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## Stronger tugs reach Prince William Sound

Two powerful tractor tugs arrived in Prince William Sound this summer in the first part of a two-phase program by Alyeska Pipeline Service co. to beef up its tanker escort services.

The 5,500-horsepower tugs — the Protector and the Guard — reached Valdez in mid-July and early August. Tractor tugs, according to a risk assessment study co-sponsored by the citizens' council, will be better able to help than conventional tugs would if a tanker gets in trouble.

"They're incredibly maneuverable because of their propulsion system," said Tracy Green, an Alyeska spokeswoman.

The Protector-class tugs are still undergoing crew training and maintenance. But when one of them is on escort duty, it will be tethered to the stern of a laden tanker from the Alyeska terminal to just past Bligh Reef, site of the Exxon Valdez spill. There, the tether will be released and the tractor tug will return to Valdez

*See Tugs, page 3*



Photo: Courtesy Crowley Maritime

The Tractor tugs Guard (shown here) and Protector arrived in Prince William Sound this summer for tanker escort duty.

## BP will conduct "Spill of National Significance" drill

**Scenario: Tanker aground at Hinchinbrook Entrance**

British Petroleum this month will stage a response drill for an Exxon Valdez-scale oil spill at the mouth of Prince William Sound.

With help from ARCO, Alyeska, the U.S. Coast Guard, the state of Alaska and the citizens' council, the oil giant will run through a scenario in which a laden tanker loses navigation capability and goes aground the morning of Sept. 18 at Middle Point on Montague Island.

The result: 300,000 barrels — about 13 million gallons — of North Slope crude spilling into the sea and heading southwest for

Seward, Kodiak and other communities that were oiled by the 11 million gallon Exxon Valdez spill nine years ago.

BP expects some 300 people — from government as well as industry — will work during the drill.

All 16 staffers of the citizens' council will also participate, along with council contractors and volunteers from the council's board and committees. The council's role will be to independently monitor the response activities, and to serve

*See BP, page 6*

## Vapor system passes safety check, but suffers valve problem

Alyeska's system for controlling crude oil vapors from tankers at the Valdez Marine Terminal passed a citizen's council safety review in late June.

But a month later, problems in a key valve temporarily forced a partial shutdown of the system.

The four-day safety review, conducted the week of June 24 by a panel of expert consultants hired by the council, was triggered by anonymous allegations that defects in the system could cause a major fire or explosion.

But the expert panel reported on June 27 that the system was "safe from all reasonable risk of catastrophic fire and explosion."

The system collects vapors forced out of tanker holds as crude oil flows in. The vapors are piped ashore to the terminal, where they are burned to produce electricity, pumped into the voids in Alyeska's crude storage tanks,

or incinerated.

The problems in the system surfaced July 24 when a detonation arrestor valve in the vapor system failed to close during a routine maintenance check at Berth 5.

The device, also known as a Fenwal valve, is mounted on the piping that runs uphill from the tanker berth to the terminal's crude oil storage tanks, incinerator and power plant. The Fenwal valve is critical to safety because it is supposed to slam shut instantly to prevent a fire or explosion detected at one end of the system — such as in the power plant — from spreading through the piping to the other end, such as a tanker.

After the valve failed to close during the test, Alyeska shut down Berth 5.

Berth 4, which is also fitted with vapor controls and has an identical valve, tested normal and was kept in service.

*See Vapor, page 4*

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# People

## Peter Armato: Committee volunteer from Seward combines passions for Alaska, science and berry pie

Peter Armato is what you might call a science cop for the citizens' council.

He sits on the Scientific Advisory Committee, which is charged with seeing that council-sponsored research not only is useful, but also meets the highest professional and technical standards.

"I certainly hope the committee is viewed as being able to lend expertise where expertise may be needed," Armato said. "Not to be a hindrance to any process, but to provide insight where it may be lacking."

Armato, 51, was raised in the San Francisco area. He holds a master's degree in geology from Western Washington University in Bellingham, and is, as he puts it, "a heartbeat way" from getting his Ph.D. in marine biology from Greenwich University in Hawaii.

He came to Alaska in late 1995 from a job at California's Redwood National Park. Now he's with the National Park Service in Seward, where he helps oversee scientific work in a group of coastal parks: Aniakchak National Monument, Katmai National Park and Preserve, Kenai Fjords National Park, and Lake Clark National Park and Preserve.

"I always wanted to come to Alaska," Armato said. "And the

challenge of this position — I just couldn't pass that by."

He volunteered for the citizens' council's Scientific Advisory Committee in early 1996, shortly after his arrival in Seward, and plans to stay on it "as long as they'll have me."

"I can never see losing interest



Peter Armato

in it. It's such a dynamic committee with ever-changing projects and programs and tremendous responsibilities."

Nowadays, he estimates, he puts in 32 hours a month for the committee. He considers it time well spent.

"I do get some work time, but a good portion of it is personal time," Armato said. "I'll stay in the office late or work on it at home. It's a labor of love more than anything else."

He lives in Seward with his wife, Kathleen, who is executive

secretary to the director of the new SeaLife Center. They have four grown children, one of whom followed them to Alaska. That was their youngest daughter, who Peter said was distraught when her parents moved north.

"She came to Alaska for a visit, fully knowing she would not like it, that there was no way she would move here," Armato said. "But she fell in love with Alaska and one of its citizens and she married him."

On the Scientific Advisory Committee, Armato has worked with the council's Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program in Prince William Sound, with the study of whether non-indigenous species brought in by tanker ballast water pose a threat to the ecosystem of the Sound,

real broad background, which allows him to approach every project we have and contribute a great deal to each one."

