

THE OBSERVER

A publication of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

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THE OBSERVER

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Changes proposed to Alaska's regulations on oil spill prevention and response

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation recently proposed changes to the regulations that govern how oil spills are prevented and cleaned up in Alaska. These changes were open for public comment from November 2021 through January 2022.

Improvements

During its review, the Council noted positive changes, including:

- increased clarity within regulations,
- combination of redundant sections, and
- use of technology to modernize workflow.

Remaining concerns

The Council also identified concerns with some of the changes. Among these, the four highest level concerns are:

- 1. Reduction in drills and exercises:** The proposed changes could potentially reduce the number of oil spill drills and exercises for larger crude operators, such as those in Prince William Sound. These activities are an important part of the prevention and response system. To effectively prevent or clean up a spill, responders must practice ahead of an actual emergency.
- 2. Assurance that technology is up to date:** Regulations require that modern oil spill technologies are studied and incorporated when plans are updated. Currently, this includes holding a conference to advance this knowledge, but the proposed version removes this requirement.
- 3. Notifying citizen councils:** The existing regulations require both RCACs (Prince William

Sound and Cook Inlet) be notified and receive printed materials during contingency plan renewals, updates, and amendments. That language has been removed, instead noting that "interested stakeholders" will be notified that these materials are available for review by an ADEC listserv.

While the Council supports electronic distribution, which allows searching, both Councils should continue to be named as recipients required to be notified and receive materials. After the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the U.S. Congress specifically recognized the RCACs' special role in reviewing contingency plans within the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The Alaska Oil Spill Commission similarly recommended integrating the RCACs into a state system of citizen oversight including government agency operations.

- 4. Towing equipment for Alaska weather:** The proposed regulations would change tow package requirements for tankers calling at the Valdez Marine Terminal. While the adoption of International Maritime Organization standards for emergency towing arrangements is appropriate, regulations should also require that tankers calling at the terminal be able to deploy the arrangement from the bow position in 15 minutes.

Review the Council's full comments on our website:

www.tinyurl.com/RegulationComments



Council supports Alyeska's appeal to EPA

In late 2020, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company appealed a July 2020 Environmental Protection Agency air quality rule that would regulate emissions from the crude oil storage tanks at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

Alyeska asserted that the new rule would not result in emissions reductions at the terminal, that local residents would not see air quality benefits, and that Alyeska was already controlling air pollution from the storage tanks using optimal methods.

Alyeska noted that the existing control system at the terminal captures 99.94% of all tank vapors, while the reduction goal for the updated rule is 95%.

The Council hired experts at John Beath Environmental to conduct an independent review of Alyeska's appeal and their assertions, to determine if the Council should support Alyeska's appeal or not.

The section of the standards being appealed establishes national emission limitations, operating limits, and work practices for major sources of hazardous air pollutants. Hazardous air pollutants can be harmful to human health and include carcinogenic compounds such as benzene, among nearly 200 other harmful compounds.

In addition to verifying Alyeska's assertions, the review documented how the implementation of the new rule, as written by the EPA, would impact the amount of hazardous air pollutants coming from the terminal.

The Council's independent review supports the key arguments in Alyeska's appeal. The design of the existing vapor recovery system already controls vapors better than the alternatives required by the new rule. Imposing the entirety of the new rule at the terminal would not result in overall, local air quality benefits.

The Council will be supporting Alyeska in their

appeal by sending a letter and the final report to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Read the full report:

www.tinyurl.com/AppealSupport

Should Alyeska change how they control hazardous air pollutants from the crude oil storage tanks?

Emissions
in tons
per year

Current
emissions
with
existing
structure

1/2
ton

Estimated
emissions
if rule is
implemented

9/10
ton

Upcoming Council meetings

The next meeting of the Council's Board of Directors will be held May 5 - 6, 2022 in Valdez.

The Council's Board of Directors meets three times annually. Next after Valdez:

- September 15 -16, 2022 in Seward
- January 26 - 27, 2023 in Anchorage

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

More information on our website:

www.pwsrcac.org



Volunteer Spotlight: Skye Steritz

Volunteer cultivates resilience and seaweed in Prince William Sound

Skye Steritz' passion for a clean environment started at an early age, during a childhood spent outdoors in Texas.

"I was raised with environmentalist values and became an advocate, especially for water, as I got older."

You can hear the smile in her voice when she's asked why she first moved to Alaska.

