



# COUNCIL

*“The mission of the Council is to represent the citizens of Cook Inlet in promoting environmentally safe marine transportation and oil facility operations in Cook Inlet”*

# BRIEFS

## 3rd Quarter 2011

### Cook Inlet Risk Assessment Underway

For well over a decade, the concerns about navigation risks in the Cook Inlet have simmered. The Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (Cook Inlet RCAC), pilots, harbor masters, and many others have voiced those concerns formally and privately, and through two separate forums sponsored by Cook Inlet RCAC on the subject of navigational hazards and risk assessments.

In October 2010, due in large part to the Council’s efforts, the United States Coast Guard’s Congressional Reauthorization included a mandate to conduct a Cook Inlet Risk Assessment.

Early this year, \$250,000 in initial funding from the State of Alaska became available through a grant from the Kenai Peninsula Borough. A Management Team was formed, consisting of Mike Munger, Executive Director of Cook Inlet RCAC; Captain Jason Fosdick, Captain of the Port, US Coast Guard; and Steve Russell, Program Manager, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Nuka Research was retained to serve as Project Manager.

Shortly thereafter, an additional \$180,000 was directed to the effort through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. A third funding source that materialized was the Prince William Sound RCAC, which contributed an additional \$20,000. Most recently, Tesoro has now pledged \$20,000 as well.

(continued on next page)

pg1

Risk Assessment  
Long-awaited Study of  
Cook Inlet Navigation  
Underway

pg3

Directors Spotlight  
Stanley & Opheim Step  
Up Their Engagement

pg4

CISPRI Profile  
Innovation in Oil Recov-  
ery & Species Protection

pg5

Election/Membership  
Commercial Fishing  
and Muni Seats to be  
Filled

pg6

Annual Recertification  
Coast Guard Approves  
CIRCAC Application

pg7

Public Outreach Position  
Filled  
Rombach Hired Mid-Year

## 2011 COUNCIL

**MOLLY MCCAMMON**  
Municipality of Anchorage

**GARY FANDREI**  
Aquaculture Associations

**BOB FLINT**  
Recreational Interests

**JAY STINSON**  
Commercial Fishing

**ROB LINDSEY**  
City of Kodiak

**ROBERT PETERKIN, II**  
State Chamber of Commerce

**ALLISON MILLER**  
City of Seldovia

**GRACE MERKES**  
Kenai Peninsula Borough

**MICHAL OPHIEM**  
Alaska Native Organizations

**CARLA STANLEY**  
City of Homer

**JOHN WILLIAMS**  
City of Kenai

**DERIC MARCORELLE**  
Environmental Interests

**LIZ CHILTON**  
Kodiak Island Borough

**Cook Inlet RCAC**  
P.O. Box 2029  
Kenai, Alaska 99611  
PHONE: (907) 283-7222  
FAX: (907) 283-6102  
WEB: [www.circac.org](http://www.circac.org)

## Risk Assessment (con't.)

Stakeholder groups were solicited in August to fill the seats of an Advisory Panel of experts with vast credentials and local knowledge. These individuals were chosen from applications received to represent commercial fishing, pilots, shipping and ports, salvors, oil producers, Alaska Natives, environmental managers and others. The Panel's first meeting was in October, and featured a presentation of the Vessel Traffic Study. It is expected the full Assessment will take up to two years and cost just under \$1 million to perform.

The Assessment will analyze the risks present to navigation in the Inlet. It will further project the nature of the consequences these risks are likely to create, and the measures necessary to reduce the likelihood of an event and to mitigate the consequences. The Advisory Panel will recommend measures to federal and state agencies and industry to achieve these goals.

All documents, reports and notices may be found on the project website, [www.cookinletriskassessment.com](http://www.cookinletriskassessment.com).



*Steve Russell, ADEC; ADEC Commissioner Larry Hartig; Mike Munger, Cook Inlet RCAC; Capt. Jason Fosdick, USCG (l to r)*

# Directors Spotlight - Stanley & Opheim Take to the Sea

Carla Stanley (City of Homer) and Michael Opheim (Alaska Native Organizations) accepted an invitation from Tesoro to observe the company's recent on-water oil spill response training exercise launched from Homer. Joined by Cook Inlet RCAC staff and a number of agency and industry observers, Stanley and Opheim saw a full-blown deployment of off-shore, near-shore and shoreline recovery and containment measures, including a lightering and decon station.

Acting as the Oil Spill Response Organization, or OSRO, Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response, Inc. (CISPRI) devoted a great deal of attention during the drill to the deployment and evaluation of their 56 and 13 disc Crucial skimmers. CISPRI also engaged contract Vessels of Opportunity from the Homer and Seldovia commercial fishing community, as well as the Seldovia Oil Spill Team for near- and on-shore measures.

In related notes, Carla reports earning her Certificate of Achievement for successful completion of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security/FEMA Emergency Management Institute *Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS-100)* course. And Michael has been appointed to the Risk Assessment Advisory Panel. Congratulations, Michael and Carla!



