THE OBSERVER

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND RCAC
Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

Photo by Cathy Hart/Photography.

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Oil spill prevention and response services transition to new contractor

Prince William Sound has a hive of activity this summer. On July 1, Alyeska's marine services contractor transitioned from Crowley Maritime Corporation to Edison Chouest Offshore.

This transition means all of the escort tugs and much of the spill prevention and response equipment in Prince William Sound are brand new, or new to the Sound.

General purpose tug Elrington. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

New spill prevention and response vessels:

5 new tanker escort tugs:
Challenger
Commander
Courageous
Champion
Contender
Length: 140 feet
Horsepower: 12,336

4 new general purpose tugs:
Elrington
Latouche
Bainbridge
Ingot
Length: 103 feet
Horsepower: 6,008

1 utility/anchor handling tug:
Ross Chouest
Length: 256 feet
Horsepower: 11,400

4 new purpose-built oil spill response barges
Length: 400 feet
Capacity: Almost 4.9 million gallons each

Demonstrations of the new equipment

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation required that each vessel and crew member demonstrate their capabilities before beginning service. Each tug, as well as each tug's captain, had to perform a set of maneuvers which differed according to the vessel and its purpose.

Beginning in March, Edison Chouest Offshore conducted their first demonstration in Alaska of their new tugs' capabilities. The Alaska Tanker Company's tanker, Alaskan Legend, simulated a series of tanker failures to allow the tug Commander to attempt to stop the tanker's movement from different angles, at different speeds.

The Legend is one of the largest tankers operating in Prince William Sound and it was loaded to its maximum capacity,

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Escort tugs Commander and Courageous, and general purpose tug Latouche. Photo by Amanda Johnson.

* Please note the previous issue, mislabeled Volume 28, No. 2, was Volume 28, No. 1.

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND RCAC Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

Changes to oil spill contingency plans approved

Extensive amendments due to transition

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation recently approved major amendments to oil spill contingency plans for both the Valdez Marine Terminal and for the tankers that transport oil through Prince William Sound. Both approvals came with conditions.

Neither the tanker plan, nor the terminal plan was due for a renewal. However, Edison Chouest Offshore is bringing so much new equipment and personnel to their new role as Alyeska's marine services contractor that major changes were needed to both plans. Major amendments require a public comment period.

The public comment period, which began last July, ended in April and May, and the department issued approvals in June. Both approvals are subject to several conditions, meaning the plan is tentatively approved, but there are required steps that must be taken for the approval to be valid. Among other details, the following must be described in the plan:

- Each Edison Chouest vessel, and their crews, must demonstrate their capabilities and be approved for prevention and response duties by the department.
- Escort tugs must show they can fully stop the largest tanker in the fleet.
- Each tug, and each captain, must show they can perform required escort and assist maneuvers from different angles and at different speeds.
- The general purpose tugs and the utility tug must demonstrate various emergency towing maneuvers.
- Each class of tug had to fulfill the U.S. Coast Guard's requirements to tow a tanker at 4 knots, or 4.6 miles per hour; and simulate holding a tanker in a steady position against a headwind of 45 knots, or 51 miles per hour.
- All tugs must demonstrate they can work with the barges and fishing vessels to perform the response activities required in case of a spill.
- Barges must demonstrate deployment of response equipment.
- For the terminal plan, the vessels must also demonstrate docking and undocking.

The department is also requiring the escort tugs, general purpose tugs, utility vessel, and oil spill response barges to conduct one exercise in winds of at least 20 knots, or 23 miles per hour, and one exercise during darkness. These exercises must be completed by December 31, 2018.

Next steps

The industry is required to update these plans every five years, and submit them for public review. The amended terminal plan expires in November of 2019, and the tanker plan expires in January of 2022, when the regular five-year plan reviews are scheduled to occur.

What is a contingency plan?

A contingency plan, or "c-plan," outlines steps to be taken before, during, and after an emergency.