Armato said one of the pleasures of his committee role is the chance to work directly with members of the council's Board of Directors.

"I would encourage all council members to become active at the committee level," Armato said. "They can begin to appreciate how committees approach problems and what the problems are and what our areas of responsibilities are."

Still, he wouldn't want anyone to think "I am too dull and have no life beyond science."

He's a SCUBA diver and enjoys cross-country skiing,

**"Peter's just a real bright guy. He's got a real broad background, which allows him to approach every project we have and contribute a great deal."**

and with this year's dispersants workshop.

Dick Tremaine, an Anchorage resource economist who chairs the science committee, said Armato's versatility makes him valuable.

"Peter's just a real bright guy," Tremaine said. "He's got a

hiking and camping. "I also," he adds, "enjoy picking berries with my wife due to the fact that she bakes a great berry pie."

## Board to consider name change

The citizens' council Board of Directors will hold its fall meeting in Seward this year. The meeting is Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 14-15, at the Alaska SeaLife Center.

Agenda items include:

- seating Paul McCollum, who was nominated by the City of Homer to replace Tex Edwards as its representative on the board
- picking the council volunteer of the year
- a report on plans for British Petroleum's oil-spill drill the week of Sept. 21.

The board will also hear a task force report on possible new names for the council. The motive is to find something that better describes the council's work and region, according to a memo by the task force that has been working under board member Wayne



Paul McCollum

Coleman of Kodiak since May.

Some possibilities from the task force: Citizens' Oil Advisory Council; Oil Transportation Advisory Council; Oiled Region Citizens' Council of Alaska; Oiled Region Citizens' Advisory Council; Citizens for Safe Oil Transportation; Citizens Monitoring Oil Transportation; Oil Transportation Monitoring Council.

## Council's application for recertification is up for review

The U.S. Coast Guard is considering the citizens' council's application for recertification as the alternative voluntary advisory group for Prince William Sound, as authorized under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The Coast Guard is charged with assessing whether the council fosters the general goals and purposes of the Oil Pollution Act and is broadly representative of communities and interests affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Copies of the application can be obtained by contacting the council's Anchorage offices as shown on the back page of the Observer.

Comments may be mailed to the Docket Management Facility. (USCG-1998-4271), U.S. DOT, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington DC 20590-0001. They must arrive by Sept. 21, 1998.

## Council report is more than annual this year

The council's annual report, "1997-98 In Review," is available by request to the council's Anchorage office (see back page). This year's report covers the 18 months from

January 1997 through June 1998, unlike past reports that covered a calendar year. We are switching to a fiscal year publishing schedule to better match our budget cycle.



# Response and planning

## New ferry might become future spill-response headquarters

The people in charge of managing oil spills in Alaska waters may one day do so from a floating command post on the state's newest ferry, the MV Kennicott.

The 382-foot, \$80 million vessel entered service in June, running between Bellingham, Wash., and Skagway with one leg a month as far north as Seward. It can carry 750 passengers and around 75 vehicles at a cruising speed of 17 knots, according to Capt. George Capacci with the Alaska Marine Highway System.

But the Kennicott is also equipped to serve as an emergency nerve center.

"Be it an oil spill or a natural disaster — earthquake, tsunami, asteroid strike, whatever — it has the capability to be a floating command post," Capacci said.

The forward observation lounge, which is wired with eight satellite channels for data and voice traffic, would be the main control center. The vehicle deck would become a combination cargo hold and work space.

The Kennicott also boasts a helicopter landing pad, its own decontamination facilities for

oiled workers, housing for the workers, a dock that can be slung off the back for berthing fishing vessels up to 50 feet long, and enough power and cable to light up a small village experiencing generator problems.

The extra features needed for disaster response added \$15 million to the cost of the Kennicott, according to Larry Dietrick, manager of the state's oil spill prevention and emergency response program.

"It's a substantial asset," Dietrick said. "And it will perform well in a substantial event."

But a "substantial event" is the only kind that's likely to pull the Kennicott into service, according to Dietrick. That's because the ship rents for over \$50,000 a day.

Moreover, Dietrick said, the amount of dedicated response facilities already in place for Prince William Sound spills makes it unlikely the Kennicott would be needed there. It would be most likely to be drafted for a major spill in a remote location.

"When you've got a big spill, that's when you need your big assets," Dietrick said.

As usual with Alaska state



Photo: Courtesy State of Alaska

The state's newest ferry, the MV Kennicott, can serve as a command center for oil spills and other man-made or natural disasters.

ferries, the Kennicott is named after a glacier, this one in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park near the old copper mining town of Kennecott. The glacier, town and mine are all named after explorer Robert Kennicott, but the town and mine misspelled it.

The ship's name was selected from over 200 entries submitted

to the state's "Name the Ferry" contest by Alaska schoolchildren. Sixth-grader Leah Jarvis from Glennallen came up with "Kennicott," explaining that "it is a well known name and isn't an obscure glacier that tourists can't see and have never heard of."

## Alyeska responds to spills of another kind in Prince William Sound

The crews set up by Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. to rescue tankers in trouble instead rescued three fishing vessels in mid-August, according to the Valdez Vanguard newspaper.

In one of the three rescues, Alyeska's Ship Escort Vessel Response System pulled two

### Oil spills fewer, smaller in 1997

The amount of oil spilled into the world's waters dropped 10 million gallons from 1996 to 1997, according to the Oil Spill Intelligence Report. Figures from the International Oil Spill Database show spills totaled about 49 million gallons in 1997, down from 58.5 million gallons the year before, according to the intelligence report. The number of spills also dropped: from 202 in 1996 to 136 last year.

