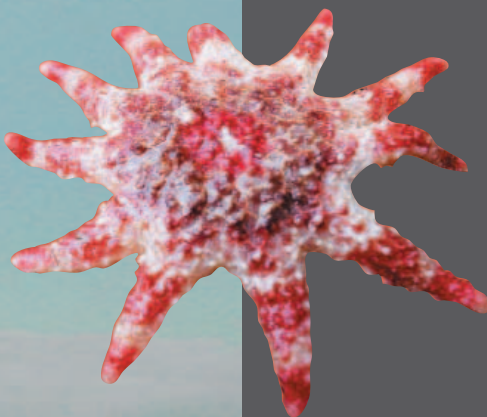


Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council



2002 Annual Report



Cook Inlet RCAC Staff

Executive Director
James E. Carter, Sr.

Assistant Executive Director
Karen Williams

Director of Operations
Mike Munger

Director of Science and Research
Susan Saupe

Director of Public Outreach
Stephen Howell

Secretary
Kelly Rose

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Presented to
Cook Inlet Regional Citizen Advisory Council

for making this Partnership a reality. The State Of Alaska and all users of fundamental water quality information have greatly benefitted by CIRCAC's selfless contribution of scientific personnel that designed and led the 2002 EMAP coastal survey of Southcentral Alaska.



Michele Brown
Michele Brown
Commissioner

Tom Chapple
Tom Chapple
Director

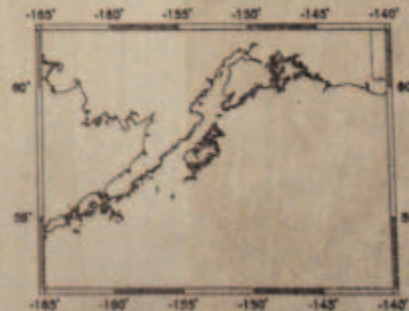


Photo at left

Plaque recognizing the successful partnership between Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the Cook Inlet RCAC in conducting Alaska portion of National Coastal Assessment in northern Gulf of Alaska.

Photos on cover

Background: Research Vessel Ocean Cape at anchor in Redoubt Bay.

Cut-out (top): A rose sea star (*Crossaster papposus*) found during intertidal surveys for ShoreZone mapping project.

Inset left: Bull kelp (*Nereocystis leutkeana*), which can be important for fish habitat, is surveyed and mapped during the ground and aerial components of the ShoreZone mapping project.

Inset center: Cook Inlet oil and gas production platforms.

Inset right: Fisheries scientists Paul Olson (left) and Mark Myers (right) emptying cod end of research trawl onto sorting table during EMAP sampling in northern Gulf of Alaska.

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MESSAGE

from the President and the Executive Director



Glen Glenzer
President



James E. Carter, Sr.
Executive Director

Each year, the volunteers and staff at Cook Inlet RCAC reflect on the many challenges and accomplishments of the organization as we chart its future. During 2002, Cook Inlet RCAC delivered on its short-term objectives and established long-term projects that usher a new era of partnerships in the Cook Inlet region.

Nowhere was the effect of these partnerships more evident than in Cook Inlet RCAC's science and research programs. Increased funding and a heightened sense of cooperation supported our scientists as they studied Cook Inlet through hydrographic surveys, groundtruth and reconnaissance sampling, aerial video mapping, and the first component of an EPA-sponsored coastal assessment program – EMAP. Through these efforts, Cook Inlet RCAC has firmly established long-term science projects and partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies that will benefit area citizens beyond 2003.

This cooperative spirit has been a catalyst for success in our prevention, response, and operations safety work as well. With borough support, our program to develop Geographic Response Strategies has expanded to include the Outer Kenai Coast and Southwest Cook Inlet. The success of this program means that many culturally and environmentally sensitive locations like salmon spawning streams, seal haulouts, and native heritage sites along the Kenai Peninsula coast now have detailed plans to protect them in the event of an oil spill.

Many of our projects in 2002 relied on public involvement and input for their success. To encourage that involvement, our public outreach program developed new printed materials for volunteer participation and institutional awareness, student programs for field science exploration, and presentations for civic organizations. Groundwork has also been completed for an enhanced web site to showcase Cook Inlet RCAC's work in a medium with global reach. The new site – set to launch in early 2003 - will provide both local and international visitors with a better understanding of the citizen-based model as an avenue for public participation.

