



The Observer

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AK Chamber of Commerce - AK Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Assoc. - Chugach Alaska Corp. - Cordova District Fishermen United - OSREC - PWS Aquaculture Corp.

Marine hitchhikers outside ballast tanks also a threat

By **LISA KA'AIHUE**
Director of Administration

The citizens' council has long studied the threat of marine invasive species reaching Alaska waters via by the ballast water of crude oil tankers.

Now the council is shifting its focus to the organisms that catch rides from port to port by attaching themselves to vessel hulls, a phenomenon known as hull fouling or biofouling.

In addition to organisms such as barnacles and mussels that attach themselves to hulls, non-attached organisms may travel with ships as well. They may shelter in the nooks and crannies created by a colony of attached organisms. Or they may travel in the vessel's sea chest, where they are protected from being washed away as the ship moves through the water.

Sea chests are compartments on the sides of ships that house seawater intake lines used for ballast, engine cooling, and fire suppression. Despite the fact that sea chest intakes are equipped with strainers, whole live crabs and lobsters have been found inside.

The council does not know the risks to our waters posed by hull fouling.

What is known is that, once organisms become established on the bottoms of vessels, the risk of transporting invasive nonnative species increases, as does the potential for catastrophic effects on native ecosystems.

Vessel owners are constantly fighting the establishment of biofouling communities on their hulls, as such communities create extra drag, slow down the ship, and increase fuel consumption. Many anti-fouling paints have been used on hulls. One of the most effective was a highly toxic paint called tributyl tin. However, it was banned because it tended to leach into seawater and harm native marine life. Newer anti-fouling paints are less toxic, but also less effective.

Hull fouling has only recently emerged as a topic of concern. Researchers around the world are acknowledging that hull fouling may be even more important than ballast water as a pathway for the transport of invasive species, but the problem is not yet well understood, particularly in the United States. It has been reported that

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HITCHHIKERS—When this ship entered dry dock in New Zealand, its hull, propeller shaft, and propeller were heavily encrusted with biofouling organisms. Photograph by Tim Dodgshun, Cawthron Institute, Nelson, New Zealand.

Legislative session wraps up with a solution on fishing vessel tax issue

One day before adjourning in mid-April, the Alaska Legislature passed a measure that had been a high priority for the citizens' council and the commercial fisherman who make up an important part of the oil-spill response system for Prince William Sound and nearby waters.

That measure was House Bill 289, which passed the House without opposition on March 13 and cleared the Senate on a 20-0 vote on Apr. 12.

The Legislature adjourned its regular session on April 13.

The bill eliminates a problem that arose last year when the state Department of Labor moved to require fishing vessel captains to pay unemployment taxes on crewmembers who worked during oil spill response drills and training exercises. That raised the specter of vessel owners dropping out of the

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State to scrutinize oil-facility risks

• **How public will participate is still to be determined**

Alyeska Pipeline's Valdez tanker terminal and other Alaska facilities that handle natural gas and crude oil will come under the regulatory microscope when a state-chartered risk assessment study starts this summer.

As the Observer went to press, the state Department of Environmental Conservation was still reviewing proposals from contractors interested in conducting the two-year study, budgeted at \$4.1 million.

The state's request for proposals cites recent leaks and corrosion problems in the North Slope oil fields as reasons for launching the project, and says the study's goals are both environmental and economic: "The



Alyeska Pipeline's Valdez tanker terminal will be one of the facilities evaluated during the state's risk assessment.

infrastructure must be maintained to protect Alaska's environment and to ensure uninterrupted oil and gas production and revenue flow."

The study will "identify those infrastructure items, components, systems,

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Volunteer Profile

OSPR volunteer brings a wealth of experience

By **EMILY POLLEY**
Project Manager

When recruiting volunteers, one thing the citizens' council looks for is experience. Bob Flint, the newest member of the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee has it in spades.

Flint was born and raised an Army brat, graduated from California State University in Chico, and joined the Vista Program. Vista, which evolved into the modern AmeriCorps, sent him to Alaska in 1971 for two years. After Vista, Flint needed a job. He went to a recruiting office in Anchorage and landed a temporary post with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Little did Flint know his next 33 years would be spent there.

