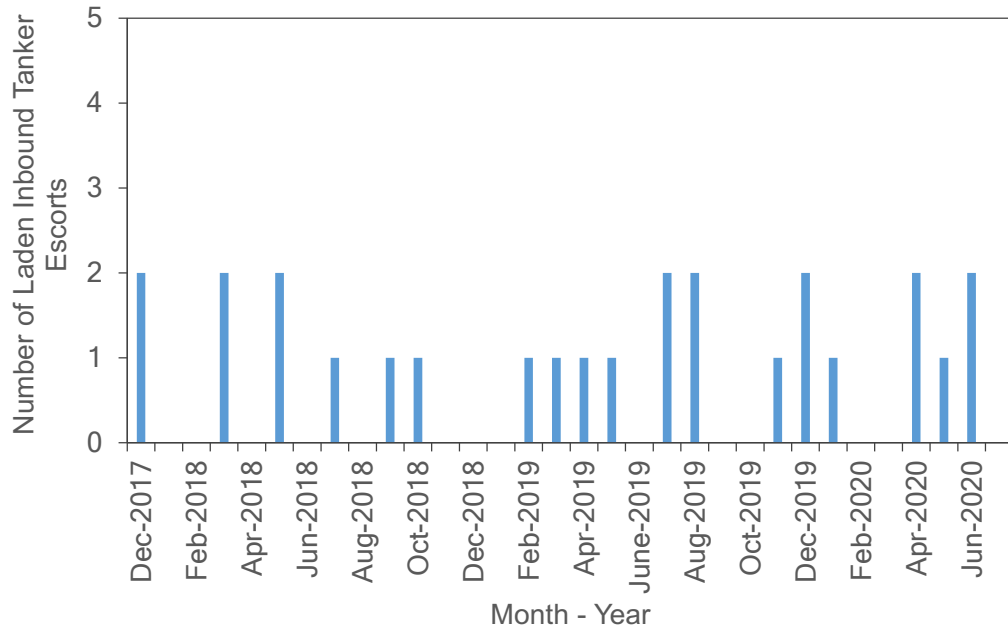
- **Crude oil stored at the Valdez Marine Terminal** (Source: Alaska Department of Revenue Tax Division and Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. Current through July 2020.)



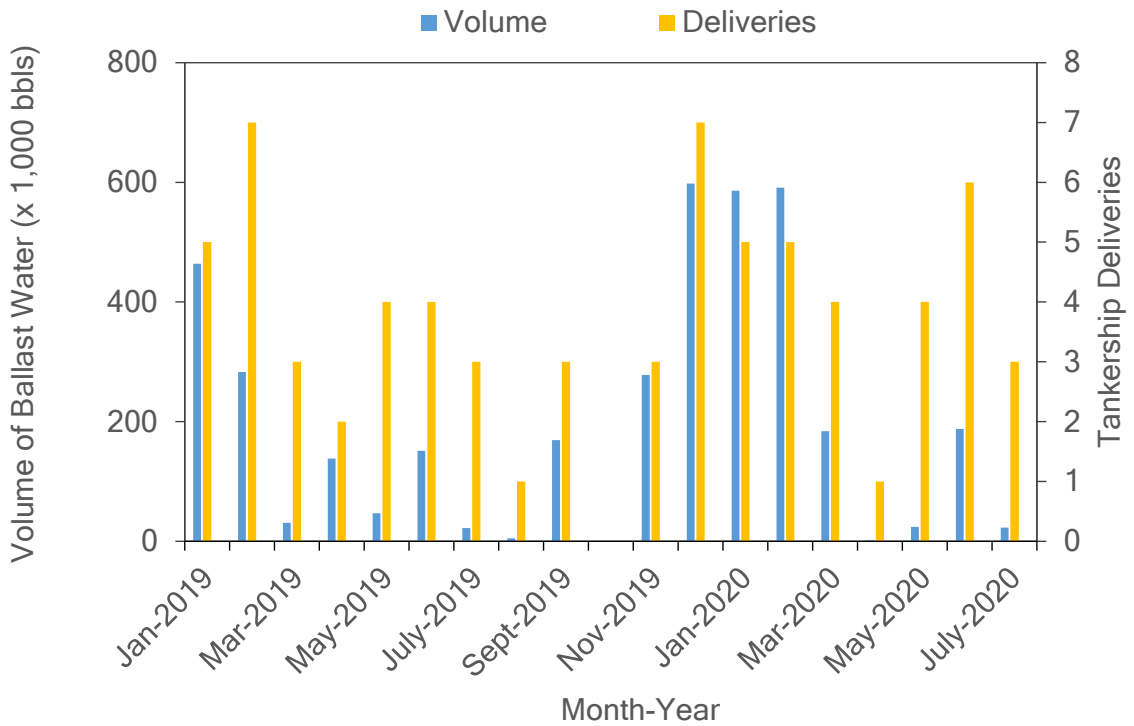
- **Crude oil loaded and tanker visits at VMT.** (Source: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company Vessels Nearby Schedule. Partitioned by VMT vessel arrival date, current through July 2020.)