"My love of water," she replies. "It's critical to thriving of life on earth."

Growing respect for diverse opinions

Her father was a geophysicist for Exxon for 30 years; conversations with him gave her a well-rounded perspective and a deep respect for oil workers.

"He recognizes the threats of transporting oil, from drilling to pipelines to tankers," she explains. "My conversations with him prepped me to be able to communicate with people from all backgrounds."

She pursued these ideas after high school, racking up three Masters degrees: water resources policy and management; water management and governance; and water cooperation and diplomacy. Her studies took her to Ghana, the Netherlands, Costa Rica, California, and Oregon.

"I was in water management classes with students from all over the world," Steritz mentions. "In the Netherlands, I was one of two from the U.S. out of about 200 students."

Her studies included collaborative projects, working with people from different cultures with different communication styles.

"We were learning to listen deeply and understand where people are coming from," Steritz continues. "We integrated ideas together, rather than assuming any one person had all the answers."

Steritz believes that's an integral part of living in small-town Alaska. "You're going to have neighbors that have different opinions than you

and that's okay. We all still need to work together."

Steritz landed in Soldotna at first, working for the Kenai Watershed Forum. She now lives in Cordova, where she works as a kelp farmer and a special education aide at Mt. Eccles Elementary School.

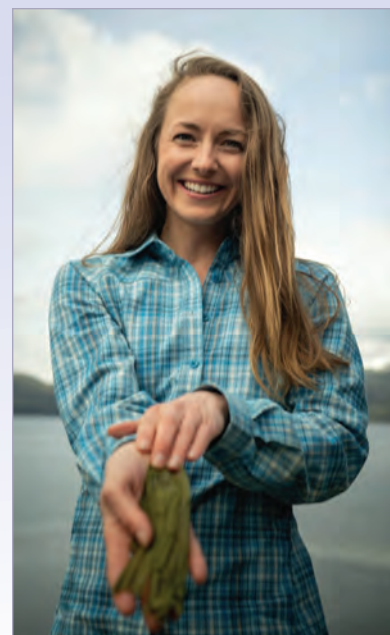
She recalls her first glimpse of Alaska during her plane trip to Soldotna in 2015. "I was having a dream about a community caring for each other in a really cold, harsh subarctic environment, helping each other through a tough winter," she recounts, "then I woke up, and the first part of Alaska that I ever saw was Prince William Sound."

"I just remember being filled with awe," she shares. "It feels full circle that I live here now and work on the Sound."

Cultivating the environment by growing healthy food

Steritz' latest adventure puts her values to work. In 2019, she and her partner Sean Den Adel started Noble Ocean Farms, a new kelp farm in Simpson Bay, near Cordova.

"It increases food security and



Skye Steritz
Member, Oil Spill
Prevention and Response
Committee

Find out more about Steritz' work at Noble Ocean Farms, including recipes for using kelp in stir fry or seaweed salad:

www.nobleoceanfarms.com

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Volunteers like Steritz dedicate their time and expertise on the Council's five standing committees who advise the Council's Board of Directors on technical issues related to the safe transportation of oil through Prince William Sound.



From the executive director:

Collaboration leads to better solutions for prevention and response

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 notes congressional findings from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Included in those findings was the need to foster the long-term partnership of industry, government, and local communities. This is a key piece of the foundation on which the Council was formed.

The Council may not always agree with industry and regulators, but we strive to maintain positive working relationships and build trust. While we do not hesitate to raise concerns when we perceive potential rollbacks in oil spill prevention and response safeguards, it is just as important to recognize when we are in agreement.

I am pleased to report the Council will be supporting Alyeska in a recent appeal they filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (page 2). Our independent review verifies that systems Alyeska currently has in place at the Valdez Marine Terminal capture over 99% of the emissions addressed by the rule – a higher reduction goal than is currently being required. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) has also voiced support of Alyeska's appeal to the EPA.

This collaborative approach goes both ways. For example, after months of coordination, Alyeska has also agreed to support a project proposed by the Council to look at the chemical composition and concentration of oxygenated hydrocarbons released from the terminal. Oxygenated hydrocarbons are less studied than other hydrocarbon products and they are potentially toxic in the aquatic environment. Revisions to the scope of work were necessary to satisfy Alyeska's concerns, mostly related to COVID impacts and their desire to focus resources on their priority operational goals. This is another example of how good communication, strong relationships, and

a willingness to work together can lead to solutions that support everyone's goal of moving oil safely.