An oil spill contingency plan contains detailed information on how to prevent an oil spill, as well as response activities in the event a spill occurs.

Preventing an oil spill from occurring in the first place is the most effective way to protect human health and the environment.

If an oil spill occurs, however, a systematic and well-organized approach is necessary to quickly contain and control a spill. Responding efficiently and effectively to a spill requires advanced planning and preparedness.

Piping inspections near completion

By Austin Love
Council Project Manager

For the first time since the facility's construction was completed in 1977, a majority of the large diameter crude oil piping at Alyeska's Valdez Marine Terminal is undergoing a comprehensive inspection, both externally and internally. The inspections of these 36 and 48 inch diameter pipes began in 2016, and will be completed by the end of 2018.

Alyeska can use the data from these inspections to evaluate the current, complete condition of the large diameter piping used to move Alaska North Slope Crude onto tanker ships at the terminal.

A tremendous amount of work by Alyeska and their contractors is making these inspections possible:

- Concrete foundations had to be reinforced to accommodate loading stresses associated with the inspections;
- Piping inspection tool access and retrieval points had to be created at multiple locations;
- Sharp bends and large valves had to be removed from certain piping sections to allow for the passage of inspection equipment;
- The piping has to be cleaned of accumulated wax and debris after 40 years of use; and
- With the exception of a few necessary, planned pipeline shutdowns, most of this work was done while crude oil was still flowing through the pipeline and tank ships were still loading.

Alyeska has had to overcome a number of challenges in order to successfully complete the inspections:

- Some of the piping is buried underground and in some cases encased in concrete, making access difficult if not practically impossible;
- Other sections of piping are relatively steep, creating a challenge to control the velocity of inspection tools; and
- Certain sections of piping could not be cleaned with traditional cleaning tools, but instead were cleaned with high pressure water jets.

New tech making the inspections possible

Before this expansive inspection work, the piping had been monitored and inspected to a relatively limited extent. Technological advancements have helped make this comprehensive inspection work feasible.

Traditionally, piping and pipelines, including the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, have been inspected with "free swimming" tools that are propelled by the flow of oil in the line. However, using oil to push an inspection tool along is not always feasible or practical. To address the propulsion shortcomings of traditional inspection tools, newer "self-propelled" piping inspection tools have been developed to inspect more challenging sections of piping. Alyeska used a self-propelled, robotic crawler tool for all of the inspections that took place at the terminal in 2016 and 2017; whereas in 2018, the inspection work will use a traditional "free swimming" inspection tool.

Free-swimming inspection tool. Photo by Tom Kuckertz.

Alyeska's 2016 and 2017 inspection results have shown that the crude oil piping at the Valdez Marine Terminal is in good working order, requiring no repairs. The Council will continue to track the progress and results through the rest of the project.

Council Board President Amanda Bauer, staffer Austin Love, and Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee volunteer Steve Goudreau check out one of the new robotic crawlers during a visit to the terminal in 2016. Photo by Mike Drew.

From the Executive Director

Prevention and response improving, full capabilities not yet proven

By Donna Schantz
Executive Director

The Council is pleased to say that the recent transition of prevention and response services to Edison Chouest Offshore (details about this transition on page 1) will bring many improvements in Alyeska's capabilities to protect Prince William Sound and its downstream communities. Alyeska and the Prince William Sound oil shippers are to be commended for their significant investment and commitment in the new vessels, equipment, and crews.

Details provided by Alyeska show that the new vessels, built specifically for Prince William Sound, will have new technologies to improve safety for the crews and boost spill prevention and response capabilities. A few notable examples include:

- The new render-recover winches which the Council has been promoting for years
- Response barges with decks specifically designed to deploy and retrieve oil skimming equipment, maximizing safety for crews

We recognize and appreciate the details about the safety enhancements we have seen so far.