During Flint's decades at DEC, as the department is known, he spent some time in every one of their various areas. He tackled an array of tasks from grunt work to management, even serving as Incident Commander for the *Exxon Valdez* spill for a time.

Flint remembers when the citizens' council was formed. "I used to tease Joe Banta (a long-time council project manager), 'RCAC is the biggest pain in the butt! Thank God you're here.'"

Flint explained that the council's charter allows it to do more and ask for more than DEC can as a state agency. Flint feels that including a variety of member communities and organizations makes the council a well rounded organization, and this ability to give everyone a voice is what made him feel that serving on one of its committees would be a worthwhile use of his time.

Besides volunteering with the council, Flint is an independent emergency management consultant, working mostly with the O'Brien Group and Alaska Steamship Response. Flint has assisted in major cleanups such as the *Selendang Ayu* spill in 2004 and the *Cosco Busan* spill this past November. When he was in California working that spill with the O'Brien Group, he worked as a division leader and a branch director, eventually supervising more than 350 cleanup personnel. The O'Brien Group serves in a supervisory capacity during a cleanup. Many companies involved in a cleanup effort provide equipment,

but lack experience directing crews. Early on in a cleanup effort contracted companies need a jump start, and the O'Brien Group works with them to provide direction and oversight.

The vast majority of Flint's jobs are

training and drill-related, thus he spends most of his time keeping up with oil-spill response technology. The work offers great opportunities, but Flint also enjoys being able to turn down jobs. Recently he was asked to go to Turkey, but decided the region was a bit too tumultuous for him.

Flint enjoys spending time working with the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee, or OSPR. His wide experience with the state side of spill response gives a new perspective to the committee. Because of his hands on experience and understanding of personnel, regulations, and spill response, the committee will be sending Flint to the International Oil Spill Conference in Savannah, Ga. this month.

He also serves on the Prevention,

Response, Operations and Safety Committee of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council. There, he works on a number of the same issues that OSPR faces, only in a different body of water.

Not all Flint's time is spent in oil-spill work, however. Flint and his wife Fran have very active lives. What else would you expect from a couple that met in scuba diving class? "I've never met anyone who looked that good in flippers," recalls Flint.

Fran is an avid gardener, while Flint enjoys woodturning. Every September Flint and his brother volunteer for a month with the U.S. Forest Service in Montana's Bob Marshall and Great Bear wilderness areas. Using horses and pack mules, the Flints work on odds and ends of jobs that have fallen to the bottom of the list for paid employees, including packing supplies into isolated areas. The paid employees work on bigger projects while the Flints work on the littler projects.

"Someone gives me a horse and lets me play in the woods for a month," Flint said. "That's the kind of thing some people pay for."



Bob Flint

Comings and goings shuffle council staff

After a series of resignations and hires over the past few months, the council staff is returning to full strength.

In the Anchorage office, Susan Sommer, who ran the council's website, resigned in early March to take a similar job with Tatitlek Corporation, one of the council's member entities. She has been replaced by Emily Polley, who had been working as a project manager assistant for the council.

Polley, however, will be leaving the staff in mid-July because of her husband's transfer by the U.S. Army. She will be replaced by Kyle von Bose, the editor of the Bristol Bay Times and a soon-to-be graduate of the journalism program at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Von Bose's start date was April 28.

The project manager assistant position, meantime, is being filled by Amanda Beck Johnson, who had worked previously in the Municipality of Anchorage's



Anita Daniels



Venessa Dawson

Parks and Recreation Department. Her start date was also April 28.

And Anita Daniels has replaced Mary Schonberger on the Anchorage office front desk. Daniels, who started April 7, has a background in administration and bookkeeping. Schonberger left in mid-February for a job with the Alaska Power Association.

In the Valdez office, meantime, Administrative Assistant Denise Schanbeck will be leaving May 15 because of her husband's transfer by the U.S. Coast Guard. She is being replaced by Venessa Dawson, who started Feb. 27.