The worst recent year was 1991, with over 300 million gallons spilled.

people out of the water after their skiff capsized near the Alyeska tanker terminal on Aug. 13. Without Alyeska's help, Coast Guard Cmdr. Ron Morris wrote the company, the two people

probably would have died.

In one of the other incidents, Alyeska crews helped pump out and stabilize the fishing vessel Comstock after it began taking on water near Shoup Bay in Port

Valdez, also on Aug. 13.

And on Aug. 16, the SERVUS crews rescued three people from a beach at Jack Bay after their small boat went aground, according to the Vanguard.

### Tugs, continued from page 1

while other vessels escort the tanker until it reaches the Gulf of Alaska via Hinchinbrook Entrance.

The Protector and Guard — which Alyeska is chartering from Crowley Maritime Services Inc. for \$3 million a year per vessel — will serve at least until early 1999, when the company plans to replace them with even bigger tugs being built specifically for duty at Valdez.

Those tugs, which have a similar design but are larger and stronger at 10,000 horsepower, are due in Valdez by spring of next year, Green said.

Both new tugs will be named after Alaska bears, thanks to

entries from students in a contest Alyeska conducted. Jessica Millburn, a senior at Valdez High School, came up with Nanook, which means "polar" bear in Inupiaq, the Eskimo dialect spoken in northern Alaska. Gwen Vasloff, a first-grader from Tatitlek, submitted Tan'erliq, which means "black bear" in the Aleut language. Each winner gets an all-expenses-paid round-trip for two to Seattle for a tour of the shipyard where the new tugs are being built.

The citizens' council has been lobbying for years for tractor tugs because of their superior ability to save disabled tankers.

Different areas of the tanker route through Prince William

Sound pose different risks and challenges. Quick deployment and sharp maneuvering are critical in the early part of a tanker's outbound journey, through Valdez Narrows and Valdez Arm. Farther out, however, in the severe conditions as a tanker approaches the Gulf of Alaska, sheer power is the top priority. That was a major factor in Alyeska's decision to station the 11,500-horsepower Gulf Service at Hinchinbrook Entrance.

The decision to upgrade the tugs came in the wake of the Prince William Sound Risk Assessment, a joint effort of oil shipping companies, the citizens' council, regulatory agencies, and Alyeska.

# Air

*Vapor, Continued from page 1*

Alyeska's analysis concluded the problem at Berth 5 was caused by a fire extinguishing agent left in the system after an accidental discharge soon after startup in March. Rex Brown, Alyeska terminal operations advisor, said the agent itself, together with some corrosion it caused, prevented closure of the valve.

Alyeska cleaned the damaged valve and resumed using it on Aug. 14, said company spokeswoman Tracy Green. Alyeska has ordered a new part — called a gate — to replace the one damaged by the extinguishing agent and installed it August 31.

The company has also established a policy of cleaning out the pipes whenever the extinguishing agent — essentially baking soda — is discharged into the system, Green said.

Lynda Hyce, the citizens' council's deputy director in Valdez, said the council will carefully go over Alyeska's full report on the valve problems, but was gratified the company found the problem before it failed in a real emergency.

"This malfunction was found during routine maintenance," Hyce said. "That's a good thing."

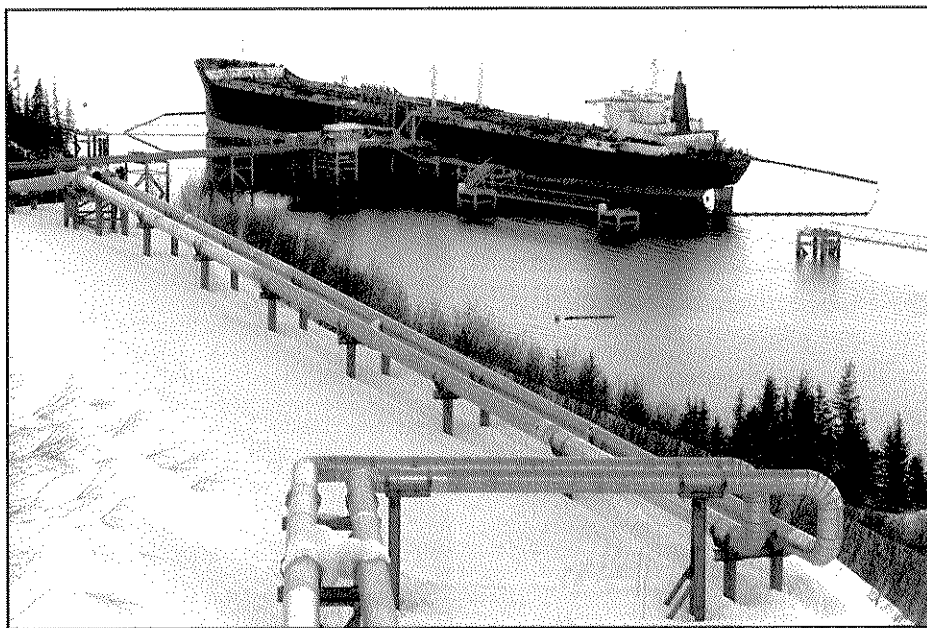


Photo: Courtesy Alyeska Pipeline

**New pipes were installed and tied into the existing Vapor Recovery System to carry vapors collected from tankers.**

The council's safety review had found Alyeska's preventive maintenance program satisfactory, but recommended the company "should continue their efforts to minimize equipment malfunction."