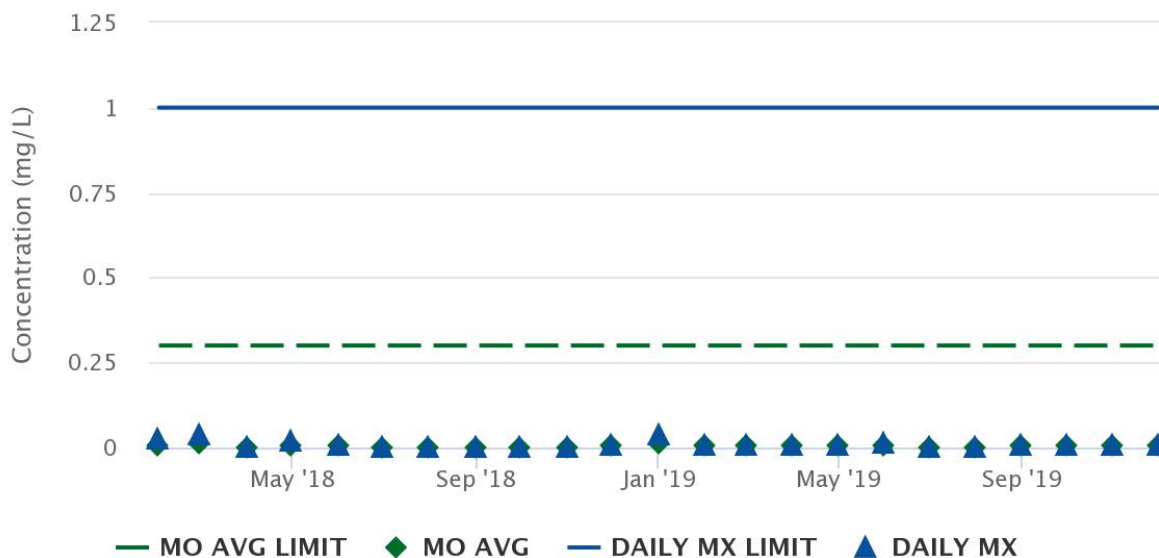
- Inbound, laden tanker escorts.** (Source: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company Vessels Nearby Schedule. Partitioned by VMT vessel arrival date and determined based on if vessel was escorted inbound or not, current through July 2020.)



- Ballast water deliveries to Ballast Water Treatment Facility from tanker ships** (Source: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company Vessels Nearby Schedule. Partitioned by VMT vessel arrival date, current through July 2020.)



- Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene (BTEX) discharged from the Valdez Marine Terminal's Ballast Water Treatment Facility** – The solid line depicts the maximum permitted limit, while the dashed line depicts the average. The diamonds depict the average monthly concentration, while the triangles depict the maximum concentration measured within a month. Note, Ballast Water Treatment Facility effluent data on EPA website is only available through November 2019, Council staff will try to determine why this is the case (Source: EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online).



5056 – Tank 8 Internal Inspection Review

Overall Goal: The goal of this project is to review and thereby monitor an important aspect of the maintenance of the Valdez Marine Terminal, the scheduled 2019-2020 internal inspection and repair of crude oil storage Tank 8.

Accomplishments since last report: A contractor, Taku Engineering, LLC, was selected for the project. A contract was finalized between Taku Engineering and the Council. Taku Engineering started work on the project, compiled a list of needed information, and an information request was submitted to Alyeska for this project. Alyeska has not been able to provide the requested information to the Council to date. Multiple meetings between the Alyeska liaison and Council management have occurred in regards to the information request. The Council’s Executive Director and Board President sent the Alyeska liaison a letter on July 23 asking to expedite the Tank 8 information request. On August 20, 2020 the Alyeska liaison provided a letter in response to the Council’s July 23 letter as well as some of the requested Tank 8 information. However, as of August 25, the majority of the Tank 8 information request remains unfulfilled.