Dawson, who worked at a local medical clinic before joining the council staff,

lives in Valdez with her partner and their three children, ages nine months through 11 years. She's been a resident of the community since shortly after her first birthday.

Council reports are now widely available online

Looking for a council report? You now have multiple options for finding it online.

As always, reports and other important documents are posted on our website at www.pwsrccac.org/resources/reportsavail.html, where they are grouped chronologically by program.

But our reports are also available on other, easily searchable, websites. Links to these sites reside on the web page mentioned above.

The nerve center for all of this is ARLIS, or Alaska Resources Library and Information Services. ARLIS was created by merging the staff and collections of nine Anchorage natural resources libraries. Additional organizations support the library financially as contributors.

The council has recently partnered with ARLIS as a contributing organization. This means we have access to some of the technical and professional databases

and journals to which the library subscribes, and our reports are entered into the ARLIS collection faster.

The ARLIS collections are available through their own website, www.arlis.org, as well as through the Anchorage Municipal Library and the University of Alaska Library. ARLIS is also part of the Online Computer Library Center, which connects hundreds of libraries around the world. The center's online catalog is called WorldCat.

Try this: visit www.worldcat.org and, in the search box, type "Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council." More than 100 council reports appear in WorldCat's list.

Since many university and public libraries around the world tie into WorldCat, researchers and students interested in oil transportation and related environmental issues in Alaska have a good chance of discovering our reports.

HULLS: Also invasion risk

Continued from Page 1

74 percent of the aquatic invasive species that arrived in Hawaii did so because of biofouling.

The council, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is embarking on a project to describe biofouling communities on the major classes of vessels that operate in Prince William Sound, including oil tankers, barges, ferries and cruise ships.

Tactics for combating hull fouling without the use of highly toxic paints could include such measures as limiting the amount of time a vessel is in port and requiring periodic out-of-water cleaning.

As a first step, the council chose the University of Washington to conduct research for this project. The team includes Russell Herwig, Jeffery Cordell, David Lawrence and Gregory Jensen. Over the next year, they will develop hull sampling methods, and take samples from various vessels, with a focus on oil tankers. They will identify the organisms they find and report the results to the Council. This study will provide important information on which vessels in which trade may pose the greatest risk of introducing invasive species via their hulls.

For more information on hull fouling, visit the University of California's West Coast Ballast Outreach Project hull fouling web page: http://groups.ucanr.org/Ballast_Outreach/Non-Ballast_Vessel_Vectors.

Council is recertified by the Coast Guard

The Coast Guard recertified the citizens' council has as meeting its responsibilities under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

In a February 27, Rear Admiral A.E. Brooks, Commander of the Coast Guard's District 17 in Juneau, wrote that all 16 of the comments received during the public comment period supported the council's application and "noted the positive efforts, good communication, and broad community representation demonstrated by PWSRCAC."

The recertification expires in January 2009.

From the Executive Director**Looking back on the citizen oversight movement**

The idea behind citizen oversight is that those with the most to lose from oil spills and other industrial accidents should have a say in the programs put in place to prevent and respond to them.

In Alaska, that principle is embodied in two organizations – our group and our sister organization, the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council. Both were established in response to the Exxon Valdez spill of 1989.

But we were not the first such organizations to be formed worldwide. From time to time, it's useful to consider the history of citizen oversight and what it teaches about the movement.

Citizen oversight for the oil industry was born in 1975, when the Sullom Voe Association was created in the Shetland Islands of Scotland. It came out of an agreement between Shetland's local government and more than 30 oil companies. BP – also a major player in Alaska – was the operating company.

The non-profit association was established to supervise the construction and operation of the Sullom Voe oil terminal, with the oil industry paying all costs. While this association does many of the same things we do, it's also different in important respects: it actually built and owned some of the oil facilities at Sullom Voe, as well as a tug company that operated there. And it maintains two large endowment-type funds worth nearly \$500 million, financing projects in such areas as social welfare, leisure, recreation, environmental education and economic development.

