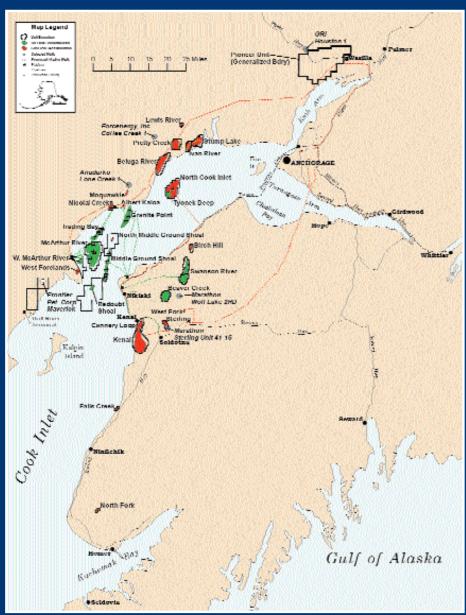


Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council

## Cook Inlet Oil & Gas Activity



#### Cook Inlet RCAC Staff

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Science Coordinator
Sue Saupe

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> Transcriber Cindy Sanguinetti

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# Message

## from the President and the Executive Director



e can be proud of the good work accomplished by our organization in 2001. During the year, Cook Inlet RCAC continued to pursue its mandates and progress was made in many areas. However, a budget shortfall has continued to limit our ability to achieve some of our most important goals, especially in the area of scientific research. We will continue to seek additional funding so that the mission of the Cook Inlet RCAC is fully realized.

We were fortunate that, in a unanimous vote, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly appropriated \$250,000 to Cook Inlet RCAC to be used for specific projects that otherwise would have gone unfunded. The Charter Funding Companies, which provide most of Cook Inlet RCAC's funding, added an additional \$40,000 to the budget for staff salary adjustments. These two actions were very much appreciated by Cook Inlet RCAC.

We are already exploring possible funding sources for 2002, which includes working with our Congressional Delegation. Senator Frank Murkowski, who was instrumental in making citizen advisory councils part of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, has stated that we need to find a permanent solution to Cook Inlet RCAC's funding needs. The Council, committees, and staff are determined to work with Senator Murkowski and others so that we can accomplish even more in the years ahead.

As you read through this report, you will find that working in partnership with others was a key objective in 2001 and will continue to be so in 2002. Continued partnerships allow us to share knowledge and resources and accomplish much more than we ever would have been able to do on our own.

The United States Coast Guard Recertified Cook Inlet RCAC again in 2001. This annual Recertification is valid through August 31, 2002. In the Recertification letter, Admiral T.J. Barrett, Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District, wrote, "Of the eight comments the Coast Guard received, all were supportive of Recertification and noted the positive efforts, good communication, and broad representation of Cook Inlet communities as

Cook Inlet RCAC carries out its responsibilities as intended by the Act. Comments such as unbiased objectivity, technical expertise, political support, and credibility resounded through the letters of support. Your improvements to the oil spill prevention and response program in Cook Inlet are commendatory." The Admiral's comments are a reflection of Cook Inlet RCAC's commitment to working closely with the citizens of Cook Inlet.

At the end of the year, Cook Inlet RCAC Public Outreach Coordinator Joe Gallagher resigned and accepted a position with Homer Electric Association. Thanks in large part to Joe's efforts over the past three years, the public is more aware of Cook Inlet RCAC's activities then ever before. We wish Joe great success!

Finally, we would like to share a poem that speaks to the strength of the American people after the September 11, 2001, disaster:

"There is sobbing of the strong, and a pall upon the land; But the People in their weeping Bare the iron hand: Beware the People weeping When they bare the iron hand." - Herman Melville

GOD BLESS AMERICA

## Mission & Goals

## of Cook Inlet RCAC

"The mission of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council is to represent the citizens of Cook Inlet in promoting environmentally safe marine transportation and oil facility operations in Cook Inlet."

he mission statement of the Cook Inlet RCAC is a reflection of the mandates spelled out by Congress in 1990 when it passed the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90). The federal law made sweeping changes to the way oil is produced and transported in the United States. Thanks in large part to the efforts of United States Senator Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska), there is a section in OPA 90 that creates two citizen oversight councils; one for Prince William Sound and one for Cook Inlet. Congress established the councils to ensure that citizens, the oil industry, and government agencies would work together as partners to prevent oil spills in Alaska's pristine waters.