However, the Council's job is to be a voice for those most affected by an oil spill. During this transition, a significant number of new vessels, equipment, and crews have entered the system in an extremely short time. From the information we have received, and the demonstrations we have observed, we have not been able to verify the new equipment and crews in the full range of weather conditions in which the tankers are expected to operate. In addition, several small incidents have raised some concerns.

The "response gap"

Outbound laden tankers are not allowed to travel through Hinchinbrook Entrance once winds exceed 45 knots (over 51 miles per hour) or waves are higher than 15 feet. Research has shown that the weather may be under-reported in this area. This is important because the escort tugs must be ready and able to adequately control, approach, connect a line to, and tow a disabled tanker in adverse conditions. This is a key oil spill prevention measure because it is in these same conditions that oil spill response efforts are ineffective.

Donna Schantz
Executive Director

A 2007 Council study identified what we termed a "response gap" in Prince William Sound. This response gap occurs when oil is being shipped through Prince William Sound, but environmental conditions such as wind, waves, temperature, and visibility preclude safe and effective spill response operations. The response gap is this separation between the point of maximum mechanical response capability and the established closure limits.

Council researchers compared environmental conditions (sea state and wind) from 2000 to 2005 in Prince William Sound to response operating limits.

The study found that conditions for an effective oil spill response are exceeded, on average, 37 percent of the time at Hinchinbrook Entrance. This percentage is lower in summer, but reaches up to 65 percent in the winter. In short, for 37 percent of the year, weather conditions are such that an effective response to spilled oil is not possible at Hinchinbrook Entrance.

Visit our website for more information on this report: www.bit.ly/ResponseGap

Safe drills and exercises are needed

In order to have an effective system that is safe for both vessel crews and the environment, the crews deserve and must receive training and experience in the adverse conditions in which they may be called upon to respond during a real emergency. Crew safety is paramount. This experience can be gained starting in calm conditions and working up to more challenging conditions, with tightly controlled parameters where the exercise is stopped any time the risk to crews or vessels becomes unacceptable.

Until the new vessels and crews have demonstrated they

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From Alyeska Pipeline Service Company

Transition activities - an update from Alyeska

Docking: In May, Edison Chouest vessels were cleared for docking and undocking duties. Above, the general purpose tug Latouche docks a tanker at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Barge deployments: Alyeska and Edison Chouest have bi-weekly barge deployments so that crews can practice and demonstrate their proficiency operating the new skimmers and boom aboard the purpose-built barges.

Tether drill: Alyeska and ECO have conducted more than 60 tether and towing exercises with tankers since the vessels started arriving in March. Above, the Commander maneuvers during a tether drill.

Oil Spill Response Barge: OSRB 3 was the last of four new oil spill response barge to launch, and plunged into the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon in mid-May.

Photos and information courtesy of Alyeska Corporate Communications.

Council elects officers for next year

The Council held annual elections to choose its seven-member executive committee at the May meeting in Valdez.

Amanda Bauer, who represents the City of Valdez, was re-elected as president. Thane Miller, who represents Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation, was re-elected as vice-president. Bob Shavelson, who represents the Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition, was re-elected as secretary. Wayne Donaldson, who represents the City of Kodiak, was re-elected as treasurer. Robert Archibald, who represents the City of Homer; Melissa Berns, who represents the Kodiak Village Mayors Association; and new Board member Rebecca Skinner, representing the Kodiak Island Borough, were all elected to serve as at-large members of the executive committee.

These officers will serve until the next election in May 2019.

Amanda Bauer

Thane Miller

Bob Shavelson

Wayne Donaldson

Robert Archibald

Melissa Berns

Rebecca Skinner

Al Burch resigns from Board of Directors

Al Burch, who served on the Council's Board of Directors since September of 2002, resigned in May. Burch represented the Kodiak Island Borough for 16 years. He served for 14 of those years on the Council's Legislative Affairs Committee, helping to guide the Council's advice to elected officials and to provide input on legislative matters.