Vigipol, a French group formerly known as Syndicate Mixte, was created after the Amoco Cadiz spill of 1978; its board is made up of elected officials from the affected area. It's funded in part by a settlement coming out of the Amoco spill, and it has done a good job of battling complacency. In 1989, the group sent a delegation to Alaska to provide assistance and advice after the Exxon spill.

Next came the two Alaska citizens' councils.

The two are similar, but funding for the Cook Inlet council is less secure than in our case. We're funded chiefly by a strong, long-term contract with Alyeska Pipeline, whereas the Cook Inlet group's budget comes from local municipalities and negotiations with the oil industry.

The oil industry has rightly received much credit for extensive prevention and response improvements in Prince William Sound since 1989. What's less well known is that citizens were calling for such improvements even before the first barrel of Prudhoe crude started down the trans-Alaska pipeline to Valdez in June 1977.

Between the Prudhoe Bay oil strike in 1968 and the 1989 oil spill, citizens pushed for double-hull tankers, escort tugs, and comprehensive preparations for cleaning up an oil spill, among other things.

As had been the case with previous efforts at citizen oversight, it took a disaster to make clear the old way didn't work. Our council was incorporated nine months after the Exxon Valdez spill, and we signed our contract with Alyeska in February 1990. The federal Oil Pollution Act was signed into law by the first President Bush about six months later, further buttressing the powers of the council.

The Pipeline Safety Trust, based in Bellingham, Wash., was created in October 2003. It is funded by earnings from a \$4 million criminal fine resulting from a 1999 gasoline pipeline leak and explosion that killed three young people in Bellingham. The trust's mission is to promote fuel transportation safety through education and advocacy, by increasing access to information, and by building partnerships with residents, safety advocates, government and industry.

The Washington State Oil Spill Advisory Council is the newest group with at least some component of citizen oversight. It was created by the Washington legislature in 2005 after a series of spills in Puget Sound. It is not fully independent, nor is it fully citizen-controlled.

Its funding is subject to legislative appropriation, it reports to the state's governor, and its board includes industry and government officials, as well as fisheries and environmental representatives.

What does this teach us about citizen oversight?

- It's usually brought about by a disaster, though history suggests there would be fewer such disasters if citizen oversight were established at the same time as major oil projects and operations.

- Many of the achievements of citizen oversight have come despite initial opposition from the oil industry.

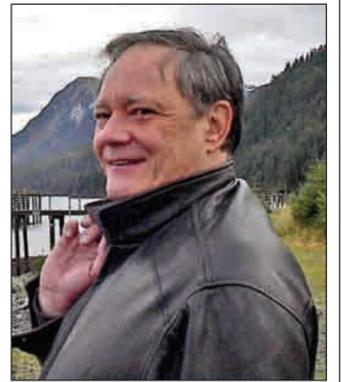
- Citizen oversight has taken on a variety of forms, the result of the different locations and circumstances that have brought it into being.

- The two most critical elements in any successful program of citizen oversight are independence and secure, adequate funding.

Even if the citizen oversight we have isn't yet perfect, it's a vast improvement over nothing at all. One reason the Oil Pollution Act embraced councils like ours was the need to improve trust among the public, the oil industry, and government regulators. That has indeed occurred in the 19 years since the Exxon Valdez spill.

We at the Prince William Sound council look forward to continuing and strengthening these crucial relationships in years to come so that future generations never have to learn first-hand what we did in 1989.

- John Devens is executive director of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council.



John Devens

Alyeska Viewpoint**Alyeska signs new contract for oil spill services**

On March 1 of this year, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company entered into a new contract with Tatitlek Chenega Chugach LLC to provide oil spill response and maintenance services. TCC, as the company is known, has provided these services for the past twelve years, bringing extensive experience and expertise as part of Alyeska's Ship Escort and Response Vessel System.

TCC is a joint venture of three Alaska Native Corporations including Tatitlek Corporation, Chenega Corporation and Chugach Management Services. The contract renewal process has afforded both companies an opportunity to examine how these services are delivered and has resulted in changes that not only allows SERVS to continue to meet its obligations with respect to oil spill prevention and response, but actually enhances the organization's capability in this regard.