Cook Inlet RCAC represents citizens from Kodiak Island, the Kenai Peninsula, and the Municipality of Anchorage. Each of these citizens has a stake in keeping the waters of Cook Inlet free from pollution. With that goal in mind, the Cook Inlet RCAC has spent the last eleven years working on several different fronts to accomplish the goal of an environmentally sound Cook Inlet.

Over the last decade there have been many changes to the way oil is produced and transported in Cook Inlet. Double-hulled tankers are now transporting the majority of oil through Cook Inlet. The nautical charts are much improved and will be getting even more accurate in the years to come. There are improved navigational aides in place to help guide tankers in the Inlet. Crews are better trained and vessels are thoroughly inspected before entering Cook Inlet waters. Spill response plans are much more detailed, with Geographic Response Strategies giving well-trained responders an additional tool to use when protecting environmentally sensitive areas. These are just a few examples of how Cook Inlet RCAC has successfully worked with industry and government agencies to make improvements to the oil production and transportation system.

Cook Inlet RCAC has been a strong voice for citizens since 1990 and that voice will continue to be heard in the years ahead.





# Membership & Organization

he organization of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council is outlined in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The thirteen Board of Directors represent various municipalities, cities, boroughs, and special interest groups to insure broad representation of all citizens within the Cook Inlet region. The Act also calls for the inclusion of several non-voting Ex-Officio members, representing various state and federal agencies.

OPA 90 also requires the Council to set up two committees: the Environmental Monitoring Committee (EMC), and the Prevention, Response, Operations, and Safety Committee (PROPS). The committees are made up of Council directors and public members and assist the Council in accomplishing its goals and mandates.

#### **Board of Director Seats**

Municipality of Anchorage
City of Kenai
City of Kenai
City of Seldovia
Kenai Peninsula Borough
Kodiak Island Borough
Aquaculture Associations
Commercial Fishing Groups
Recreational Groups
State Chamber of Commerce



CIRCAC Board member Rob Lindsey and Senator Alan Austerman (R-Kodiak) at the CIRCAC booth during ComFish in Kodiak.

#### **Ex-Officio Members**

Captain William J. Hutmacher - United States Coast Guard

Gary Lehnhausen - U.S. Forest Service

Joe Dygas - Bureau of Land Management

John Whitney - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Matt Carr - Environmental Protection Agency

Richard T. Prentki, Ph.D.- Minerals Management Service

Jim Harris - Alaska Division of Emergency Services

Susan Harvey - Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Tom Bucceri – Alaska Department of Natural Resources

#### **Environmental Monitoring Committee**

#### **Council members:**

Jim Hornaday, chair Glen Glenzer
Dexter Ogle Phil Squires

#### **Public members:**

David Raskin Dennis Randa
Dora Dushkin Merritt Mitchell
Steve Hackett Steve Hunt

Steve Okkonen Lani Kai Eggertsen-Goff

#### Prevention, Response, Operations, and Safety Committee

#### Council members:

Doug Jones, chair Glen Glenzer June Reuling

Mary Jacobs Paul Shadura

#### Public members:

Bob Baker Carol Kvasnikoff Jerry Brookman
Barry Eldridge Joe Gabriel, P.E. Bruce Gabrys

## **Board of Directors**



Glen Glenzer
Municipality of Anchorage
President



June Reuling City of Seldovia Vice-President



John Douglas City of Kenai Treasurer/Secretary



Phil Squires
Commercial fishing
interest groups



Doug Jones Recreational interest groups



Dexter Ogle Alaska Native organizations



Grace Merkes Kenai Peninsula Borough



Rob Lindsey City of Kodiak



Jim Hornaday City of Homer



Paul Shadura
Aquaculture associations



Mary Jacobs Kodiak Island Borough



Bob Shavelson Environmental interest groups



Robert Peterkin II State Chamber of Commerce

# 2001 Year in Review

## Council Activities

he year 2001 was an exciting and busy year for the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council. The work of the Cook Inlet RCAC takes place on a daily basis, with staff and Committees working throughout the year to carry out the directives of the Council. A summary of the year's highlights provides an overview of the Council's priorities, which are a reflection of the concerns of the citizens of Cook Inlet.

#### Recertification

The activities of the Council were reviewed by the United States Coast Guard as part of the annual recertification process. The Coast Guard found the Council's work over the past year to be in line with the mandates of OPA 90 and recertified the Council without reservation. During the public comment process, the Coast Guard received letters from several Cook Inlet communities, Boroughs, and interest groups that supported the recertification of Cook Inlet RCAC.