5640 – ANS Crude Oil Properties

Objectives: This project entails analyzing the physical and chemical properties of Alaska North Slope Crude Oil and interpreting how those properties would impact the effectiveness of oil spill response measures including mechanical recovery, in-situ burning, and dispersants.

Accomplishments to date: Obtained 2019 Alaska North Slope Crude Oil sample from Valdez Marine Terminal. Sample sent to Environment Canada analytical lab. The next step is to finalize an agreement with Environment Canada to chemically and physically analyze the oil sample, they offered to perform that expensive work pro bono for the Council.

5591 – Crude Oil Piping Inspections Review

Objectives: From 2016 through 2018 Alyeska conducted projects that resulted in a majority of the Valdez Marine Terminal’s crude oil piping being comprehensively, internally inspected for the first time since the terminal was constructed in 1977. The goal of this project would be to provide Alyeska with comments, advice and/or recommendations pertaining to the maintenance of crude oil piping at the VMT. In addition to that goal, this project should help PWSRCAC more fully understand the results of these inspections and how Alyeska plans to use the data gained from these projects in the overall integrity management of crude oil piping at the VMT.

Accomplishments since last report: A contractor has been selected by the TOEM Committee to complete this project, through the request for proposal process. However, this project was not funded in the FY 2021 budget. Therefore, while a contractor has been identified, this project cannot move forward until funding becomes available and the Board approves of funding it.

5998 – Cathodic Protection Systems Review

Objectives: The purpose of this project is to review and analyze the operation and maintenance of the cathodic protection systems used at the Valdez Marine Terminal to limit corrosion on the crude oil storage tanks and piping at the facility. The goals of this project are to improve the Council’s current understanding of these critical systems and, if warranted, identify ways Alyeska’s operation and maintenance of the VMT could be improved, such that the risks of an oil spill from the terminal are decreased. Another goal of this project is to highlight where and how Alyeska implements industry best practices in regards to the operation and maintenance of cathodic protection systems at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Accomplishments since last report: Work has not moved forward on this project because Alyeska has not provided all the information initially requested by the Council’s contractor, National Pipeline Services, on January 10, 2020. Multiple meetings and communications (e.g., emails, phone calls) between the Alyeska Liaison and Council staff have occurred since January in regards to completing the information request. The Council’s Executive Director and Board President sent the Alyeska Liaison a letter on July 23 asking to expedite this project’s information request (the same letter sent in regards to the Tank 8 project). On August 20, 2020 the Alyeska liaison provided a letter in response to the Council’s July 23 letter. While the letter from the Alyeska liaison specifically addressed the Council’s Tank 8 project information request, it made no specific reference to the Cathodic Protection Systems Review project information request. The information request pertaining to this project remains incomplete.

6000 – Oil Spill Response Program

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

Accomplishments since the last report:

Regional and Area Planning

- **Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT):** The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2020 which is open for the general public. General information on the ARRT can be found [HERE](#), and ARRT meeting information can be found [HERE](#).

- **Prince William Sound Area Committee (PWSAC):** The next meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2020 in Valdez. Meeting minutes from the March 17, 2020 PWSAC meeting are attached as Attachment A. Information on the PWS Area Contingency Plan can be found on ADEC's website [HERE](#).
- **Arctic and Western Alaska Area Committee (AWA-AC):** No date has been set for the next meeting. Information on the AWA Area Contingency Plan can be found [HERE](#).
- **Alaska Inland Area Contingency Plan:** Comments were submitted on the public review of the Alaska Inland Contingency Plan on July 17, 2020.

BP-Hilcorp Transaction: The Hilcorp/Harvest Alaska transaction is ongoing. The agencies and offices involved in this complex transaction include the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska Attorney General's office, the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Hilcorp/Harvest Alaska is expected to provide a presentation at the PWSRCAC Board meeting in September.

ADEC Public Scoping on Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan Requirements: On March 11, 2020, PWSRCAC uploaded comments on ADEC's public scoping to their website. Comments received can be viewed on ADEC's website [HERE](#). ADEC is currently reviewing comments received from the public review. ADEC is expected to provide a briefing at the PWSRCAC Board meeting in September.

6510 – Contingency Planning Project

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

The Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (PWS Tanker C-Plan) and associated vessel response plans for Alaska Tanker Company, BP Oil Shipping Company, Crowley Alaska Tankers, Polar Tankers, and Tesoro Alaska Company (Andeavor) were renewed on February 1, 2017 and will expire in 2022. Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (Alyeska) Valdez Marine Terminal Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (VMT C-Plan) was renewed on November 15, 2019 and will be in effect until November 21, 2024.