The vapor control system was a long-sought improvement by the citizens' council, which for years had argued releasing the vapors into the air might cause health problems — such as cancer — in Valdez

residents. The council has called on Alyeska to install controls at a third berth to cope with rising estimates of North Slope oil production after 2000.

Brown said the company is still analyzing the question.

"We're working with shippers on future fleet requirements and monitoring closely future pipeline throughput projections," he said.

## Does oil-spill solution lie on cutting-room floor?

An Alabama man has patented a system to clean up oil spills with human hair, and beauty salons are sending clippings his way, according to various press accounts.

The system: Stuff hair into pillows that are then thrown into spilled oil. They soak up the goo better than anything else that's been tried, according to the inventor, former hair salon owner Phil McCrory of Madison, Ala.

McCrory told the Anchorage Daily News he started his search for a better cleanup tool after watching oiled otters on CNN coverage of the Exxon Valdez spill nine years ago. Hair got a boost after the National Aeronautics and Space Administration tested some and reported it picks up five times its weight in oil. NASA put out a press release and McCrory's phone began to ring with calls from reporters, including the New York Times as well as the Anchorage Daily News.

So far, the hair pillows are not actually in production, though McCrory says he's dickering with a Japanese company to start making them.

## Protector tugs bring added security to Prince William Sound

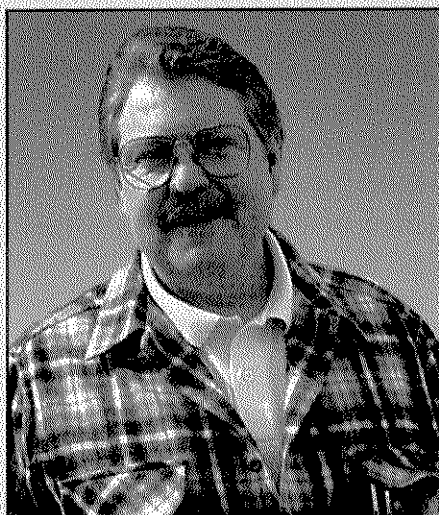
By **REX BROWN**  
Alyeska Terminal Advisor

The addition of two Protector-class tractor tugs to Alyeska's Ship Escort Response Vessel System (SERVS) fleet will provide even greater capability to prevent oil spills. "These tugs have incredible maneuverability," said Vince Mitchell, SERVS Mechanical Response Coordinator. "They can turn 360 degrees with equal power in any direction. They have the ability to stop and maneuver a fully laden taken under any condition."

The Protector arrived July 15, and the Guard on August 1. Receptions on the Protector allowed community members in Valdez and Tatitlek to view the tug and see first-hand what these vessels can do. The tugs will return to service in Washington following the arrival of two new Enhanced Tractor Tugs now under construction

in Anacortes, Washington. The Nanook, the first of the two 10,000 horsepower supertugs, is expected in Valdez in February 1999, with the Tan'erliq arriving by mid-1999.

### Alyeska Report



Rex Brown

Alyeska also faced some challenges this summer. The Fenwal Valve, a safety component in the Tanker Vapor Control System designed to slam shut in a fraction of a second in the event

of an emergency, operated properly on Berth five after the March 19 startup of the system. However, during a routine quarterly inspection in early August the valve failed to operate within acceptable ranges.

As a result loading was suspended on this berth while the valve could be repaired. A temporary repair was made to allow loading to resume and a new valve ordered. The valve was installed August 31. Nevertheless, the overall system performance remains exceptional, resulting in capturing even more emissions from tanker loadings than required by law.

In keeping with our goal to maintain every aspect of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System at peak performance, numerous other projects are underway at the Valdez Marine Terminal this summer. Tanker Vapor Incinerators Performance Testing is complete. These tests measure the amount of vapors destroyed at the lowest possible temperature. The

lower the temperature, the less diesel fuel required, which results in fewer emissions.

Wilder Construction is performing avalanche protection work above the power house by constructing a berm, almost 1,000 feet long, next to the Visitors Viewing Area, with 55,000 cubic yards of rocks approximately three feet in diameter extending up to the existing rock quarry. Wilder is making the boulders by blasting into the quarry. This redesign will divert the snow away from the power house in the event of an avalanche.

Crude oil tank repairs are continuing. As the tanks are cleaned, repaired and repainted, corrosion protection systems are installed and the pressure safety vents are replaced. This reflects Alyeska's commitment to the long term. By taking steps to maintain the system integrity today, we're ensuring the system can continue to safely deliver Alaskan oil far into the future.



# Council

## Cordova institute joins council as ex-officio member

The Cordova-based Oil Spill Recovery Institute has joined the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council Board of Directors as a non-voting, ex-officio member.

The institute was set up under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the same law that gives the council much of the authority to perform its mission of promoting safer oil transportation.

The two organizations are similar in that both commission research on the environmental and sociological aspects of oil pollution. They are different in that the insti-

tute has a somewhat broader geographical reach – the Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environment – while the citizens' council's region extends from Prince William Sound along Alaska's gulf coast to Kodiak and Lower Cook Inlet.

Another difference is that the citizens' council, in addition to its research, advises industry and regulators on oil transportation safety, while the Cordova institute confines itself to research.

Research programs of the two organizations "can benefit each other and

should be coordinated so that they are complementary," said Nancy Bird, administrator at the recovery institute.

"Our ex-officio seat is important to achieve better communication and possible partnerships."

The institute's delegate to citizens' council board meetings is Gary Thomas, its executive director.

The council and institute

are also linked through Marilyn Leland, a council deputy director who sits on the institute's advisory board.