There are concerns with the integrity of the secondary containment liner at the Valdez Marine Terminal that we hope can be addressed in a similar fashion. In January, the Council requested an adjudicatory hearing with ADEC in support of the department's decision to require additional evaluation and testing of the liner. Alyeska also requested a hearing seeking to remove any requirement for further liner testing.

Secondary containment systems are required by Alaska regulation to hold oil in the event of a spill from a tank or pipe until the spill can be detected and cleaned up. The protection of groundwater and Port Valdez, in the event of a breach of one of the terminal's large crude oil storage tanks, is dependent largely on the integrity of the liner, so it is of critical importance that the liner be inspected to ensure there are no cracks or holes.

For two decades the Council has voiced concern over the ability of the secondary containment liners within the system to meet regulatory standards. The liners were installed during original construction of the terminal, 45 years ago, and the type of liner installed then would not be allowed by regulations today. Additionally, when relatively small sections of the liner have been inspected over the years during other maintenance work, damage to the liner has been discovered. The Council's persistent calls for more rigorous evaluation and testing, or even replacement of the liner, have not been adequately addressed.

The Council is hoping to find a more collaborative approach to addressing our concerns with the secondary containment liner, in lieu of a hearing.



Donna Schantz

Executive Director

"Only when local citizens are involved in the process will the trust develop that is necessary to change the present system from confrontation to consensus."

- Oil Pollution Act of 1990

Continued on page 10

From Alyeska:

New year, new barge, renewed optimism for 2022



**Danika
Yeager**

**Interim President
Alyeska Pipeline
Service Company**

2022 marks an exciting milestone; the 45th anniversary of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, or TAPS. And in January, I stepped into the role as Alyeska president after Brigham McCown's departure. I couldn't be prouder to serve; I joined TAPS in April 2021, and it's already been one of my most memorable and meaningful professional experiences. I look forward to getting to know the Council's

Board members, staff, and volunteers as I transition into this new role.

I'm also excited to celebrate our anniversary with you; we would not be able to keep the pipeline running without Alaskans. Some of you were a part of TAPS design, construction, start up, and maintenance. Many have worked on TAPS or had a family member who did. Others provide goods or services to TAPS, or workers' families. All share in this legacy and depend on one another for a robust future for our state.

The statue that commemorates the TAPS construction era and sits at the Valdez City Dock has a plaque that proclaims, "We didn't know it couldn't be done." Today, we now know that our work is never done; maintenance and renewal activities will keep our crews busy this summer. Projects include the cleaning, inspection, and coating of ballast piping at the Valdez Marine Terminal. Elsewhere, a robotic inspection tool will inspect relief piping from the East Metering building to the East Tank Farm. This important piping system transports crude to tankage in the event of an overpressurization event. Tank cleaning and inspection work plans are underway.

At Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System, or SERVS, our team is preparing for spring Vessel of Opportunity training, as well as a full slate of drills and exercises this year. I'm pleased to announce that Alyeska and the TAPS Marine

Shippers have commissioned a new large oil spill response barge, or OSRB. Barge OSRB-5 will replace the lightering barge Mineral Creek in 2023. It will be built at Gunderson shipyards in Portland, where several of the other open water barges were constructed during the 2018 marine services transition. Barge OSRB-5 is a sistership to the first OSRBs and will feature equipment to transfer cargo off a stricken tanker and assist with nearshore deployments. It also improves upon the earlier OSRBs with additional hydraulic systems for nearshore capabilities, a more robust snow removal system, and a stern mooring winch.

As we begin our 45th year with optimism and pride, our greatest asset remains our employees; Alaskans around the state working to keep TAPS running safely, reliably, and efficiently. In January, the American Petroleum Institute launched its annual State of American Energy event, highlighting the contributions of the oil and gas industry – and its employees – to the economy and communities around the country. This year, the virtual session held special significance to TAPS because it featured one of Alyeska's own: lifelong Alaskan, small-business owner, and Valdez operations and maintenance coordinator, Jenna Compehos.

Jenna embodies #TAPSPride. Her family has lived in Prince William Sound for generations. She is a hard worker, a strong advocate for TAPS, and an engaged and passionate community member. We couldn't be prouder that this year's State of American Energy features Jenna, because employees like her truly represent a bright future for the oil and gas industry here in Alaska and nationwide.