Accomplishments since last report:

VMT C-Plan

VMT C-Plan Amendment 2020-1: Amendment 2020-1 incorporates revisions to the VMT C-Plan based on the consensus terms reached during the Collaborative Process with respect to the *Solomon Gulch Hatchery and Valdez Duck Flats Sensitive Area Mobilization Decision Matrix*, the subject of the administrative appeal in 2017. The parties agreed that Alyeska will replace the matrix with language that rapid and immediate boom deployment to protect the Valdez Duck Flats (VDF) and Solomon Gulch Hatchery (SGH) would be required whenever a spill of 5 bbls (210 gallons) or greater occurred, or an unknown volume reached Port Valdez. The following is the timeline of amendment 2020-1:

- January 2020: Alyeska submits Amendment 2020-1
- February – March 2020: public review
- March 19, 2020: PWSRCAC submits comments
- May 2020: ADEC issues Requests for Additional Information
- June 12, 2020: Alyeska submits responses to RFAIs

- July 17, 2020: PWSRCAC submits final comments on RFAI responses
- September 23, 2020: due date for ADEC's decision on Amendment 2020-1

Condition of Approval (COA) #3B: COA #3B in the November 2019 VMT C-plan approval (available [HERE](#)) required Alyeska to work with ADEC on deployment exercises to protect Saw Island and Seal Island prior to October 2020. Alyeska requested that it be given credit for satisfying this COA due to deployment of both of these sites during the April 2020 Admin Sump Incident response. ADEC found ADEC met the requirements of COA #3B and issued a decision on June 1, 2020.

VMT Coordination Work Group: The VMT Coordination Work Group met on July 7, 2020. A priority topic for the work group will be to look at the ICS checklist in Volume 3 of the plan. The list may be rearranged to make it easier for the end user. One of the action items from the meeting in accordance with the work group charter is for participants to identify priority topics for discussion.

Pending:

1. PWSRCAC Informal Review: On December 6, 2019, PWSRCAC filed requests for informal reviews on:

- (1) integrity of the secondary containment liner,
- (2) spill source containment deficiencies with Drainage 58; and
- (3) number of personnel needed to meet regulatory requirements for a Response Planning Standard-sized spill remain outstanding.

2. PWSRCAC Request for Adjudicatory Hearing: On December 16, 2019, PWSRCAC filed a Request for Adjudication Hearing on the same issue that is the subject of the 2017 Request. Action on PWSRCAC's request for adjudicatory hearing on protection of the VDF and SGH is dependent upon the outcome of VMT C-Plan Amendment 2020-1.

3. Alyeska Informal Review: On December 5, 2019, Alyeska requested an informal review on:

- (1) Condition of Approval No. 2: Secondary Containment Commitment;
- (2) Condition of Approval No. 4: Training Updates Needed; and
- (3) Condition of Approval No. 6: Update of VMT C-Plan Information.

PWS Tanker C-Plan

Change of Ownership - Hilcorp North Slope LLC Tank Vessel Operations Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan: On July 16, 2020, ADEC approved a minor amendment to the BP Oil Shipping Company, USA Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan changing the ownership of BP's plan to Hilcorp North Slope. According to 18 AAC 75.414, a change of ownership is considered a minor amendment, so the changes do not go out for public comment.

6511 – History of Contingency Planning

Objectives: Objectives: The purpose of this project is to take a long-term view of contingency planning in Alaska spanning over 30 years since the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. This project will document where progress has been made and where protections have decreased through the established regulatory record. The final report will capture the evolution of contingency planning in Alaska by identifying key issues, themes, and trends over time.

Accomplishments since last report:

- On June 8, 2020, a contract was entered into with Nuka Research and Planning Group to begin working on the history of the Prince William Sound Tanker Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plans.

- In July, contractors and staff met to kick off this project. Nuka will focus on findings documents and PWSRCAC's comments on the PWS Tanker plan only.
- Issues from the last 30+ years are being identified from ADEC's decisions and PWSRCAC's comments.
- Staff is assembling documents and working through PWSRCAC's internal document management system so that Nuka has access to critical information and documentation.

6530 – Weather Data / Sea Currents Project

Objectives: This project studies wind, water current and other environmental factors near the Valdez Marine Terminal, in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. Weather conditions affect the safe navigation of vessels and aids the ability to prevent, respond to, contain and clean up an oil spill. Accurate weather data for the region supports research and decision making in areas like oil spill response, traffic management, vessel performance specification and contingency planning.

Accomplishments since last report: Equipment at Nuchek and Cape St Elias is operating without incident.