Al Burch

In May, the Council passed a resolution commending and expressing gratitude for Burch's dedication and service to Alaska. The resolution noted that Burch "maintained one of the best attendance records for his participation in Council meetings, even when doing so presented him with many challenges and difficulties."

Read the full resolution: www.bit.ly/ResolutionAlBurch

"Al was a commercial fisherman in Alaska for over 55 years, and was shrimping out of Seward when the Exxon Valdez went aground. Since the spill, Al has been a tireless advocate for the protection of Alaska's fisheries and ocean resources. We will sorely miss Al's sage advice and his dedication to the Council's mission," said Donna Schantz, executive director for the Council.

New Board members join the Council

Rebecca Skinner of Kodiak, pictured above, has replaced Al Burch as the representative for the Kodiak Island Borough. In addition, Josie Hickel from Chugach Alaska Corporation resigned from the Board in May and was replaced by Peter Andersen.

Skinner is a member of the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak. She is a practicing attorney and Executive Director of Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association.

Andersen who is currently the Vice President of Operations for Chugach Commercial Holdings at Chugach Alaska Corporation, has an extensive background in oil spill prevention and response.

Peter Andersen

Community Corner: Devoted to the cause of safe oil transportation

By Lisa Matlock
Outreach Coordinator

The Council is exceedingly lucky to have volunteers who spend precious time and provide invaluable expertise toward our mission, some of whom have volunteered for decades. Their dedication to the safe transportation of oil through Prince William Sound is both remarkable and essential to the Council's mission.

Lisa Matlock

Long-term volunteers can see projects through from beginning to end. They possess a unique perspective on how changes in the region's prevention and response system have improved over the years. Long-term volunteers also help preserve the Council's history, reminding us all of how, and why, our positions and policies have been shaped as they have over the years. Many examples of how these volunteers have influenced today's Council are exemplified in their personal stories, especially those who have spent over 20 years working on behalf of the Council and its mission.

George Skladal has been a volunteer for the Council's Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring Committee since its inception. His education and work in petroleum management and experience as counsel to the Alaska Pipeline Commission give Skladal a unique set of skills when the Council reviews and advises Alyeska about the Valdez Marine Terminal's safe operation.

Gordon Scott, who has volunteered for over 25 years on the Council's Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee, was a Whittier-based commercial fisherman and shrimper when the Exxon Valdez grounded on Bligh Reef. He worked on the response for 186 days and this experience drove him to volunteer for the Council and become an active member of the Alyeska SERVS fishing vessel oil spill response program out of Whittier. Today, Scott still brings fresh shrimp to the Council's Anchorage office during the

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Scott testifying at a 1993 U.S. Coast Guard hearing about escort tug regulations in Prince William Sound.

Long-serving volunteers

On average, each of our committee members volunteer over 40 hours of their time per year. That includes preparing for and attending regular committee meetings. In addition, most committees hold an annual one-day workshop to develop work plans for future fiscal years. Many volunteers also donate extra time on teams that delve more deeply into specific projects. Board members attend three meetings per year (two-days each), plus many Board members volunteer additional time and energy on committees.

Our longest-serving volunteers have contributed thousands of hours to the Council during their time of service. The current estimate of total all-volunteer hours since the Council was formed in 1990 is well over 100,000 hours.

Following are current volunteers that have served over 5 years. We also wish to recognize former volunteers that have put in countless hours that are not listed here.

5 years' service: Jim Herbert, Robert Beedle, Andrea Korbe
6 years: Amanda Bauer, Harold Blehm, Orson Smith
7 years: Roy Totemoff
8 years: Savannah Lewis
9 years: Debu Misra, Kate Morse, Ruthie Knight
10 years: Cathy Hart, Pat Duffy
15 years: Roger Green, Cliff Chambers
16 years: Al Burch
17 years: Pete Heddell, Jane Eisemann, Steve Lewis
20 years: Patience Andersen Faulkner
23 years: Jerry Brookman
26 years: Gordon Scott
27 years: George Skladal

New tech improves knowledge of water circulation in Port Valdez

By Jeremy Robida
Council Project Manager

This year, the Council completed a multi-year study with the Prince William Sound Science Center to better understand how water circulates within Port Valdez. The study documented seasonal changes to the circulation due to fresh water runoff in spring and summer as well as seasonal wind patterns.