By far the most significant change is around how maintenance services are carried out and delivered. Under the old contract there were two groups of mechanics. Each group worked

what we call a "day field schedule" – a week of shifts from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., followed by a week off.

A portion of those mechanics now form a single core maintenance team that works day shifts every week, Monday through Friday. This core team includes a master mechanic and a full time supervisor.

In addition a field schedule mechanic has been placed on each 12-hour day shift and night shift, ensuring at least one mechanic is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

This new approach to maintenance results in a more efficient and effective operation through a core team having ownership and accountability for the delivery of maintenance and improving continuity week to week. Issues that inevitably occur when work is handed over from one shift to the next have virtually been eliminated. This, along with the new mechanic coverage on the night shift, ensures that SERVS' state of readiness to respond remains at a high level.

Throughout this process, Alyeska's commitments and obligations to oil spill prevention and response continued to be and still remain our number one priority. Contingency plans were reviewed, unions were consulted, stakeholders were briefed, and the effects on people were all taken into consideration.

Though change and the accompanying uncertainty can be difficult, the feedback has been positive and the resulting benefits are supporting the decisions that have been made. Alyeska is excited by this new contract and looks forward to continuing its longstanding relationship with TCC.

- Peter Andersen is operations manager of Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System.



Peter Andersen

A photographic tour of Prince William Sound



Sunrise, Passage Canal

Kittiwake

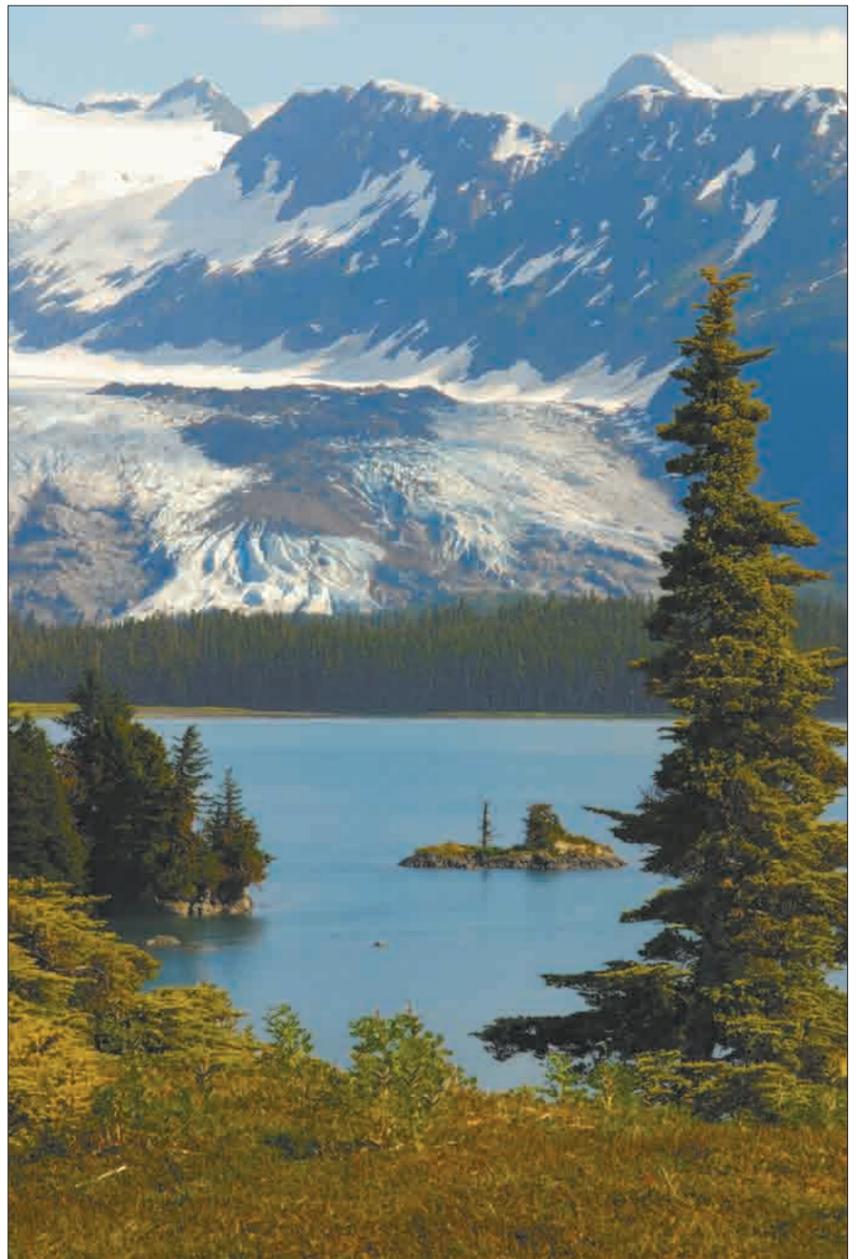


Sea lions, Perry Island





Columbia Fjord



Amherst Glacier, College Fjord

Photos by Bill Rome

Bill Rome is an Eagle River photographer and videographer who has spent years shooting in Prince William Sound



... and a harbor seal waving goodbye.



TAX: Waiver approved for fishing vessel crews

Continued from Page 1

program, which is run by Alyeska Pipeline, because of the inconvenience of figuring and paying unemployment taxes on their crews for just a few days of work per year. During actual fishing operations, crew members are exempt from unemployment insurance requirements because their pay consists of a share of the value of the catch.

In a somewhat rare case of unanimity, the bill was supported by the oil industry, the citizens' council, and the fishing industry.

"This shows how much we can get done when we join forces," said John Devens, executive director of the council. "We're grateful to the industry, the fishermen, and the area legislators who pitched in on this one."