I look forward to celebrating our legacy and exciting future with you this year.



Watch this video to learn more about Jenna:
www.tinyurl.com/JennaCompehos



Drills and exercises affected by pandemic again in 2021

The Council has released its annual report on drills and exercises conducted in Prince William Sound in 2021. This report highlights the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and lessons learned.

Reduced on-water monitoring for second year

For the second year in a row, the Council has been unable to monitor the on-water drills and exercises in Prince William Sound as closely as pre-pandemic years.

The Council has not been allowed on tugs or barges since early 2020, given COVID safety precautions. To be able to monitor some drills, the Council has chartered boats to observe from afar, but evaluation has proved difficult from such a distance.

"We can't see the full evolution of the exercise or hear communications," says Council drill monitor Roy Robertson. "We can't tell if the crews are having problems deploying boom and we can't time the activities like we usually do."

A quick response is critical to prevent spills. State regulations require certain tasks like boom deployment be done within a specified time limit. These drills and exercises are good practice for responders and help to ensure that crews will be ready to respond efficiently if a spill were to occur.

At a recent Council meeting, Alyeska stated that they hope to start allowing observers back on board their tugs and barges to evaluate drills and exercises in the near future.

Tracking lessons over time

Each year, the Council issues an annual summary of activities and observations from the previous year. These reports help the Council track the history of spill preparedness and response by Alyeska's Ship Escort/Response Vessel System and the associated shippers.

Full descriptions of the drills and exercises described here, and others are available on our website at:

www.tinyurl.com/DrillReport2021

On-water drills and exercises monitored during pandemic

2020: 2

2021: 6

Normal year (pre-pandemic): 12-20

First virtual drill for Prince William Sound

While activities like boom deployment must be done in person and on the water, tabletop exercises can be performed virtually.

The Prince William Sound shipping companies take turns holding an annual drill to test these activities. Usually, this takes place in the Valdez Emergency Operations Center, which can get crowded.

In 2021, Polar Tankers and ConocoPhillips conducted the first-ever virtual drill in Prince William Sound. Folks participated from as far away as London. Most were participating online, which reduced the number of people in the emergency operations center.

Council staff monitored the online meetings.

"This drill showed that a spill response can be managed remotely," Robertson said. "It's possible to do, but maybe not recommended as best practice because in-person drills facilitate relationship-building." Relationships that can be leveraged during actual spills in the future.

A few technology issues arose. Robertson said time stamps on documents were confusing because participants were tuning in from different time zones.

First exercise involving a foreign tanker

Another first this year occurred in June. The Los Angeles Spirit, a foreign flagged tanker chartered by Hilcorp and operated by Teekay Shipping, participated in a towing exercise.

The Council has advocated for years for foreign flagged tankers to take part in drills and exercises. Since 2016, more foreign tankers have been loading oil from the terminal.

These crews may be unfamiliar with the harsh Alaska weather or the prevention and response systems that protect our unique region. The Council is concerned this may increase risk of an

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After 25 years of work on invasive species, Council studies remain innovative

Twenty-five years ago this year, the Council released its first study on the threat of marine invasive species to Prince William Sound. The researchers determined that the biggest source of risk was the ballast water discharged from the oil tankers arriving in Prince William Sound.

Ballast water is sea water that the tanker takes on when they are not carrying oil. This helps stabilize the vessel during ocean voyages. Larvae of marine species can end up in the water. Tankers may release this water straight into Port Valdez if it is carried in clean tanks, segregated from the oil and not contaminated.

This program has changed through the years with advances in science and technology.

Here are a few highlights:

1996

- Council conducts first ever comprehensive study on the threat of invasive species in high-latitude, cold water ecosystems. Researchers confirm that Prince William Sound is at risk of invasion.

Late 1990s

- Council studies sources of ballast water and whether exchanging ballast water at sea is effective at reducing high risk coastal species.

Early 2000s

- European green crab is identified as a species of concern. The Council starts supporting monitoring for these invaders.

Mid-2000s

- New regulations require vessels to exchange ballast water while at sea; however, Prince William Sound tankers are exempt.
- Council studies four species of concern to determine whether they could survive in Prince William Sound. All could survive* in parts of the region.

Green crab, *Carcinus maenas*
Barnacle, *Amphibalanus improvisus*
Snail, *Littorina saxatilis*
Tunicate, *Styela clava*

*The study notes that a warming climate would likely result in a more suitable habitat.