The data from this project will help improve oil spill prevention and response planning. Knowing how sea currents and wind affects oil movement on water, as well as the effects on consistency and amount of water mixing into the oil, in turn affects how an oil spill is contained and cleaned up.

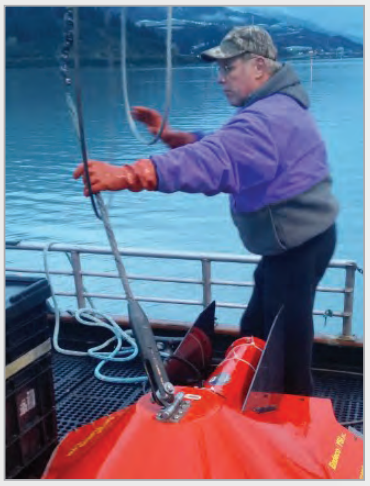
New technology

A major effort to understand Port Valdez circulation was done in the early 1970s when the Valdez Marine Terminal was constructed. This recent project used better technology and instrumentation now available to build upon that previous work. In the earlier study, researchers had to use binoculars to find the drift buoys with small attached flags. The new drifter buoys were all GPS enabled. These buoys not only measured surface flow and wind patterns, but some of the buoys captured data up to 100 feet below the surface.

Other new technology, such as the Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler, which was towed alongside a vessel, provided a significant amount of data on underwater flow patterns as well. This technology simply didn't exist when the original baseline environmental work was first conducted and this helped fill in some of the gaps left in the work from the 1970s.

Results

The project revealed that there are circulation patterns present in Port Valdez that vary by season. Winds, if blowing, tend to overtake and dominate these circulation patterns.



Shelton Gay, an oceanographer with the Prince William Sound Science Center and principal researcher for this project, prepares to launch a buoy.

Effects of the fresh water layer

During summer and fall, when fresh water runoff is at its maximum and air temperatures are highest, water in the port is highly stratified and layered, causing the large scale rotations present to be more pronounced. These large scale circular patterns are overtaken and dominated by winds, however, particularly in the summer. The surface waters generally move in the direction of the current, unless overtaken by wind.

Summer sea breezes tend to blow towards the town of Valdez from the Narrows. In the winter the winds reverse, blowing towards the Narrows. Given the high degree of stratification in the summer, wind can only penetrate down to approximately 30 feet, whereas in the winter, when temperature and salinity is more uniform through

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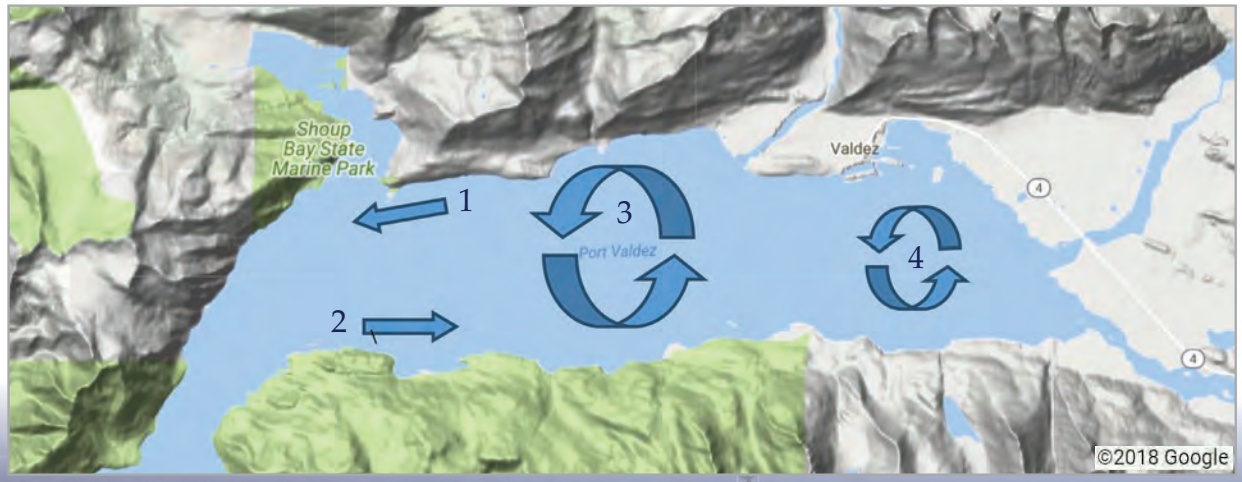