A maintenance trip is being planned to replace the batteries and guy wires on the Cape St. Elias weather station in August or September.

6530 – Weather Data / Sea Currents Project

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

Accomplishments since last report: Equipment at Nuchek and Cape St Elias is operating without incident.

6531 – Port Valdez Weather Buoys

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

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

The Council's Board of Directors has long advocated that robust weather monitoring systems be located in the vicinity on the Valdez Marine Terminal (VMT). This includes proposals to install ultrasonic anemometers at the loading berths and a weather station at the VMT. The Council's Board of Directors passed a resolution expressly requesting a weather station be employed at the terminal on January 22, 2016.

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

Accomplishments since last report: A MOU was signed with NOAA that will establish a PORTS (Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System) site for Port Valdez. NOAA will be using our buoy data along with information derived from their weather stations and tide gauges located in Valdez. A press release is prepared to announce this event, when the site goes live. It may be online by the September Board meeting.

NOAA describes this system as “PORTS® is a decision support tool that improves the safety and efficiency of maritime commerce and coastal resource management through the integration of real-time environmental observations, forecasts and other geospatial information. PORTS® measures and disseminates observations and predictions of water levels, currents, salinity, and meteorological parameters (e.g., winds, atmospheric pressure, air and water temperatures) that mariners need to navigate safely”.

An example for Cherry Point, WA can be seen at <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=cp>

The support contract for the Prince William Sound Science Center was renewed for FY 2021.

The OSPR Committee accepted a proposal from JOA Surveys to provide support services for its two weather/metocean buoys. The contractor is currently working on a power monitoring panel and charging system design. JOA will participate in the annual haul out and maintenance of the buoys in October.

6536 – Analysis of Weather Buoy Data

Objectives: In 2019, PWSRCAC was able to install two weather buoys in Port Valdez, one in the vicinity of the Valdez Marine Terminal and the other near the Valdez Duck Flats. The buoys are expected to collect weather data for at least five years. This project would be the first of five projects that would take the data collected in each of the five years and perform an analysis to determine any weather trends throughout the year and seasonally. The analysis should include current and wind direction and speed information, wave direction and heights, and other pertinent information that can be obtained from the weather data.

Accomplishments since last report: Buoy data is currently being produced and collected. Analyzation will begin sometime after September 30, 2020.

6533 – Hinchinbrook Entrance Wind and Wave Extremes

Objectives: Working cooperatively with the Prince William Sound Science Center, this project seeks to provide improved observations of weather and wave conditions seen at the Hinchinbrook Entrance to Prince William Sound. The primary focus of this effort will be the eastern portion of the Entrance that encompasses the established vessel traffic lanes that pass by Cape Hinchinbrook. It is proposed to install an X-band (8.0 to 12.0 GHz) wave radar, upland weather station, and supporting equipment at Cape Hinchinbrook.

This equipment will be used to measure the spectra of wave height and direction on the water at the Entrance and provide observations of standard meteorological variables, wind speed/direction, temperature, humidity, and barometric pressure at the Cape. A subsurface moored wave gauge will be installed to ground truth the radar observations. Power to the equipment installed on the uplands will be provided by solar panels and a wind generator. Data generated by the equipment will be telemetered out via cellular modem link to the Naked Island communications site.

Collection of weather data affects the safe navigation of vessels and aids the ability to prevent, respond to, contain, and clean up an oil spill. This project supports the Council’s mission by providing the organization with the best scientific knowledge on weather in the region to help make informed decisions and comments that are scientifically justified in an area of spill response where there is a significant data gap.

Accomplishments since last report: The project was included in the long-range planning process and funding has been secured to pursue a land use permit from the Coast Guard. Establishment of a weather station at Cape Hinchinbrook will be proposed once a permit is secured.

Members of the Board and staff met with Rear Admiral Matthew T. Bell Jr. in Juneau. This project was discussed with the Admiral, who seemed to support it. Staff was able to meet with permitting personnel in Juneau and an initial application has been filed with the Coast Guard.

Staff has been in contact with the Coast Guard at District 17 to encourage the issuance of a land use permit for the weather station. A response on this request has not been received yet. Captain Ed Page of the Marine Exchange of Alaska has volunteered to help us with the effort to secure a permit.

7000 – Oil Spill Response Operations Program

Objective: The Oil Spill Response Operations Program encompasses monitoring and reporting on the activities related to the operational readiness of the oil spill response personnel, equipment and organization of the TAPS shipping industry. The program also encompasses monitoring actual oil spill incidents within our region and evaluation of overall response readiness. Additionally, the program includes the planning and implementation of PWSRCAC’s Incident Response Plan.