How to identify European green crabs

This species isn't always green. You can identify these invaders by the five spines on each side of the shell.

Late 2000s

- Council begins monitoring for invasive tunicates.
- Council studies risk of invasion from biofouling (attached to hull of tanker).

Early 2010s

- Data from monitoring efforts show that invasive species are moving north.

Mid-2010s

- Council study of federal and state policies governing ballast water shows regulations are varied and complex.
- U.S. Coast Guard approves first on-board treatments for ballast water.

Late 2010s-present

- Council trials genetic analysis of plankton samples to help monitor for invasive species. Techniques found to be effective.

More details and full studies are available on our website:

www.tinyurl.com/25YearsOfNIS



Ballast water is sea water that the tanker takes on to help stabilize the vessel when not carrying oil. Larvae of marine species can end up in the water.



Community Corner:

Council mourns loss of Anchorage staffer

Natalie Novik, administrative assistant for the Anchorage office, passed away in October 2021, after a two-year battle with cancer. Natalie joined Council staff in June 2014.

Born and educated in Paris, Natalie was proud of her Breton and Russian roots. She dedicated much of her life to oil spill prevention and response in Alaska and internationally.

She volunteered to help clean up after multiple oil spills that plagued Brittany starting in the 1970s. When the Exxon Valdez spill occurred, Natalie was teaching in New York and already planning to move to Alaska.

In Alaska, Natalie spent 13 years with Northern Forum, a nonprofit group created to improve communications and cooperation in northern regions. In that role she supported providing ongoing know-how and assistance related to the 1994 pipeline spill in the Komi Republic in Russia. As part of Northern Forum's program on disaster management in the North and the Arctic, Natalie was in charge of relations with the Arctic Council.

Years before joining the Council's staff, she provided translation and interpretation between the Council and Sydicat Mixte Vigipol, a citizen governance group created after the Amoco Cadiz ran aground in 1978 on the Brittany coast. Natalie also worked two years for Ecoshelf on Sakhalin Island in Russia, translating contracts and

documents related to oil spill prevention, monitoring, and response.

Natalie was an advocate for residents of northern regions and cross-cultural engagement in many ways. She worked for the Alaska Native Science Commission's community self-reliance project from 2012-2013, and the World Trade Centers Association immediately before joining the Council's staff. From 2009-2014, she served as Honorary Consul of France in Alaska. She was a devoted volunteer for the Celtic Community of Alaska, where she was still serving as president until she passed.

Natalie was very proud of her work with the Council and was a true believer in our mission. She provided vast contributions to the Council's robust archives, directly supporting the success of many projects that rely on historical knowledge. She firmly believed in the value of gathering and connecting in person, and poured attention into every detail for the annual Science Night event, volunteer workshop, and holiday party.

Natalie left behind her beloved cat Sashka (who has been adopted by a friend), many friends and colleagues, and memories of her sense of

humor, caring, creativity, and passion. When Natalie applied for her position at the Council, she summed up her career thusly: "curious and creative individuals will go through life learning new skills and enriching their potential."



Betsi Oliver

**Outreach
Coordinator**



Natalie Novik, 1951-2021

The Council's "all-purpose bureaucrat" looking forward to a busy retirement

Walt Wrede is retiring after serving as the Council's director of administration since 2016.

Wrede's passion for and knowledge of the political system in Alaska has been instrumental as he worked closely with the Legislative Affairs Committee to monitor developments on matters related to the Council's mission in Washington, D.C., and Juneau. He also worked with the Council's Executive Committee and Board Governance Committee.

Before the Council, Wrede spent most of his career in Alaska working in municipal government. He served as the city planner in Cordova for four years immediately following the Exxon Valdez oil spill. He also served for eight years as the borough manager of the Lake and Peninsula Borough and 12 years as city manager for Homer.

Wrede's easy-going demeanor, willingness to work

with those that had differing viewpoints, and great sense of humor were instrumental in moving important work forward throughout this career. He often introduced himself as the Council's "all-purpose bureaucrat" and, during his tenure as Homer city manager, when asked by Homer's citizens who he was supporting for city council, would answer, "Whoever wins."

When asked about where he plans to focus his time in retirement, Wrede noted he is looking forward to spending more time volunteering. He says he is looking forward to being able to give

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Walt Wrede

Three new staff members join the Anchorage office

KJ Crawford joined staff as the new director of administration in December 2021, and has been able to focus on training with Walt Wrede ahead of his retirement.