According to the study, there is a tendency for water to exit along the northern shore (1). To balance this mass, incoming water tends to move in along the south shore (2). The central section of Port Valdez often shows a counter-clockwise rotation (3). The head of the port, to the east, shows an intermittent clockwise flow pattern, usually in summer (4).

Prevention and response improving

Continued from page 4

can safely save a fully laden tanker in the full range of conditions in which tankers are allowed to operate, the Council recommends lowering the closure limits to those conditions in which a safe and effective tanker rescue has been demonstrated.

A voice for those living closest to the problem

The Council's role, on behalf of the people who live in the region, is to advocate for the safest system possible, and to verify that key oil spill prevention and response commitments as described in the plans can be successfully carried out.

Much has been learned over the past 28 years by the escort towing company and its crews, tanker owners and crews, government regulators, industry, and members of this Council about how to keep people and the environment safe from another major oil spill. It has taken thoughtful and vigorous commitments from the industry, state and federal regulators, and citizens to ensure that the transportation of oil through Prince William Sound and into the Gulf of Alaska is the safest in the world.

The Council looks forward to continuing to promote the safe transportation of oil, and helping maintain the current high standards that make the prevention and response systems in Prince William Sound some of the best in the world.

New technology

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the water column, wind can affect circulation several hundred feet below the surface.

In addition to circulation and water movement, the study also:

- Provided temperature and water salinity at various depths in various seasons. This will be useful for making decisions about the use of dispersants in Port Valdez.
- Looked at the amount of time water spends in Port Valdez. This information could help determine whether dispersed oil would be flushed from the port or sink to the bottom, where it would concentrate.
- Mapped out areas that would likely be impacted by an oil spill, according to season.

Read the report:
www.bit.ly/PortValdezCirculation

Long term volunteers

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season, helping all of the staff stay closer to the Sound.

Jerry Brookman has served as an Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee member since 1995, and has also volunteered for the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council as well. His vast aviation expertise has supported both regions, as aviation plays an important part of all oil spill response operations.

Patience Andersen Faulkner is currently the longest serving Board member on the Council, having just hit the 20-year mark. Her first-hand experience with the spill began in 1989, as a legal representative for many commercial fishermen who were unable to make a living afterwards. Her experience led to her becoming the longest standing voice for commercial fishermen on the Council, representing Cordova District Fishermen United. Andersen Faulkner has dedicated countless hours, as she has served multiple times as president of the Board, as vice-president, treasurer, and as member-at-large on the Executive Committee. She has also served on the Finance Committee, the Board Governance Committee, Long Range Planning Committee, the Information and Education Committee, and several ad hoc committees. On top of all this, she donates her time and expertise with many other organizations and her beautiful hand sewn sea otter fur scarves are in demand all over the region.

Together these and many more Council volunteers have put in countless hours to help craft a true citizen oversight organization. Volunteers help develop technical projects, do outreach to communities, set the Council's direction, and, most importantly, offer advice to industry and regulators about how to make the operations at the terminal and tanker transportation in Prince William Sound safe for all of the people and wildlife who depend on this special place. We celebrate their involvement with the Council and thank them for their service.