The institute is affiliated with the Prince William Sound Science Center, which is also based in Cordova and was set up in 1989 to study the environment of Prince William and the rivers that drain into it. Thomas is president of the science center.

## Council committees see some changes

Sean Thurston is the new chair of the Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee.

He replaces Bob Benda. Board member JoAnn McDowell, Ph.D., has joined the Scientific Advisory Committee.

## Citizen oversight now an accepted fact of life

By **STAN STEPHENS**  
**Council President**  
and **JOHN S. DEVENS, Ph.D.**  
**Executive Director**

Ten years ago citizen oversight of the Valdez Marine Terminal and crude oil tankers in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska was the dream of local residents but was rejected by the oil industry. Today, it's an accepted fact of life, and oil transportation is safer because of it.

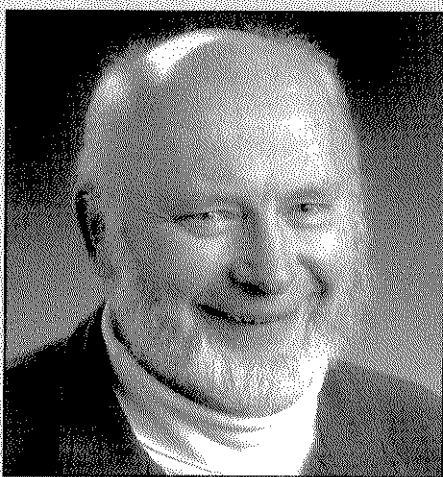
In 1989 the Alaska Oil Spill Commission concluded that people who live in the region and depend on the marine environment have the most to lose from a catastrophic oil spill. Therefore, the commission said, those people should have a voice in decision making. In the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, Congress agreed and mandated regional citizens' advisory councils for Cook Inlet and for the area of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council has been certified by the U.S. Coast Guard since 1991 as meeting that mandate.

In that time, our organization has grown in strength and maturity.

A major strength is the broad range of communities and interests represented on our board of directors and our four standing

committees. Our region stretches from Valdez to Kodiak and includes Chenega Bay, Cordova, Homer, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the Kodiak Island

### President



**Stan Stephens**

Borough and the towns on Kodiak Island, Seldovia, Seward, Tatitlek, Valdez, and Whittier. Representatives from those local governments and from commercial fishing, aquaculture, tourism, recreation, Alaska Native and environmental groups give a strong voice to citizens.

Another strength is the institutional knowledge amassed over the years by the commitment and longevity of our staff and volunteers. Fortunately, we have not kept pace with the agencies and industry when it comes to personnel turnover and reorganizations.

Often when we sit at the table with government and oil industry representatives, it is the citizens' council that remembers past lessons learned on the issues being discussed.

We continue to gain strength because we have learned the effectiveness of cooperative approaches to problem solving. Whether we're working to prevent

### Executive Director



**John Devens**

oil spills, develop response plans, or monitor terminal and tanker operations, the citizens' perspective is most likely to affect policy if presented early and to the right people in the decision-making process.

Considerable progress has been made during the period

covered by this report in oil spill prevention and response and in limiting environmental impacts from terminal and tanker operations. One major improvement is the more powerful and more maneuverable rescue tugs that are coming to Prince William Sound. Another is the tanker vapor control system that went into operation in March 1998 at the Valdez tanker terminal.

Still, much remains to be done. The citizens of the region affected by the 1989 oil spill now share responsibility with state and federal agencies and the oil transportation industry to ensure that existing programs are fully implemented and maintained, that new escort vessels are integrated into the system, and that a continuous improvement system is in place as new technology becomes available.

We appreciate the efforts of the council's staff and volunteers and the cooperation we receive from Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., the crude oil shippers, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the Joint Pipeline Office, the U.S. Coast Guard, and many others as we promote the environmentally safe operation of the Valdez Marine Terminal and associated tankers on behalf of the communities and citizens in our region.

# BP SONS drill

*BP - continued from page 1*

as a communications link between affected communities, response managers and the public.

"It's the same as any incident," said Becky Lewis, the staffer coordinating the council's part in the drill. "As part of our mandate under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, we observe, inform, verify and advise."

Most council staff will be in Valdez, where onshore elements of the drill will take place in the Valdez Civic Center and in the Valdez Emergency Operations Center at Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System offices.

But some council staff will be in Anchorage, while contractors will be out on the water and council volunteers will observe in member communities.

The drill focuses on events after the third day of the spill, and so will not involve the immediate response, which would be in the hands of Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. Only the response after BP takes over as the oil spiller will be included in the exercise.

In particular, the drill will exercise BP's ability to import response equipment stockpiled outside Alaska. Most of it is on the West Coast, but some is in Southampton, England. It's not as much as would be needed in a real spill, but BP believes it will be enough to teach important lessons about what would need to be done in a real spill.

"We really want to learn whatever there is to learn from the actual effort of putting that equipment into place," said BP spokesman John Andes.

Besides the 300 people in-

involved, BP expects to see 40 fishing boats in action, as well as government equipment like a Navy skimmer and a Coast Guard cutter and C-130 airplane.

The on-water part of the drill will take place Sept. 21, followed by tabletop exercises on Sept. 22.

The drill will exercise not only BP, but the Coast Guard as well. The agency's commandant in Washington, D.C. has declared the BP simulation a "SONS," or "Spill of National Significance."

The Coast Guard defines that as a "rare catastrophic spill which greatly exceeds the response capabilities at the local and regional level." In a SONS event, the Coast Guard typically names a National Incident Commander to manage the response, including the coordination of resources up to the international level.

SONS status doesn't mean the Coast Guard intends to give added scrutiny to the company — BP in this case — handling the drill.