The bill becomes effective immediately upon its signing by Gov. Sarah Palin.

Another measure of council interest was House Bill 149, intended to enable the state of Alaska to take over water-quality permits from the federal Environmental Protection agency under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. This program, usually referred to as NPDES, is of

great interest to the council because Alyeska has one of the EPA permits for the Ballast Water Treatment Facility at its tanker terminal in Valdez.

The issue was a carryover from legislation passed under Gov. Frank Murkowski. The state sought to take over NPDES permitting under that legislation, but was turned down by EPA because of a number of deficiencies in the proposed state program, including a lack of statutory authority paralleling what EPA has under the Federal Clean Water Act and other federal statutes.

The council did not support or oppose this year's bill, but did write Palin after it passed, urging her to ensure the state Department of Environmental Conservation will be adequately funded if the state takeover application succeeds. Otherwise, the council warned, the application will likely face strenuous opposition when EPA puts it out for public comment.

The governor has called a special legislative session for early June, but the agenda is limited to a proposed natural gas pipeline from the North Slope and the council does not expect any of its issues to arise.



Fishing vessels and crews like those shown here in Kodiak and Cordova train regularly for oil-spill response work.



HEADING NORTH?



INVADERS—This European green crab was caught in March off Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Of the approximately 300 crabs taken that day by Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans for research and monitoring purposes, all but two were green crabs, according to Dan Gilson, a citizens' council project manager who went along to observe. The green crab is an invasive species that has been migrating up the West Coast since the early 1990s and has now reached Canada. Canadian scientists are finding that the green crabs can shed their shells and grow new ones in water colder than 50 degrees Fahrenheit, a sign they might be able to survive in Prince William Sound if introduced in tanker ballast water. Because green crabs can threaten other species when they invade an area, the council runs its own green crab trapping program in the Sound to detect their arrival, if and when it happens. So far, none have been found. *Photo by Dan Gilson*

ASSESS: State will tally risks

Continued from Page 1

and hazards that demonstrate the greatest probability for a failure which would lead to negative impacts to overall safety, the environment, or reliability," the proposal request says.

The study will not cover oil tanker operations in Prince William Sound or Cook Inlet, nor will it address risks of terrorism or sabotage.