Accomplishments since last report: COVID has prompted *cancellation of annual Fall fishing Vessel training* in Cordova and Whittier this year. In order to stay current with certifications and be able to respond, Program participants will complete their HAZWOPER renewals online this year and show that they took the course to satisfaction. Training is anticipated to start back up again “as usual” this spring.

The *VMT C-plan coordination workgroup* met on 7/7. This was a fairly light meeting in terms of the agenda topics, but it also represented a fresh start to some degree with all VMT related C-plan amendments and updates being completed. The workgroup discussed respective organizational calendars and how the charter cites the groups should identify and work 5 priority topics. Participants will meet again next quarter and revisit these 5 priority topics for discussion, with one suggested idea already being raised to address and work through some edits on ICS position checklists.

Weekly briefings with the *Admin Sump Spill* have continued. Staff members Lally, Robertson, and Robida have been attending via teleconference and are continuing to take and steer notes into document management. The biggest development at this point is an intent to remove the temporary piping system that’s been redirecting water into a different sump, and swap this to more of a longer-term solution. This is necessary since snow removal will be impossible given the above-ground run of the current temporary piping system. Above ground means potential freezing of liquids inside the temporary pipeline during the winter. Finally, the size of this system itself needs to be upsized, or some sort of additional capacity will be needed to manage heavier spring snow melt and flow rate further into the future.

7520 – Preparedness Monitoring

Objectives: PWSRCAC's Drill Monitoring program falls under a broader program called Oil Spill Response Operations. Objectives for the Drill Monitoring program are to promote oil spill response operational

readiness within the EVOS region by observing, monitoring, and reporting on spill response drills, exercises, and training in the EVOS region; to provide citizens, regulatory agencies and responders (Alyeska and the shippers) with independent observations and recommendations to improve preparedness; and to provide citizen oversight.

Targets of the Drill Monitoring project included:

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

Recent Exercises:

Sheep Bay OSRB-2 Deployment Exercise – June 10, 2020

Alyeska conducted an open water response exercise off of Sheep Bay in Prince William Sound. This exercise included four fishing vessels working with the tug and barge. Alyeska is conducting a number of these exercises because it allows the tug, barge, and fishing vessel crews to train without having to physically interact as a precaution to the COVID-19 virus.

Upcoming Drills and Exercises

Valdez Marine Terminal Tabletop Exercise – Postponed

Andeavor PWS Shipper's Exercise – Postponed until October 2021

Polar Tankers PWS Shipper's Exercise – Spring of 2021

7901 – Resources for the RSC and Affected Communities

Objective: This project will assemble relevant information and reference material for those involved in the Regional Stakeholder Committee (RSC) process, so that RSC members have easy to digest, easy to find, web-based resources they can draw from. The project will build upon and capture materials from the previous Spill Response for Stakeholders Council-led workshop series, along with other information that the RSC members could use to better represent their communities and understand Alyeska-applicable VMT and Tanker contingency plans and response assets.

Accomplishments since last report: As of the May Board meeting, contractor Nuka Research and Planning had been selected to conduct this work, but the contract had just been initiated, and no work had occurred yet. Much has changed since then. Approximately 80% of content has been generated with staff having the chance to get several rounds of review on this material. Interviews with former RSC participants has also occurred, and these personal experiences have been vital in shaping what materials and resources should be present within this online guide. There are still several interviews to go. Staff and Nuka have also worked through a lot of website specifics in terms of navigating this information. This navigation discussion was more complex than expected, but we have developed a good plan, and content is starting to get set online, but hidden from view. Once content is organized and fully online, volunteer and committee feedback will be requested..

8000 – Maritime Operations Program

Objectives: This program reviews port organization, operations, incidents, and the adequacy and maintenance of the Coast Guard Vessel Traffic System, and coordinates with the Port Operations and

Vessel Traffic Systems (POVTS) Committee. Major program components include participation with the Valdez Marine Safety Committee (VMSC), monitoring changes to the escort system, reviewing Best Available Technology documents for the escort system and the Vessel Emergency Response Plan (VERP), participating in the monthly SERVS/PWSRCAC communication meetings, monthly ADEC/PWSRCAC communications meetings, and supporting maintenance for the NOAA weather stations.

8012 – Tanker Towline Deployment BAT Review

Objectives: Oil tankers operating in Prince William Sound are required to carry emergency towing equipment packages. The availability of this equipment can allow a stricken tanker to be towed safely to a place of refuge, where further action can be taken to stabilize the vessel.