"We realize it's a good opportunity for us to also exercise our capabilities," said Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Robertson, a Coast Guard spokesman in Alameda, Calif. "We'll be taking a look at how the Coast Guard would set up the command to oversee this type of cleanup."

Robertson said the Coast Guard will spend millions of dollars on the drill and put hundreds of its people to work on it, including two admirals who will come to Valdez for the event.

"It's one of the largest the Coast Guard has ever run."

This is only the second SONS drill ever conducted, Robertson said. The first was last year and involved a simulated oil spill in Philadelphia.

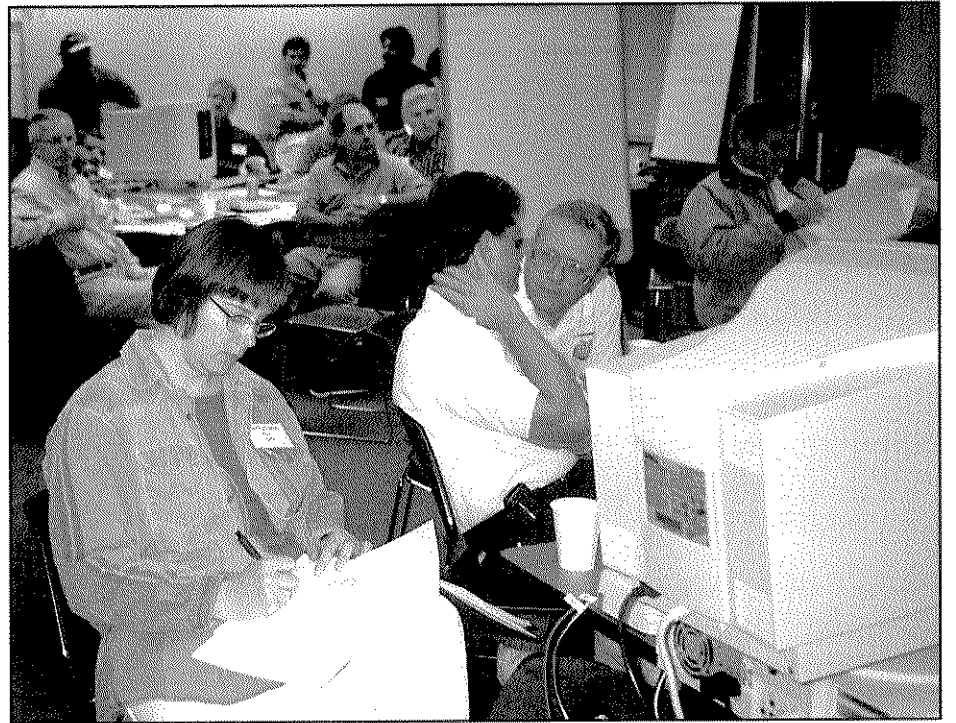
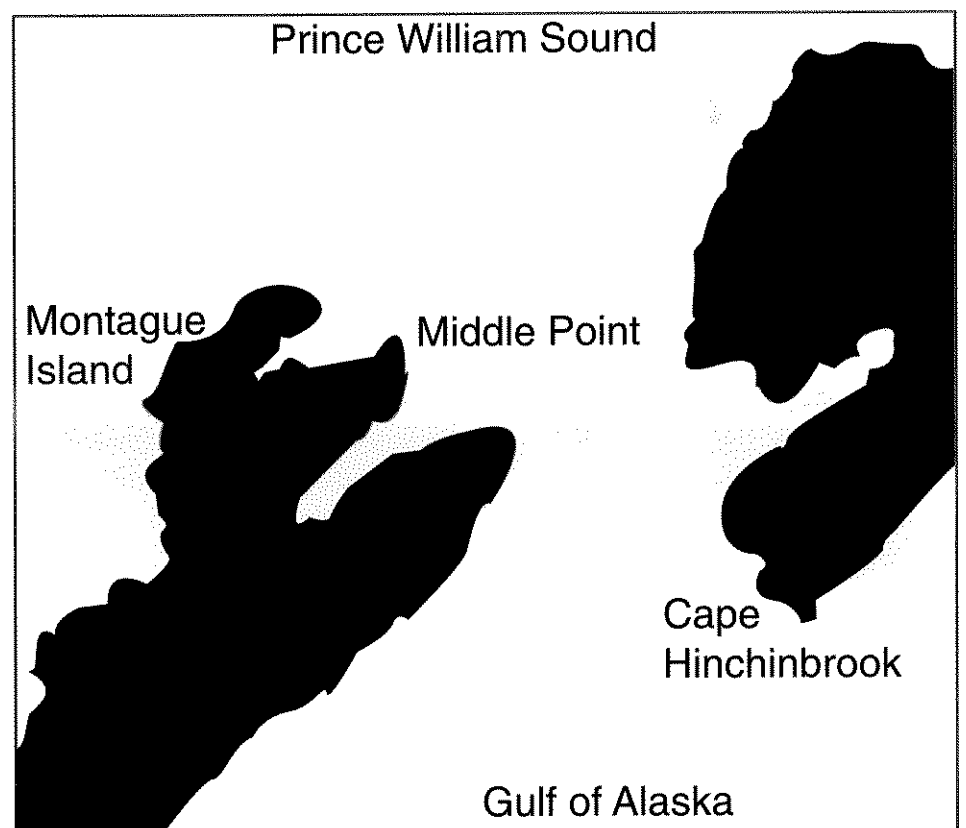


Photo: Leann Ferry

Project Manager Becky Lewis participates in a 1997 BP drill. Lewis is coordinating the citizens' council's role in the upcoming British Petroleum drill.