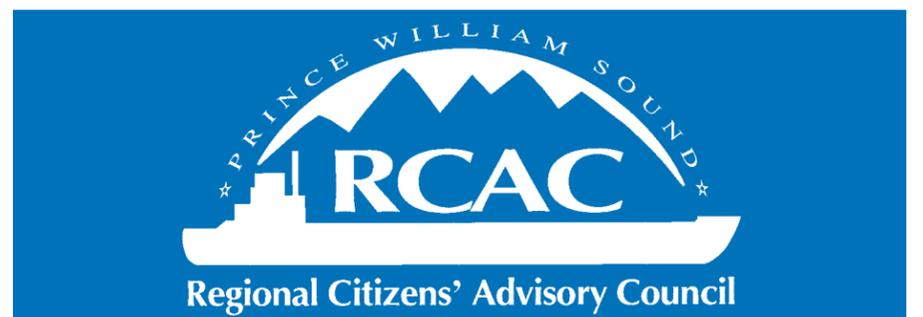
The citizens' council is charged by its funding contract with Alyeska and by federal law with overseeing operations at the Valdez terminal, though the council's purview does not extend to the trans-Alaska pipeline or production facilities on the North Slope.

The state will require the winning contractor to establish a process for

participation by groups like the citizens' council, as well as by the general public. What that process will be, however, isn't specified in the proposal request and won't be known until a contractor is chosen, according to Betty Schorr, a program manager in the state Division of Spill Prevention and Response.

"We're not sure how it will work," said John Devens, executive director of the citizens' council. "But we'll certainly be involved. We support any process that will produce useful information about the safety of a critical facility like Valdez tanker terminal and we feel like we will have some valuable input to offer the contractor."

For more information about the risk assessment, visit:
www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/ipp/ara



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Single copies of most documents produced or received by the citizens' council are available free to the public. To make a request, contact either council office. Addresses appear on the back page of the Observer.

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Ten Years Ago In The Observer!

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Council to investigate vapor control safety allegations

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council will conduct its own review of warnings by the group Oilwatch Alaska that problems in Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.'s new vapor control system could result in a catastrophic explosion at the Valdez tanker terminal.

The citizens' council board voted for the safety review at its May quarterly meeting in Valdez, but with some reluctance. Some board members said it was hard to justify the expense — up to \$50,000 for contractors to handle the review — because the allegations were vague.

"Most of us probably don't believe there is a problem," said council president Stan Stephens of Valdez. "If there's a possibility, we need to act, and, if that's the case, we need to act as quick as we can."

The council's Valdez office is organizing a four-day meeting on the subject for June 24-27. The plan, said Project Manager Joe Bridgman, is to convene the council contractors with government and Alyeska representatives at the tanker terminal. They will review previous studies of the system rather than attempting a from-scratch safety inspection and analysis of their own.

The council's team leader for the review is Brad Sly, a Pennsylvania expert on fire protection and the safe management of industrial processes.

Dr. Bob White, an expert on fire and explosion prevention, will also participate. White, who is with the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, Texas, has published several papers on vapor-control safety.

California-based Sierra Research, the council's long-time contractor on vapor-control issues, will be involved. So will Babot Engineering, a Pasadena, Texas, firm that handled safety certification of Alyeska's vapor-control system for the U.S. Coast Guard.

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

"The fundamental danger in any vapor recovery system is, there's a flame on one end and a tanker full of explosive gas at the other end," Bridgman said. "We'll put all these

Citizens' council is at work outside Prince William Sound, too

By Leann Ferry
Community Liaison

The citizens' council has made it a priority to maintain strong relationships with its member organizations and increase its presence in communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill, as required by the federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990. This is the focus of one Community Outreach Program — and of our "Community Corner" column, debuting in this issue.

she didn't realize the citizens' council is active on Kodiak Island. Thanks to this useful

Community Corner

Leann Ferry

Kodiak Island
In December 1997, Executive Director John Devens and I

comment, we are considering new ways to use the Observer to publicize the fact that our work goes beyond Prince William Sound, taking in Lower Cook Inlet and Kodiak Island as well.