#### Pipeline Risk Assessment

One of the top priorities of the Cook Inlet RCAC during 2001 was getting a pipeline risk assessment process started.

During 2001, there were a series of pipeline related spills that occurred in Cook Inlet. These incidents did not result in significant amounts of oil being spilled into the water, but they did serve as a warning sign that the system was in need of a serious evaluation. Cook Inlet RCAC recognizes and appreciates the high level of maintenance and monitoring work the industry has done with Cook Inlet pipelines. However, there are still too many unanswered questions about the condition of the pipelines.

In August, the Cook Inlet RCAC called upon the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) to immediately begin the process of

getting a pipeline risk assessment started. The Council felt too much time had already passed and that there could be no more delays. The Council's insistence that ADEC initiate a pipeline risk assessment resulted in prompt action by the state. The ADEC, in conjunction with Cook Inlet RCAC and industry, has scheduled a Cook Inlet pipeline workshop for January 2002. The workshop is the first step in getting a risk assessment started. The Cook Inlet RCAC looks forward to working with all parties involved to complete this very important project.

#### Funding Agreement with Kenai Peninsula Borough

In a unanimous vote on October 9, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly passed an ordinance that will provide funding for several Cook Inlet RCAC projects. The ordinance sets aside \$250,000 for environmental monitoring, oil spill contingency plan reviews, and public outreach efforts. The ordinance was sponsored by Borough Assembly members Grace Merkes of Sterling, Bill Popp of Kenai, and Tim Navarre of Kenai. Under the terms of the ordinance, the funds will be used to support the following projects:

- \$100,000 for Cook Inlet intertidal and subtidal monitoring for hydrocarbon contamination.
- \$58,000 to continue a shoreline mapping project that was initiated in 2001.
- \$45,000 to pay for an independent contractor to review spill contingency plans for large, non-tank vessels. These vessels are required to have contingency plans under a state law that was passed last spring.
- \$22,000 to help pay for an independent review of Cook Inlet pipelines.
- \$25,000 to expand Cook Inlet RCAC's public outreach program.

Cook Inlet RCAC appreciates the support extended by the Kenai Peninsula Borough to help fund these important projects.



#### Awards

The Cook Inlet RCAC recognized the work of its volunteers at the annual Volunteer Awards banquet in Anchorage on December 6. The event, held in conjunction with the Prince William Sound RCAC, is an opportunity to thank all the volunteers that are the foundation of the regional citizens advisory councils. This year, there were special awards handed out to recognize ten years of service, along with awards to honor the outstanding work of Council and Committee members.

Volunteer of the Year: Doug Jones of Anchorage. Mr. Jones began as a public member of the PROPS Committee in 1991 and is the current Chairman of that committee. He has been on the Board of Directors since 2000 filling the recreational special interest seat of the Council. Mr. Jones was also recognized for his 10 years of service to Cook Inlet RCAC.

<u>Board Member of the Year:</u> June Reuling of Seldovia. Ms. Reuling has represented the City of Seldovia on the Board of Directors since 1994. She is currently the Vice-President of the Council.

<u>Prevention, Response, Operations, and Safety Committee Volunteer of the Year:</u> Barry Eldridge of Kenai. Mr. Eldridge has been a public member of the PROPS Committee since 1995.

Environmental Monitoring Committee Volunteer of the Year: Merritt Mitchell of Homer. Mr. Mitchell served as the environmental special groups representative on the Board of Directors from 1991 to February 2001. He is currently a public member of the EMC Committee.

<u>Ten-Year Award:</u> Recognized for a decade of work with Cook Inlet RCAC were Board members Doug Jones of Anchorage and Mary Jacobs of Kodiak; EMC public member Dennis Randa of Kasilof; and Cindy Sanguinetti of Kenai who works on special projects for the Council.

#### **Industry Awards**

Cook Inlet RCAC also congratulates Tesoro Alaska Company and Cook Inlet Pipeline Company for the recognition they received during 2001. In July, Tesoro Alaska was selected by the Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force as one of the organizations Legacy Award winners. The award was established to recognize and support exemplary oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response programs.

Cook Inlet Pipeline Company was recognized by the American Petroleum Institute for its safety record at the API Pipeline Conference in April. Cook Inlet Pipeline Company was one of 15 small American pipeline companies that finished 2000 without a single occupational safety incident.