Map: Rica Salvador

BP's imaginary spill takes place at Middle Point on Montague Island on the morning of September 18.

## Double hulls, bottoms help avert spills

Double hulls or bottoms recently prevented spills from two grounded tankers, according to the Oil Spill Intelligence Report.

The first incident involved a Russian tanker, the Nadym. Its bottom was perforated after it ran aground on rocks on March 10 in the Sea of Okhotsk, according to the Intelligence Report. But it spilled "insignificant oil" because of its double hull, according to Russia's Itar-Tass News Agency.

Repairs to the vessel required 700 tons of steel plates, according to the Intelligence Report.

The publication also reported that the Russian tanker Kapitán E. Egorov went aground in Guayanilla Bay, Puerto Rico on June 21 without spilling any of its cargo of fuel oil, despite two tears under a laden tank.

The U.S. Coast Guard credited the Egorov's double bottom with preventing the spill, according to the Intelligence Report. U.S. ship surveyors found hull plates buckled and ribbing bent under the Egorov's cargo tanks, the Coast Guard told the publication.

## No return to Sound for the Exxon Valdez

The ship that caused North America's largest oil spill shouldn't be allowed back into Alaska waters any time soon, according to U.S. District Judge H. Russel Holland in Anchorage.

Holland in June upheld provisions of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 that bar the tanker Exxon Valdez — now known as the SeaRiver Mediterranean — from ever returning to Prince William Sound, according an article in the Anchorage Daily News.

Exxon had contended those

provisions were unconstitutional and unfair because they singled out the Exxon Valdez, which now operates in the Mediterranean Sea.

But Holland ruled Exxon gave up its right to contest the no-return provisions in 1991, when it signed a deal with the state and federal governments to settle criminal and civil lawsuits over the 11 million gallon spill at Bligh Reef in 1989. All parties to the settlement agreed to end all litigation over the spill.

**Note:** Observer articles are written by public information manager Stan Jones, except where another author is identified.



# Publications

## Publications, reports are available from council office

Copies of most documents are available to the public free of charge. A handling fee will be charged for large documents and for requests of more than 10 documents. Contact the council's Anchorage office to order.

### Reports

Safety Review of the Valdez Marine Terminal Vapor Control System: Preliminary Report. C\629.98.1\Vapor Review  
Drill Monitoring 1997 Annual Report. C\605.98.1\Annual  
FINAL REPORT: LTEMP Data Analysis of Hydrocarbons in Intertidal Mussels and Marine Sediments, 1993-1996. C\611.98.1\LTEMP Data Analysis  
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY: LTEMP Data Analysis of Hydrocarbons in Intertidal Mussels and Marine Sediments, 1993-1996. C\611.98.1\Sum\LTEMP Data Analysis  
The Risk of Nonindigenous Species Invasions In Prince William Sound Associated with Oil Tanker Traffic and Ballast Water Management: Pilot Study. C\632.91.1\NIS Pilot Study  
1996-97 Annual LTEMP Monitoring Report. C\608.97.1\96-97Annual  
1996-97 Annual LTEMP Monitoring Report APPENDICES. C\608.97.1\96-97Appendices  
Ballast Water Treatment Plant January 1997 spill incident data report. C\608.97.1 BWTF spill report  
Final Report: Community-based Nearshore Strike Teams. C\612.97.1C\Nearshore  
Shoreline Bioremediation Literature Review and Synthesis. C\636.97.1\Bioremediation  
Shoreline Bioremediation Literature Review and Synthesis: Executive Summary. C\636.97.1\Bioremediation Summary  
Tenth Survey Report - PWS RCAC Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program - July 1997. C\608.97.10th\LTEMP  
A Review of In Situ Burning as a Response for Spills of Alaska North Slope Crude Oil in Prince William Sound. C\635.96.1 In-Situ Burning  
A Review of Dispersant Use on Spills of North Slope Crude Oil in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. C\634.96.1 Dispersants  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of A Review of Dispersant Use on Spills of North Slope Crude Oil in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. C\634.96.1A Dispersants Summary  
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY of Dispersant Use on Spills of North Slope Crude Oil in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. C\634.96.1B Dispersants Non-Technical  
A Regional Multiple-Stressor Ecological Risk Assessment for Port Valdez, Alaska. C\654.97 Eco Risk Assessment  
Ninth Survey Report - PWS RCAC Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program - March 1997. C\608.97.9th\LTEMP  
1996 Year in Review. SR\Annual Report\1996  
Comments on the TAPS Pipeline Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan General Provisions, Regions 4 and 5, with cover letter to JPO. JPO\TAPS.plan\9806.618.98\jba

### Advice and Comment

Letter to SERVS regarding recommendations from the RCAC drill monitor. SERVS\drillrecs\9805.605\bl  
Letter to USCG and EPA on the RRT Guidelines. USCG-EPA\RRTguides\9805.634  
Letter to USCG on Keystone VRP. USCG\keystone.VRP\9805.615\jba  
Letter to ADEC regarding 1998 c-plans and the ACMP. ADEC\98cplans.ACMP\9804.618  
Letter to ADEC regarding funding for the ballast water work group. ADEC\bwttwg\9804\lh  
Letter to ADEC regarding PWS c-plans, condition 8. ADEC\PWSplan-cond8\9804.615\jba  
Letter to Gov. Knowles encouraging veto on SB299. Knowles\SB299\9804.650\sa