*Director Michael Opheim (Alaska Native Organizations)*



*Director Carla Stanley (City of Homer)*

# CISPRI Profile

Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response, Inc. (CISPRI) is having a busy year. In addition to its core activities of supporting member regulatory drill requirements, equipment maintenance and spill responder training, the oil spill recovery organization is excited about several new initiatives they are pursuing. Among these new endeavors:

- Completion and full utilization of their 18,700 gallon Test Tank. This facility will provide CISPRI and its members the ability to validate skimmer performance to the ASTM F2709 standard. In addition, CISPRI hopes to support other spill response organizations' responder training needs. Though not a wave tank, it allows for the introduction of ice, mimics the salinity of Cook Inlet, and allows responders the ability to work with real oil. The tank measures 25'x25'x4', and is located within a contained, heated concrete slab.
- Relocation of its Sea Otter Rehabilitation facility from Nikiski to Seldovia. The new facility at the Seldovia harbor will be fully operational beginning Summer 2012.
- Upgrading its Incident Command Center and planning for further technological improvements in 2012 ... including the introduction of SmartBoard technology.

(continued next page)



*CISPRI's on-site test tank allows the newest technology to actually recover oil in comparable Cook Inlet salinity, and even ice conditions*

# Council Seats Set to Expire

By design, several stakeholder seats on the Cook Inlet RCAC Board of Directors expire every year, and in March 2012 the following seats will need to be filled: Commercial Fishing, Aquaculture Associations, and the municipalities of Homer, Kodiak and Kenai. These would be for three year terms.

Public notifications have been issued, and we have reached out to the appropriate parties at commercial fishing organizations to solicit membership and interest in participating in the nomination and election process.

For more information, contact Karen Delaney at [karendelaney@circac.org](mailto:karendelaney@circac.org).

---

## CISPRI

(continued from previous page)

These improvements are expected to enhance member use of their operations tech manual and response equipment availability and published rental rates for the Planning and Finance Sections. They will also allow several environmental enhancements, including the effective use of the ShoreZone imagery database, Geographic Information System (GIS), Geographic Response Information Network (GRIN), and the Cook Inlet RCAC Ice Forecasting Network. CISPRI views these key additions as timely steps toward keeping communication technology at the forefront.

*CISPRI crew lowers a Crucial Skimmer during Tesoro's on-water drill in Kachemak Bay*



## Coast Guard Awards Annual Recertification

The Cook Inlet RCAC is legislatively required to demonstrate on an annual basis that it is operating in accordance with its Congressional mandate under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90). This thorough, very public process was initiated in June. It details our budget, and shares the status of programs undertaken to advance our mission.

In a letter dated September 14, 2011, the U.S. Coast Guard notified Cook Inlet RCAC of its successful recertification, effective through August 31, 2012. In approving our Recertification, Rear Admiral Thomas P. Ostebo commented “My staff and I look forward to continued work with you on our common goal of improving the safe and environmentally sound transportation of oil in Cook Inlet and surrounding communities.”

*“...CIRCAC has worked to develop a Navigational Risk Assessment... the installation of high frequency radar and...real-time monitoring of Cook Inlet’s winter ice. Also...its outreach program has helped educate the Cook Inlet region on the importance of oil spill prevention and response.”*

*U. S. Senator Lisa Murkowski  
August 23, 2011*

Widespread support of the Cook Inlet RCAC and our performance was expressed during the public comment period, including letters from our Congressional and State delegations, Borough and municipal officials, oil industry and agency representatives, fishing and environmental organizations and more. We are very grateful for the relationships and partnerships we’ve developed that enable us to achieve our objectives.

In the Spring of 2012, we will renew the process of pursuing our annual recertification. Watch our website for updates and instructions on how you might provide public comment.

## New Director of Public Outreach

Cook Inlet RCAC welcomes a new face to the organization. Jerry Rombach joined in mid-July after a brief but thorough search to fill the position created by Trent Dodson's departure.

A native St. Louisan and lifelong Midwesterner, Rombach brings extensive experience in corporate communications, crisis management, regulatory compliance, government advocacy and non-profit leadership to the Council. Since joining, Jerry has taken full charge of the Council's Public Information Program. Immediate tasks have included helping bring the Recertification process to a successful conclusion; participating in several oil spill training exercises; representing Cook Inlet RCAC at industry functions; assisting in supporting the Cook Inlet Risk Assessment project, and beginning to take ownership of the publications and website.

Rombach welcomes your ideas to better enhance this opportunity to serve Cook Inlet RCAC and implement its public information programming.



*Jerry Rombach*



*Think you can identify this plant?*

*E-mail Jerry at [jerryrombach@circac.org](mailto:jerryrombach@circac.org) if you think you know the answer, and we'll acknowledge your achievement in a future issue.*

*We encourage you to visit our website, [www.circac.org](http://www.circac.org), to view our extensive photo gallery from our environmental monitoring programs.*



## Other Cook Inlet RCAC Third Quarter Activities:

- Staff engaged in Oil Spill Drills for Escopeta and Chevron
- Tour of Marathon Oil Beaver Creek Facility
- Industry Appreciation Days
- 3rd Quarter Council Meeting in Seldovia
- Introduction of Directors Synopsis Reports
- Staff participated in key meetings and conferences sponsored by:
  - Clean Pacific Advisory Committee
  - Shore Zone Partners
  - Alaska Oil & Gas Conservation Commission
  - Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Pipeline Leak Detection Conference
  - Pacific States/BC Oil Spill Task Force
  - Alaska Regional Response Team
  - Coastal Response Research Center (Gulf) Dispersants Workshop
  - Soldotna/Kenai Chamber
  - Oil Spill Recovery Institute
  - many more