Cook Inlet RCAC President Glen Glenzer presents outgoing Council member Ron Rainey with an award in recognition of Mr. Rainey's outstanding work while representing the State Chamber of Commerce on the Board of Directors. In 2001, Mr. Rainey was replaced by Robert Peterkin II.



# Environmental Monitoring Committee

The Environmental Monitoring Committee (EMC) continues to develop a database of intertidal information for Cook Inlet. Their intertidal studies are being conducted at two spatial scales. First, they continue to assess the results of their field sampling and data collected during the 2000 Cook Inlet Intertidal Reconnaissance Survey field surveys in central Cook Inlet. This study involved detailed on-the-ground surveys of individual sites to assess invertebrate populations living on and within the sediments and to evaluate the sediment conditions that occurred at each site.

At a larger spatial scale, a new study that was initiated in 2001 is an aerial mapping project that will provide nearshore habitat information and digital imagery for coastal Cook Inlet. Instead of detailed on-the-ground intertidal data, this project obtains shoreline information on a large, regional scale. To illustrate the scale of this project, over 1000 km of shoreline were flown by fixed-wing aircraft and helicopter during a five-day tide window in June 2001.

#### Intertidal Reconnaissance Survey

In 2000, a total of 25 sites were surveyed by scientists Dennis Lees, Bill Driskell, and Dr. Jim Payne where they measured beach morphology and collected sediment and tissue samples. Populations of clams and other sedimentdwelling organisms were assessed to determine their value as potential sentinel species, or species that are relatively long-lived that could integrate contaminants that may come in contact with the shorelines.

At an Anchorage workshop in December 2001, the contractors presented the results of their study and described the physical processes that are driving the sediment types found in various parts of the inlet and, thus, the types of organisms that can live on those beaches. For example, they found few if any organisms on several highly scoured beaches, such as those found on shoals in the middle of Cook Inlet, but relatively high concentrations of the mud clam, Macoma balthica,

on beaches where fine clays and muds are deposited. They described the two main factors influencing distribution and abundance of long-lived infaunal organisms in central and upper Cook Inlet as the extreme tidal currents and the massive loads of silt from the northern river systems. In describing the physical and biological interactions, the contractors simplified by stating that "If it weren't for the currents, Cook Inlet would become a gigantic mud flat inhabited by large populations of Macoma balthica. And, if it weren't for the mud introduced by the rivers, Cook Inlet would become current-swept sand and gravel beaches populated with razor or surf clams. Instead, it's both..."



An aerial image of rocky intertidal substrate in Kachemak Bay collected during the ShoreZone Mapping Survey showing intertidal zonation of the seaweed Fucus gardneri. Inset: Logging GPS data while conducting aerial surveys in Cook Inlet by helicopter.

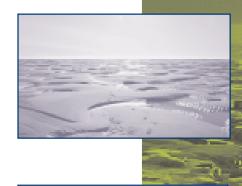
#### Cook Inlet ShoreZone EMC Inventory Database

A larger scale intertidal project is a shore zone inventory that uses digital imagery collected during aerial surveys to identify shoreline habitats in Cook Inlet. Contractor, Dr. John Harper of Coastal Ocean Resources, Inc., has developed a shorezone mapping tool that has been used for the coastlines of British Columbia and Washington state. The information has been invaluable for resource managers and oil spill planners and responders. Given the lack of detailed shoreline habitat information for much of Cook Inlet, the EMC started a pilot project in Cook Inlet using Dr. Harper's shorezone inventory system. In addition to the habitat database that he has provided for his previous projects, the EMC has asked Dr. Harper to devlop a tool that would provide access to all of the digitial imagery of all of the remote shorelines that are surveyed so that any user could virtually "fly" along the coastline of Cook Inlet.

Dr. Harper's project in 2001 included aerial surveys using fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. Data collection during the aerial surveys included digital videos, still photographic records, and in-flight commentary by a geomorphologist (Dr. Harper) and shoreline ecologist (Susan Saupe). This information is provided to a GIS mapper who later breaks the shoreline down into homogeneous alongshore units with cross-shore features incorporated into the database. After the shore units are defined by geomorphology and substrate, the major intertidal and subtidal biological features are mapped. The final product will be a database of shoreline habitats that can be queried. There has been keen interest in this pilot project by numerous potential users, including state and federal agencies, industry and citizens. The EMC, in partnership with the PROPS committee and the Kenai Peninsula Borough, will be expanding the project to include more of Cook Inlet's coastline, as well as shores along the outer Kenai Peninsula.