Letter to House Finance Committee regarding ADEC's budget. HFIN\adecbudget\9804.650\lh  
Letter to House of Reps. regarding SB299 on air quality. House\SB299\9804.650\sa  
Letter to Senate regarding HB28 on the ACMP. Senate\HB28\9804.650  
Letter to USCG regarding VRP caps. USCG\VRP.caps\9804.615\jba  
Letter to Senator Loren Leman regarding SB299 on air quality. Leman\SB299\9803.650\sj  
Letter to USCG regarding c-plan revisions. USCG\cplan.rev\9803.615\jba  
Letter to ADEC regarding vapor loading. ADEC\vapor.loading\9803.629\lh  
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Letter to ADEC and USCG regarding the unified command. ADEC\USCG\unifcmd\9802.615\jba  
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Letter to Alyeska regarding Hartec status. Alyeska\Hartec\9712.615.98\jba  
Letter to the US Coast Guard regarding training standards for Seafarers - CGD 95-062. USCG\CGD95-062\9712.623.98\ak  
Letter to US EPA regarding vapor control at Berth Three at the Valdez Marine Terminal. EPA\vapors\9712.629.98\ab  
Letter to Alyeska regarding the location of sediment sampling sites relative to the BWTF diffuser. Alyeska\BWTsampling\9710.631\jbr  
Letter to Congress regarding re-measurement of tankers / double hull requirements (HR1119). Stevens\HR1119\9710.646\ml  
Letter to DGC regarding improvements to legislative proposals to the Alaska Coastal Management Program. DGC\ACMP\9707.617.98\jba  
Letter to Response Planning Group regarding Field Monitoring and OOR Equipment Survey. RPG\FieldImp\9708.638.98\JBa  
Comments on Revisions to ACMP Revised Regulations (6 AAC 85). DGC\ACMP\9708.617.98\JBa  
Letter to Senator Ted Stevens supporting SeaGrant funding for aquatic nuisance species research in Alaska. Stevens\NISfunds\9707.632.98\ML  
Letter to the USCG requesting documents relating to the Keystone Kenai vessel response plan. USCG\KeystoneVRP\9707.618.98\JBa  
Letter to Alyeska regarding additional vapor controls at the VMT. Alyeska\vapors\9707.629.98  
Letter to Alyeska regarding the tug request for proposals. Alyeska\tugRFP\9706.620.97  
Letter to UAF supporting retention of a curator position for aquatic nuisance species research. UAF\NIScurator\9705.632.97\JK  
Letter to the U.S. EPA regarding Alyeska's NPDES permit. EPA\NPDES\9704.97  
Letter to the Alaska Legislature regarding water quality (HB 51). LEG\WaterHB51\9702.650.97\PG  
Letter to the Alaska Legislature regarding the Alaska Coastal Management Program. LEG\ACMP\9702.650.97  
Letter to OSHA commenting on requirements for marine oil spill responders. OSHA\hazwoper\9702.603.97  
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Letter to NOAA supporting continued funding of PWS weather buoys. NOAA\buoys\9701.619.97  
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## Citizens' council keeps communities informed during oil spills

By **LEANN FERRY**  
**Community Liaison**

Did you know the citizens' council has its own emergency response plan for oil spills? If a trans-Alaska pipeline tanker (like the Exxon Valdez) spilled oil tomorrow in Prince William Sound, the Gulf of Alaska, or lower Cook Inlet, the council would spring into action.

Our job during an oil spill is to observe clean-up operations, verify information reported by industry and government, inform communities as events unfold and advise the oil industry and government. Our advice is based on knowledge we have accumulated over the last nine years as well as real-time input from communities during the emergency.

If there's a serious spill, our Valdez staff begins immediate observation of the incident no matter the time of day and most of the Anchorage staff starts for Valdez or wherever the response headquarters is located.

Clean-up operations for most spills in our region are managed from Alyeska's Valdez Emergency Operations Center. The citizens' council has its own office in the emergency operations center. Some staff members work there, along with the oil industry and state and federal agencies. Some staff members are in the field. Others work in our

Our job during an oil spill is to observe clean-up operations, verify information reported by industry and government, inform communities as events unfold and advise the oil industry and government.

Anchorage and Valdez offices to maintain communications with our member groups and communities.

Our staff and contractors in the field observe clean-up operations and report back to us in the emergency operations center. Our

Anchorage and Valdez offices talk with people in communities and report back to the emergency operations center. All of this goes into our advice to the oil industry and state and federal decision-makers.

The citizens' council provides checks and balances and an immediate source of information that didn't exist in March 1989. If you live in the area affected by the

### Community Corner



**LEANN FERRY**

Exxon spill, you'll hear from us if there's another major oil spill. You'll see and hear our hotline number on cable TV, in newspapers and on radio stations. You will know how to log onto our web page, you will know where to call to get the latest information on the clean-up and you'll be able to register community concerns with our staff who will report them back to the emergency operations center in Valdez.

We don't just plan these things, we practice them, too. Every time the oil industry holds a major spill drill in the area, we participate. We also test our communications system. That's why at certain times of the year, our member groups and communities receive faxed information with "This is a drill" printed across the top. We will practice again soon at the British Petroleum drill coming up the week of September 21 in Valdez.

Call our toll free number any time with questions about our work. If you know of an organization or audience interested in a presentation about the citizens' council or if you can provide feedback from your community, please let Community Corner know. You can contact me by phone at (907) 277-7222 or (800) 478-7221, or by email at [ferry@pobox.alaska.net](mailto:ferry@pobox.alaska.net).

## Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

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

The council has 18 member organizations, including communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill and groups representing commercial fishing, aquaculture, recreation, tourism, Alaska Native and environmental interests in the spill region.

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

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

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