THE OBSERVER is published in spring, summer, and fall by the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council. Except where credited to others, articles are written by Amanda Johnson, the public communications project manager for the Council.

Questions or comments about anything in The Observer? Let us know: newsletter@pwsrcac.org

Transition: New equipment approved for prevention and response duty

Continued from page 1

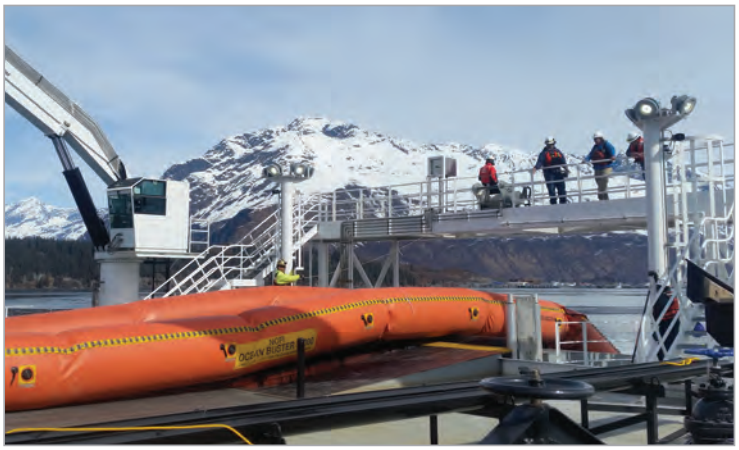
weighing 184,000 deadweight tons. The Commander successfully stopped the tanker in less time and distance than is required by the contingency plans. Each of the escort tugs had to perform a similar test with other tankers.

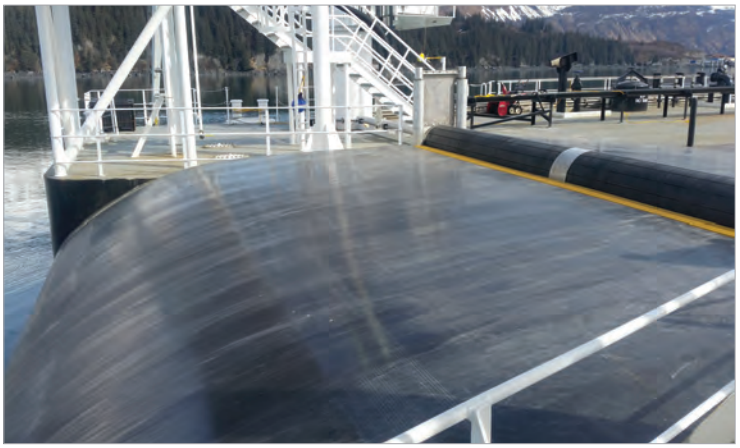
Edison Chouest Offshore started deploying the oil spill response barges in late March. The first exercises focused on training with the barge crews practicing steps needed to operate their vessel. As the crews received more training, they conducted full deployments of the barges and equipment, generally twice per week. This schedule allowed each tug and their crews to rotate through and gain experience towing an oil spill response barge.

Vessels were still arriving just a few days before the transition date. The last escort tug, the Challenger, arrived late in the evening of June 26, and was out on the water demonstrating the capabilities of the vessel and the crew the next morning.

All vessels were approved for service as of July 1. The system transition has been approved, although the department set conditions for the approval, which must be met by December 31, 2018. See page 2 for more on these conditions.

The decks of the new oil spill response barges are large enough to completely inflate the new Current Buster 8 oil spill boom on board, rather than partially inflating in the water. The new method is easier and safer for the crews.





The stern end of the barge is designed so the boom can slide off into the sea. A ramp and power roller help with boom deployment and retrieval. Photos by Jeremy Robida.

Left: Exercises have been held in both Valdez and Cordova to allow local fishing vessels to train with the new equipment. The incoming tug and barge crews must show that they can perform various maneuvers and tactics required for deploying oil spill cleanup boom. Council staff have been on hand to observe many of the exercises and demonstrations of the new vessels and equipment. Photo courtesy of Jeremy Robida.