Additional activities of the EMC include continued monitoring of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and Effluent Guideline issues. For example, they contracted for a white paper that summarizes information on synthetic drilling muds, especially in relationship to Cook Inlet's environment. The EMC also initiated a workgroup to focus on Ballast Water Discharge and Non Indigenous Species issues relevant to Cook Inlet. Their goal is to stay updated on information acquired by the larger Alaska Non Indigenous Species Workgroup and other organizations addressing these issues nationwide and even worldwide.

Three examples of beach morphology found on sites sampled during the Intertidal Reconnaissance Survey in central Cook Inlet; (top to bottom) high energy sandy shoal, sand/gravel platform armored with boulder/cobble, erosional mud flat colonized by patches of blue-green algae.







# Prevention, Response, Operations and Safety Committee



#### Contingency Plan Reviews

ne of the key duties of the PROPS Committee, in partnership with the Council's Protocol Control Committee, is the review of industry contingency plans. The plans outline the oil spill prevention measures that a company has in place, as well as detailing how the company will respond to an oil spill. The contingency plans are required by federal and state law, and Cook Inlet RCAC is the designated public reviewer of the plans.

Cook Inlet RCAC reviewed numerous contingency plans during 2001.

#### **Drills and Training Exercises**

The observation of industry drills and exercises is an important aspect of the work of the Cook Inlet RCAC and the PROPS Committee. During drills, observers can assess a company's ability to meet the standards set out in the contingency plans. Drills can be either table-top exercises where there is no actual deployment of equipment, or on-water drills that requires deployment of equipment simulating a full-scale response very similar to what would take place in a real incident.

In April, oil spill response teams from around the state joined forces in Kachemak Bay to test equipment and train personnel. Dozens of vessels, including fishing boats, skiffs, skimmers, and barges participated in the week-long exercise. The exercise was also observed by a delegation from Taiwan that was interested in oil spill response methods that are used in Alaska.

On April 27, the PROPS Committee traveled to the Alaska Vocational Technical Center in Seward to hold a meeting and tour the Center's new Full Mission Bridge Simulator. The simulator is a fully equipped wheelhouse that uses state-of-the-art computer graphics to portray images of various maritime settings on a wrap around screen. The simulator can also be used by mariners to practice docking procedures at various ports.

In July, Tesoro Alaska and Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response, Inc. (CISPRI) carried out a successful tanker towing exercise. The towing procedure involved Tesoro's double hull tanker, *Seabulk Arctic*, and the CISPRI response vessel, *Seabulk Montana*. It was the first time either vessel had been involved in a towing exercise in Cook Inlet. The general purpose of the exercise was to practice and improve techniques used to rescue a disabled tanker in Cook Inlet.

In October, Cook Inlet RCAC participated in a drill at the site of Phillips Alaska, Inc.'s Cosmopolitan Exploration Project. The project drilling site is located on a bluff, just north of Anchor Point on the Kenai Peninsula. The company is using directional drilling technology to explore off-shore oil and gas leases in Cook Inlet. The drill simulated the accidental spilling of diesel fuel on the ground at the drill site. An Incident Command System (ICS) was activated and a command center was set up at CISPRI headquarters in Nikiski during the drill.

In October, Tesoro Alaska refinery workers participated in a fire fighting training program at the Pacific Rim Institute of Safety Management. The annual training is broken into two phases, classroom sessions and field training. In the field, the operators carried out a response to several different types of fires.

Controlled fires were started to represent a small pump fire, a flange fire, a pump seal fire, and a tank overflow fire.

#### Geographic Response Strategies

The PROPS Committee took a lead role in finalizing Geographic Response Strategies (GRS) for the Kachemak Bay area in 2001. Geographic Response Strategies are map-based documents that provide pertinent information about environmentally sensitive areas to oil spill responders. Cook Inlet RCAC, working with staff from Prince William Sound RCAC, federal and state agencies, local citizens, village leaders, and industry representatives, were able to design response strategies for 21 sites in Kachemak Bay.

The 21 sites were selected by a GRS workgroup that met in Homer several times during the year. In prioritizing sites, the workgroup took into account



several factors including the presence of marine mammals, anadromous fish, eagle nests, sea otters, intertidal spawning, herring spawning, subsistence, cultural resources, sea birds, waterfowl and shorebirds, recreational use, commercial fishing, coastal habitat, special land management designation, and kelp beds.