Crawford holds a Master's degree in organizational management and Bachelor's in journalism and public communications. She previously served as the programs director for the Alaska Safety Alliance, where she oversaw the North Slope Training Cooperative and other health, safety, and environmental trainings for high hazard industries across Alaska. Before that, KJ held various positions with the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. She also volunteers with the Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network.

Ashlee Hamilton joined the Council in October, filling the new position of bookkeeper/office coordinator. In December, Hamilton was promoted to financial manager. Gregory Dixon, who has been the Council's financial manager for the past 20 years, plans to retire later this year.

Hamilton was raised in southeast Alaska on Prince



KJ Crawford



Jaina Willahan



Ashlee Hamilton

of Wales Island. She attended the University of Alaska and earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. She was previously employed as a branch manager for a credit union, as a staff accountant at a CPA firm, and as a bookkeeper for a restaurant chain in Juneau.

Jaina Willahan is the Council's new administrative assistant. A life-long Anchorage resident, Willahan holds a Bachelor's degree in English from the University of Alaska Anchorage. She came to the organization with eight years of customer service experience. She spends most of her free time playing board games, crafting, and hanging out with her dog, Jack.



Volunteer Spotlight: Skye Steritz

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nutrition security for rural communities like ours and provides habitat for fish species like salmon and herring.”

They are currently growing ribbon and sugar kelp. After spores are collected in nearby waters, they are then grown in seawater aquariums at the Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute and Native Conservancy. Once they are big enough to survive on their own, the still-tiny kelp get shipped back to Steritz and Den Adel, who “plant” them along ropes attached to a structure below the water surface. The kelp is harvested in April and May. They plan to sell fresh kelp at the docks in Cordova and potentially Whittier and Valdez.

Volunteering for the Council

When Steritz first moved to Cordova, she participated in Alyeska’s Ship Escort/Response Vessel System’s fishing vessel training program to clean up oil spills.

“It became very clear how hard it would be in reality to clean up an oil spill,” she says. “It seems like an astronomical challenge, so our only true hope is prevention.”

In 2020, Steritz joined the Council’s Oil Spill Prevention and Response, or OSPR, Committee.

She is interested in spill planning for the Copper River Delta area, in particular a project OSPR developed to capture the history of the Copper River Delta and Flats’ oil spill protection strategies.

In the 90s, a group of Cordovans pushed to get geographic response strategies developed specifically for the region. The area is home to important marine species and cultural sites, and it would be particularly challenging to clean up a spill in the area. The results were adopted into government plans in the late 90s. The committee is working with researchers to document that history, including why this work was later dropped from the government plans, and how to support planning for the area in future.

“People in our community are concerned that there is not a plan for the Flats in place currently,” Steritz notes.

Schantz: Collaboration leads to better solutions

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Regardless of how this process proceeds, the ultimate goal is to work together with industry and regulators to give citizens a voice in decisions that impact the safe operation of the terminal and tankers in Prince William Sound.

We often share the following quote from the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 congressional findings, “Only when local citizens are involved in the process will the trust develop that is necessary to change the present system from confrontation to consensus.” We will continue to try and work together with industry and regulators to find solutions that improve oil spill prevention and response.

Wrede retires from Council

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more of his time to meaningful causes.

“It has been a pleasure working with Walt,” said Donna Schantz, executive director for the Council. “The entire staff greatly benefited from his leadership and composure during difficult situations. Walt’s vast experience and passion for the organization’s mission is unmatched, and he will be greatly missed.”

Drills and exercises affected by pandemic again in 2021

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accident or oil spill.

During the exercise, the crews of the tanker and escort tugs went through the steps it would take for the tugs to take control of the tanker and begin towing. During the first part of this process, the tanker’s captain is in charge, giving orders and instructions to the tugs on how and when to approach the tanker and connect a towline.

Once the towline is connected, the captain of the towing tug takes over control. The tanker is then taken in tow like a barge.

Clear communication is important during these operations. Robertson said the tanker’s captain and crew performed well.

The Council looks forward to future exercises with foreign flagged tankers.

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, nonprofit 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 information and 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

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 Corp.
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp.
Community of Tatitlek

Advisory Committees

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 committees work with staff on projects, study and deliberate current oil transportation issues, and advise the Council's Board of Directors.

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

Terminal Operations and 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.

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