A review of 2002 wouldn't be complete without the acknowledgement of funding support from the Mayor and Assembly of the Kenai Peninsula Borough. As a direct result of that support, Cook Inlet RCAC has expanded science, spill response and public outreach programs that benefit all borough residents. We are grateful for their interest in keeping Cook Inlet pristine and for the promise these projects hold for future generations.

Ultimately, the support that Cook Inlet RCAC receives from the citizens of Cook Inlet, the Industry operating in Cook Inlet, and local, state, and federal agencies determines our success. ADEC Commissioner Michelle Brown and Director Tom Chapple emphasized this success in an award thanking the Council "for making (the EMAP) Partnership a reality. The State of Alaska and all users of fundamental water quality information have greatly benefited by CIRCAC's selfless contribution of scientific personnel that designed and led the 2002 EMAP coastal survey of Southcentral Alaska."

We value these relationships and look forward to their continued growth in 2003.

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.”

The mission statement of the Cook Inlet RCAC is a reflection of the mandates spelled out by Congress when it passed the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90). This 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 then-United States Senator and current Alaska Governor Frank Murkowski, 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. All of these citizens have 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 twelve 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

The organization of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council is outlined in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The thirteen-member Board of Directors represents various municipalities, cities, boroughs, and special interest groups to ensure 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 requires the Council to establish committees to accomplish its mandates. To that end, Council directors and public members comprise the Environmental Monitoring Committee (EMC), the Prevention, Response, Operations, and Safety Committee (PROPS), and the Protocol Committee for the purpose of assisting the Council in meeting its obligations.

Board of Director Seats

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Municipality of Anchorage | City of Homer |
| City of Kenai | City of Kodiak |
| City of Seldovia | Kenai Peninsula Borough |
| Kodiak Island Borough | Alaska Native Groups |
| Aquaculture Associations | Environmental Interest Groups |
| Commercial Fishing Groups | Recreational Groups |
| | State Chamber of Commerce |

Ex-Officio Members

- Captain Ronald Morris - 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
- Robert LaPointe - Alaska Division of Emergency Services
- William J. Hutmacher - Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Tom Bucceri – Alaska Department of Natural Resources

Environmental Monitoring Committee

Council members:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Jim Hornaday, chair | Glen Glenzer |
| James Showalter | 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. | Bill Osborn |

BOARD MEMBERS



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



James Showalter
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

2002 YEAR IN REVIEW

More than ever before, the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council has enhanced the scope and benefits of its work through partnerships and consensus-building tools. The work takes place on a daily basis with staff and committee volunteers carrying out the directives of the Council throughout the year. A summary of 2002 highlights provides an overview of the Council's priorities which are a reflection of the concerns of Cook Inlet citizens.

Recertification

Each year, the U.S. Coast Guard reviews Cook Inlet RCAC activities to address the mandates in OPA 90. During 2002, they announced changes that streamline the annual recertification process and extend the long-form review period to three years. The Coast Guard received many letters from Cook Inlet communities, Boroughs, Industry, and citizen interest groups supporting Cook Inlet RCAC's recertification. In his letter recertifying the organization, Rear Admiral J.W. Underwood, Commander of the Seventeenth Coast Guard District, noted the "positive efforts, good communication, and broad representation of the Cook Inlet communities as Cook Inlet RCAC carries out its responsibilities as intended by the Act."



Growth through Partnerships

The past year has been remarkable in Cook Inlet RCAC's history and much of its growth can be attributed to the unique partnerships it developed with a variety of organizations. These relationships propelled science, prevention, response, and outreach efforts, ushering in a new era of integration among some of the projects.

Cook Inlet RCAC partnerships with EPA and ADEC permitted the sharing of expertise, resources, and administrative support to conduct the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program, or EMAP. Nearly a dozen other institutions entered into agreements with Cook Inlet RCAC to create a world-class crew for the extensive project.