One small example: all of the citizens' council member communities will now be listed on the front page of the Observer.

The mayors expressed concern about inadequacies in Hazardous Waste Operator (HAZWOPER) training and tracking in their communities. Community members must have this training before assisting in oil spill response operations. We have been discussing this issue for some time with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company and oil shipping industry representatives. The Kodiak Island Borough is also looking into the issue.

We will continue our efforts to coordinate with both industry and the borough as it.

The mayors also said they want more environmental education in the communities around Kodiak Island. The citizens' council is also concerned, and is seeking grant money for annual oil spill education in the communities affected by the Exxon

See Community Corner, back page

Community Corner**Council teams up with Alaska Geographic to teach teachers**

Hopefully, by the time this newsletter is published, spring will be here. I'm sitting in my office watching it snow...and it's April already!!!

For the first time, the council is collaborating with the Alaska Geographic Association and others to sponsor an accredited teacher training program called *Recovering the Sound: After the Exxon Valdez*. The course will take place in Prince William Sound, with teachers traveling to communities, beaches and forest service cabins to learn about culture, the oil spill and the Sound. This information will then be taken back to their students. The oil spill curriculum developed by the council in collaboration with the Prince William Sound Science Center and Prince William Sound Community College will be presented to the teachers as well.

This is a wonderful opportunity for teachers to learn first hand about the Sound and its features. If you are interested in the course, which will be presented again in 2009, the website is www.alaskageographic.org.

The film "Then & Now, The Alaska Oil Spill at 20" has been completed. It will be shown at the International Oil Spill Conference in Savannah, Georgia, in May, and in other venues in the future. The 30-minute film provides information on the spill and its effects on people and the environment. It also shows many of the improvements made since the spill to make the oil transportation in the Sound one of the safest in the world. If you would like a presentation of this film, contact me for assistance.

The council's information booth was recently taken to two sportsman's shows: one in Wasilla and one in Kenai.

Thousands of people make their way through these shows and having our booth there is a good way to make contact with those who use the waterways in Southcentral Alaska. Next year, we plan to attend the Fairbanks sportsman's show. In May, the booth will go to the International Oil Spill Conference in Georgia, and in June to the Arctic Marine Oilspill Program Technical Seminar in Calgary, Alberta.

Two firsts for Alaska are happening this spring. In April, the 2008 National Ocean Sciences Bowl took place in Seward. This national competition is held in various locations throughout the United States. It's an academic "quiz bowl" type competition with questions related to the study of oceans. High school students participate in 25 regional competitions and the winning five-member teams attend the national competition. For more information, see www.nosb.org.

In May, the federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee holds its annual meeting in Anchorage. The committee includes approximately thirty stakeholders from state organizations, industry, conservation groups, scientists, academia and other interests. There will be presentations on such things as vectors for invasive species introduction to Alaska, citizen monitoring, and noxious weed control.

In other events, the council will hold a public reception in Soldotna in the Kenai Assembly Borough office building on June 17.



Linda Robinson

Board seats member for wilderness recreation and tourism group

Cathy Hart of Anchorage has joined the council board to represent the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association. She was seated at the board's January meeting in Anchorage to complete the unexpired term of Stan Stephens, who resigned from the council at the start of this year.

Hart is retired from 32 years in sales and marketing with the Alaska Marine Highway System, where she focused on serving local, commercial, military, group tour, and tourism customers. She has also served with the Prince William Sound Tourism Coalition, Alaska Sea Kayaking Symposium and the Alaska Society of Outdoor and Nature Photographers.

Her family moved to Alaska from Texas in 1966 when her father came to work for ARCO in the Cook Inlet oil fields and then Prudhoe Bay.



Cathy Hart

She's an avid sea kayaker, rafter, skier, and photographer. She lives in Anchorage with husband Eric Downey and their dogs Sunny and Niki.

**Prince William Sound
Regional Citizens' Advisory Council**

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

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

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

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

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