A key action that must occur in the use of one of these towing systems is to successfully make the final connection between the tow package messenger line on a rescue tugboat and the vessel to be towed. Messenger lines to stricken vessels can be passed by hand, heaved or thrown aboard, projected by mechanical means or picked out of the water. Weather is often a factor in vessel casualties and retrieving a line can be difficult and dangerous in poor weather.

Accomplishments since last report: Captain Peter Soles of Glosten made a report on the project at the May Board meeting and the project final report was later accepted by the Executive Committee.

Staff has been working with Glosten to submit an article to International Tug and OSV magazine. If all goes well, it will be published this fall. This is a premier venue for getting information out to industry on the project.

A follow-on demonstration project will be included in the long-range planning process.

8010 – Rescue Tug Best Available Technology

Objectives: Information gathered and developed from this research project will be used to build on the base of information that PWSRCAC has currently completed. Advances in technology dictate reevaluation of current standards of technology and this evaluation represents a chance to identify best practices that might otherwise be overlooked. Project results will be shared with the public, industry and regulatory stakeholders.

Accomplishments since last report:

An RFP was prepared for this project and reviewed by the POVTS Committee. Proposals are due at the end of August.

The Board is being asked at its September 2020 meeting to delegate contract authority for this project to the Executive Committee. This will allow the project to start without delay, once a proposal is selected.

9000 – Environmental Monitoring Program

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

- Project manager to attend a technical scientific conference

- Project manager to attend the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) and other meetings
- Conduct PWSRCAC Science Night

Accomplishments since last report: Council staff reviewed the budget for this program and project manager Austin Love recommended moving the \$14,400 included under this program for Science Night into the Council' contingency fund. Love felt that given the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic it was highly unlikely that an in-person Science Night event was advisable this coming December in Anchorage. It was agreed to have the Board weigh in on this topic during the September 2020 Board meeting.

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

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

- Perform winter bird surveys in Prince William Sound for three consecutive years
- Analyze data obtained during winter bird surveys
- Report the results of the analysis
- Make winter bird survey maps readily available for use by spill response managers

Accomplishments since last report: A draft scope of work for this project has been created by Council project manager Austin Love. The draft scope of work was created in consultation with researchers from the Prince William Sound Science Center. The Scientific Advisory Committee, Council staff, and other committee and Board members have provided Love with comments on the draft scope of work, and he will use those comments to update and finalize the project's scope of work. It is anticipated a contract for this project will be in place with the Prince William Sound Science Center by October 2020.

9510 – Long Term Environmental Monitoring Program

Objectives: Comprehensively monitor the actual and potential environmental impacts related to the Valdez Marine Terminal and associated crude oil tankers and provide the Council with information about the presence and effects of hydrocarbons generated by the terminal facility and associated tankers. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Obtain environmental samples in Port Valdez: marine sediments, mussels, and passive sampling devices
- Analyze environmental samples
- Interpret and report results of sample analysis
- Present analytical findings to the PWSRCAC Board of Directors
- Maintain Environmental Monitoring Program Plan

Accomplishments since last report: With the exception of one more planned sampling event on August 19, all environmental monitoring field work has been completed (to collect mussel, sediment, and passive sampling device samples). The hydrocarbon chemistry analysis of mussel tissue and marine sediments has been completed; and interpretation and reporting regarding that data is just beginning. The hydrocarbon chemistry analysis of the passive sampling devices is ongoing. The transcriptomic analysis of mussel tissue samples is ongoing.

9511 – Herring and Forage Fish Surveys

Objectives: Monitor schools of herring and other forage fish species in order to identify areas in Prince William Sound where they tend to concentrate. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Conduct aerial surveys of forage fish in Prince William Sound
- Analyze aerial survey data and report on the results
- Make aerial survey maps readily available for use by spill response managers

Accomplishments since last report: The aerial surveys were completed in June 2020. Analysis and reporting is ongoing and a draft report is expected for delivery to the Council by August 2020. Maps from the 2019 survey work have still not been uploaded to NOAA’s Arctic Environmental Response Management Application but is still planned for the future.