Agreements with the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Minerals Management Service supported hydrographic studies to improve our understanding of density-driven circulation in Cook Inlet. A separate project with University of Alaska Fairbanks researchers provides the use of electronic equipment to measure surface currents in the central Inlet. Funding partnerships with the Kenai Peninsula Borough enabled scientists to extend the shore zone mapping of Cook Inlet and the Outer Kenai Coast, work that is expected to enhance the PROPS Committee's spill and response projects. One of those spill response projects, Geographic Response Strategies, brings together experts from many different agencies in what has become a model for the consensus approach that OPA 90 mandates.

These partnerships and others illustrate how working together, we can assemble the best people and tools for the tasks at hand.

Mandy Lindeberg, an intertidal specialist from the National Marine Fisheries Service, surveys algae while collaborating on a Cook Inlet RCAC project.



Special Projects Agreement with Kenai Peninsula Borough

In addition to the generous support of the Charter Funding Companies operating in Cook Inlet, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly continued their support of projects that specifically benefit borough citizens. The funding ordinance set aside \$210,000 for environmental monitoring and oil spill response plans for highly sensitive areas. These and other projects improve public understanding of Inlet resources and the strategies designed to protect them.

Volunteer Awards for 2002

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 who are the foundation of the regional citizens advisory councils. This year, Cook Inlet RCAC also honored two volunteers for 10 years of service to the Council.

Board Member of the Year

Doug Jones of Anchorage

Volunteer of the Year

Grace Merkes of Sterling

Prevention-Response-Operations Committee Member of the Year

Jerry Brookman of Kenai

Environmental Monitoring Committee Member of the Year

Dr. Steven Okkonen of Kasilof

10-Years of Service

The Council celebrated 10 years of service from Board Member John Douglas and EMC Member Dora Dushkin.

Mr. Douglas began his 10 years of service on the Council as a representative for the City of Kenai in 1992 and currently serves as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Board of Directors, sits on the Executive Committee and is committee chairman for both the Protocol and Audit Committees.

Ms. Dushkin has served as a public member of the EMC for 10 years. Born in the Pribilofs, she moved to King Cove with her husband, a fisherman, and lived there for the next 20 years. She has been a resident of Anchorage for the past 22 years.



EMC volunteer of the year, Dr. Steve Okkonen, works with area students in deploying a physical oceanographic instrument that measures water parameters.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING COMMITTEE

The EMC's science program expanded significantly this past year - a direct result of programs created through partnerships that allow us to extend the reach of data and tools that are developed.

In 2002, Cook Inlet RCAC partnered in a region-wide assessment of the condition of bays and estuaries along the northern Gulf of Alaska, expanded the shore zone mapping, and initiated a project with the University of Alaska Fairbanks to look at the local Cook Inlet physical oceanography. Finally, we expanded our on-the-ground surveys for intertidal areas of Cook Inlet. The projects described in more detail below demonstrate Cook Inlet RCAC's commitment to its mandates in OPA 90 and to the citizens of the region.

Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP)

The Cook Inlet RCAC formed unique partnerships with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), other state and federal agencies, and a host of other organizations to conduct the first Alaska portion of a nation-wide program to assess the health of the U.S. coast.

The Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program, or EMAP, is an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program developed to assess the condition of the nation's various aquatic resources, such as lakes, streams, rivers and marine waters. This summer's work was part of the Western States Coastal EMAP which is creating an integrated and comprehensive coastal monitoring program along all of the states with Pacific Ocean coastlines.

Cook Inlet RCAC and ADEC created their partnership in order to maximize the expertise and resources available for this coastal assessment, with ADEC providing the administrative support through their government-to-government relationship with EPA, and Cook Inlet RCAC providing the scientific lead. The collected data will help provide a context, or background, to improve our abilities to interpret data from other more focused studies such as those conducted by the EMC in Cook Inlet.

The 2002 field sampling was conducted in northern Gulf of Alaska bays and estuaries between Unimak Pass and Cape St. Elias, including Cook Inlet. Cook Inlet RCAC's Director of Science and Research, Susan Saupe, led the group of scientists for 50 days of sampling aboard the F/V Ocean Cape, a commercial fishing vessel converted for research trawling and scientific work. Cook Inlet RCAC is also providing oversight for the laboratory and data analyses and writing the final report. Water column data will be combined with information about sediment characteristics and chemistry, sediment-dwelling organisms, and data from bottom trawls to describe the current condition of the bays and estuaries.