#### The GRS sites in Kachemak Bay area:

Humpy Creek Neptune Bay Head of Seldovia Bay Halibut Cove

Jakolof Bay Port Graham Bay/Johnson Slough

Petersen Bay Hoen's Lagoon
China Poot Bay Seldovia Slough
English Bay Lagoon and Reef Tutka Bay Lagoon
Little Tutka Bay West Yukon Island
Otter Beach Lagoon Barabara Creek
4th of July Creek Sadie Cove

Kasitsna Bay Beluga Slough/Mariner Park

Port Graham Hatchery/Head of Pt. Graham Bay

Tesoro Alaska's tanker, Seabulk Arctic, under tow during an exercise in Cook Inlet



# Public Outreach

n important aspect of Cook Inlet RCAC's mission is providing the public with information about the activities of the Council. Citizens need to be informed about issues that the Council is dealing with so they can actively participate in the decision making process. It is Cook Inlet RCAC's belief that keeping the public informed and educated is a very effective oil spill prevention tool.

#### Public Outreach

Cook Inlet RCAC's Public Outreach program uses a variety of methods to get its message out to the citizens.

The monthly newsletter, Council Briefs, is used to highlight the activities of the Council and call attention to current issues that are being discussed by the Council and Committees.

> The Cook Inlet RCAC web page continues to be updated with current information about the Council and Committees. Located at www.circac.org, the web page is a clearinghouse of information about the Council. Everything from biographical information about Council members to the results of scientific studies can be accessed through the web page.

Cook Inlet RCAC's Public Outreach coordinator makes regular community visits to talk with local leaders about the goals of the organization. A typical visit will include a presentation to the city or village council and students, interviews with local media, and participation in special events such as Kodiak's ComFish trade show.

Outreach Coordinator Joe Gallagher talking with Kodiak sixth graders about the role CIRCAC plays in their community.

#### International Cooperation

During 2001, Cook Inlet RCAC was host to two official delegations from Russia. The delegates were from the Russian Far East and Siberia, where an increasing amount of oil and gas exploration is taking place. The goal of the two visits was to put the Russian officials in contact with industry representatives, state officials, community leaders, and citizen groups that are involved in setting up environmental standards and regulations for oil and gas production in Alaska.

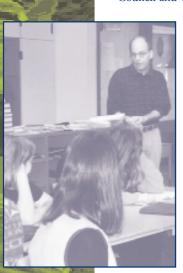
Cook Inlet RCAC worked with Tesoro Alaska to provide the delegations with an overview of Tesoro's Nikiski refinery. The tours focused on the production process that takes place at the facility and the environmental safeguards that are in place to prevent accidents. Both groups applauded Tesoro Alaska for their willingness to provide the tours and share valuable information.

#### Education

Cook Inlet RCAC will soon be using a Cook Inlet diorama during its educational presentations. The diorama was constructed by artist and educator Andrew Aguilar, who has constructed similar models for a variety of clients. Mr. Aguilar worked with Cook Inlet RCAC staff to develop a model that represents the central Cook Inlet area, with a focus on the area's industrial and recreational activities.

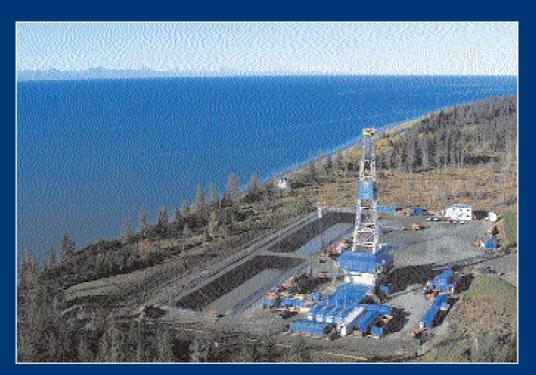
The diorama features oil industry facilities, docks, off-shore platforms, pipelines, marine vessel traffic, commercial fishing, and recreational uses. The diorama also incorporates mudflats, mountains, rivers, forests, lakes, and even a volcano in an effort to reflect the make-up of the Cook Inlet watershed. In addition, the diorama is equipped with a small pump that circulates water from the lakes, down two rivers, and into the inlet.

The diorama is designed to provide students of all ages with an interesting overview of the Cook Inlet watershed and promote an understanding about the importance of preventing any kind of pollution.



### **Charter Funding Companies**

Cook Inlet Pipeline Company
Forest Oil
Marathon Oil Company
Phillips Petroleum
Tesoro Alaska/Kenai Pipeline Company
Unocal
XTO Energy



Phillips Cosmopolitan Drill site.



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