9520 – Marine Invasive Species

Objectives: Understand and minimize the environmental impacts of harmful invasive species arriving in the PWSRCAC region due to the TAPS trade via ballast water and hull fouling. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Obtain plankton samples in Port Valdez and Prince William Sound
- Perform metagenetic analysis on plankton samples to identify any non-indigenous species
- Interpret and report results of plankton metagenetic analysis
- Conduct monitoring of invasive crab species in Valdez and Cordova

Accomplishments since last report: Mia Siebenmorgen Cresswell, the Council’s invasive species monitoring intern in Cordova, renewed her internship with the Council. She has been deploying traps to monitor for European green crabs and other invasive species on a monthly basis since May 2020, and is also using settlement plates in the Cordova harbor to monitor for invasive tunicates. Settlement plates are only checked once every three months. On May 1, 2020 Mia provided a presentation to her high school environmental science class about her invasive species monitoring work – it was a great presentation and is available upon request.

On May 27, 2020, Council staff deployed settlement plates at the Valdez Marine Terminal to monitor for invasive tunicate species, among others. It is planned for those plates to get retrieved and photographed for species identification in September 2020.

Dr. Jonathan Gellar completed the final report summarizing the metagenetic analysis that Moss Landing Marine Labs conducted on 2018 and 2019 Port Valdez and Prince William Sound plankton samples. That report is up for Board acceptance during this meeting.

9550 - Dispersants

Objectives: Continue monitoring dispersants research and regulatory issues and to perform direct research to address research gaps. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Review dispersants scientific literature
- Update PWSRCAC’s dispersants scientific literature spreadsheet
- Develop dispersants environmental tradeoff analysis tool (dispersants ETA tool)

Accomplishments since last report: Dr. Merv Fingas updated the Council’s dispersants scientific research bibliography. It is now complete through the spring of 2020. The bibliography includes 1,716 documents from 1981 through 2020. Dr. Fingas provided a summary presentation to the Scientific Advisory Committee about the latest trends and results pertaining to dispersants research.

9590 – Hydrocarbon Toxicity

Objectives: Research and address gaps in knowledge regarding chronic toxic effects of oil, dispersed oil and in-situ burn residue under study conditions closely approximating the marine waters of PWSRCAC’s region. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Continue funding hydrocarbon toxicity studies of PWS fish species by NOAA’s Northwest Fisheries Science Center

Accomplishments since last report: Dr. John Incardona from NOAA provided the Scientific Advisory Committee with an update on the status of this project. He said that it will be completed this year, as planned, and expects that multiple scientific journal articles will result from this work. He also noted that much of the Council’s funding on this project went toward post-doctoral work by, Dr. Alysha Cypher, who now is on the staff of the Prince William Sound Science Center. Dr. Incardona said he would be happy to provide an overall presentation of the results of this project to the Board later this year – the January Board meeting might be an opportune time. Finally, the third and last round of funding for NOAA was recently provided by the Council to NOAA in August 2020.

9650 – Review and Update Coping with Technological Disasters – A User Friendly Guidebook

Objectives: Review and update of PWSRCAC’s *Coping with Technological Disasters: A User Friendly Guidebook*, originally produced in 1999. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Perform in-house review of the guidebook and appendices
- Update the guidebook
- Update the guidebook’s appendices
- Promote awareness and use of the guidebook and appendices

Accomplishments since last report: PWSRCAC staff and volunteers continued reviewing and updating the guidebook’s appendices. The work to update the appendices has taken longer than originally envisioned because the original estimate of the amount of time it would take to complete this work was inaccurate. Originally, it was estimated the appendices could be updated by May 2020, but that was not feasible. Due to the need for more time to complete the project, Joe Banta will continue as a part-time Council employee, coordinating the completion of this work. A draft of the appendices is expected to be ready for review by the Scientific Advisory Committee by the end of September 2020. The goal is to have the appendices completed in time for Board review during the January 2020 meeting.

9660 – The Recovery of a Subsistence Way of Life

Objectives: Use Prince William Sound household survey data, gathered by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to conduct a study examining the socioeconomics of the post Exxon Valdez Oil Spill recovery from a local community perspective. Here are the notable tasks to be accomplished under this program:

- Analyze data from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Prince William Sound household surveys
- Prepare a journal-length paper with a summary of study findings to be submitted to a peer reviewed journal by the authors

Accomplishments since last report: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has provided the Council with a draft of the technical paper. That draft was reviewed by the Scientific Advisory Committee and they provided comments to ADF&G to consider in the next revision of the paper. ADF&G updated the report appropriately based on the Scientific Advisory Committee's comments. That revision of the report is available for review in this Board meeting packet, and ADF&G will be providing the Board with a summary overview presentation of the report's key findings during this meeting. The draft report has also been provided to Alaska Native stakeholders in the Prince William Sound/Gulf of Alaska region for their review and comments.