Below: The new Crucial skimmers, pictured here being lowered into a new Current Buster oil collection boom during a barge deployment, are more efficient at collecting spilled oil. Photo by Jeremy Robida.

Board recognizes Crowley and welcomes Edison Chouest

At its May meeting, the Council's Board of Directors passed two resolutions related to the transition. The first recognized the contributions of Crowley Maritime Corporation and their employees within Alaska communities.

Among other details, the resolution noted the history of Crowley's service in Prince William Sound, their crews' skills and talent and ability to operate in the rugged conditions of Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska, as well as the many contributions to the community by Crowley and their employees.

Crowley resolution: www.bit.ly/CrowleyRecognition

The second resolution welcomed Edison Chouest Offshore and their employees into service in Prince William Sound.

The Board recognized Edison Chouest's new vessels and improvements in the equipment, the company's focus on safety and cultivating competent staff, and their statements of commitment to the protection of Prince William Sound.

Edison Chouest resolution: www.bit.ly/WelcomeECO

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Council meets three times annually. The January meeting is held in Anchorage, May in Valdez, and the September meeting is rotated among communities affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Agendas and other meeting materials are available on our website: www.pwsrcac.org

Board meetings are open to the public, and an opportunity for public comments is provided at the beginning of each meeting.

The Board will meet next in Seldovia on September 20 and 21, 2018.

We need your feedback!

We want to make our newsletter as helpful, informative, and useful as possible for YOU, our readers! Take a quick, 5-minute survey to let us know what information you are most interested in.

Please visit **www.bit.ly/ObserverFeedback** to fill out the survey. Thank you for your time.

Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

Citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers.

Who we are

The 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 System's terminal and tanker fleet.

The Council is a voice for the people, communities, and interest groups in the region oiled by the Exxon Valdez spill.

Those with the most to lose from oil pollution must have a voice in the decisions that can put their livelihoods and communities at risk.

The Council's role

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.

We combat the complacency that led to the 1989 spill by fostering partnerships among the oil industry, government, and local communities in addressing environmental concerns.

Board of Directors

The Council's 18 member entities are communities and interest groups affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill:

Alaska State Chamber of Commerce
Community of Chenega Bay
Chugach Alaska Corporation
City of Cordova
City of Homer
City of Kodiak
City of Seldovia
City of Seward
City of Valdez
City of Whittier
Cordova District Fishermen United
Kenai Peninsula Borough
Kodiak Island Borough
Kodiak Village Mayors Association
Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition
Port Graham Corporation
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp.
Community of Tatitlek

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
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Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

A voice for citizens: www.pwsrcac.org

Our research

The Council's advice depends on quality research and accurate science about oil transportation safety and the environmental impacts of the Valdez Marine Terminal and tankers, as well as local knowledge and expertise.

The Council regularly retains experts in various fields to conduct independent research on issues related to oil transportation safety and performs a variety of functions aimed at reducing pollution from crude-oil transportation activities in and through Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska.

Advisory Committees

While the strategic direction of the Council's work is set by the Board, much of the Council's work is done through permanent volunteer committees made up of Board members, technical experts, and local citizens with an interest in making oil transportation safer in Alaska.

These standing committees work with staff on projects, study and deliberate current oil transportation issues, and formulate their own advice and recommendations to the Council's Board of Directors.

Our committees provide an avenue for public participation in the Council's work.

Terminal Operations & Environmental Monitoring:

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

Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems:

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

Scientific Advisory:

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

Oil Spill Prevention and Response:

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee works to minimize the risks and impacts associated with oil transportation by reviewing and recommending strong spill prevention and response measures, adequate contingency planning, and effective regulations.

Information and Education:

The Information and Education Committee supports the Council's mission by fostering public awareness, responsibility, and participation in the Council's activities through information and education.