Each state oversees the sampling along its own coast and scientists use a core set of parameters which ensures comparability of data from all coastal states. The success of the first Alaska EMAP field sampling effort relied on other organizations sharing their equipment and personnel and included agencies such as the National Marine Fisheries Service, International Halibut Commission, and EPA. In addition, scientists that had experience working on the Washington state coastal assessment participated in the Alaska program to ensure consistency in the sampling methods.



Cook Inlet RCAC contractors Dennis Lees (kneeling) and Dr. James Payne (standing) collecting clams and sediment samples for intertidal reconnaissance surveys.



Cook Inlet Aerial Video and Mapping Survey

The EMC expanded their shore zone mapping project to include additional Cook Inlet and outer Kenai Peninsula coastlines through a funding partnership with the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The EMC is also working with Cook Inlet Director of Operations Mike Munger and the PROPS committee to incorporate Geographical Response Strategies (GRS) into the final database and to provide the aerial imagery when developing new GRSs. A ground-truthing component was added that will provide detailed information about the intertidal algae and invertebrates that were mapped during the aerial surveys. All of the habitat data, whether obtained from the air or the ground, will be incorporated into a searchable database so that users will be able to create maps showing different habitats and intertidal biology components.

Numerous presentations were given in 2002 to demonstrate the utility of shore zone mapping. After one such presentation in January 2002, Cook Inlet RCAC contractor Dr. John Harper of Coastal and Ocean Resources, Inc. was invited to present a more detailed summary of this project at a workshop to discuss nearshore habitat mapping for the Gulf Ecosystem Monitoring (GEM) Plan. The GEM Plan is a multi-decadal science plan sponsored by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council. Since that workshop, other agencies have expanded the mapping to areas adjacent to our study areas including the northern Kodiak Island archipelago and the rest of the Kenai Peninsula Borough coastline.

The EMC will continue to expand this program to ensure that the resulting tools are widely available. The final products will be web-accessible digital video of the mapped coastlines and a searchable database of shoreline habitat and biology information. The video imagery can be seen using a link on the Cook Inlet RCAC web site. This tool will allow a user to “fly” along the mapped shorelines and, because most of these shorelines are not easily accessible, the images can provide a tool to researchers, oil spill response planners, or even somebody planning a kayak trip to these remote areas.

Physical Oceanography

The Cook Inlet RCAC worked with Dr. Steve Okkonen, a professor with the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a public member of the EMC, during the spring and fall of 2002 to acquire vertical profiles of temperature and salinity along transects in Cook Inlet. In conjunction with the release of drift cards, these data will improve our understanding of density-driven circulation in Cook Inlet and provide observational data to validate existing and proposed numerical circulation or spill trajectory models. Students and teachers from various local high school classes participated with Dr. Okkonen and Cook Inlet RCAC Director of Public Outreach Steve Howell in the preparation, field deployments, and data analysis for the project.

The EMC had an additional opportunity to obtain surface current data through an agreement with University of Alaska Fairbanks researchers. Two high frequency radar instruments were deployed on the bluffs of Cook Inlet to obtain surface current measurements near the Forelands. These instruments use the Coastal Ocean Dynamic Radar system, or CODAR, which emits low power, high frequency signals that travel along the water surface and provide information about surface ocean circulation patterns. This data will also be used to improve our ability to model and predict oil spill trajectories.

In other projects, EMC continued their intertidal reconnaissance surveys in lower Cook Inlet, focusing on soft sediment habitats that will provide information on tissue and sediment hydrocarbons. The contracted scientists for this project, from Littoral Ecological and Environmental Services, Inc., also worked with shore zone mapping scientists to provide detailed on-the-ground intertidal data.

The success in meeting EMC’s objectives can be traced to the partnerships that have been, and will continue to be, fostered between Cook Inlet RCAC and numerous other organizations.



PREVENTION, RESPONSE, OPERATIONS & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Perhaps no greater responsibility rests with Cook Inlet crude oil operators than their dedication to facility safety, oil spill prevention and response. As part of its mandate from Congress, Cook Inlet RCAC devotes much of its resources to ensure that facilities are not only safe, but also prepared in the event that an incident occurs. To that end, Cook Inlet RCAC partnered in 2002 with other organizations to develop Geographic Response Strategies, held a forum on the condition of area pipelines, and monitored and participated in Cook Inlet area spill drills. Several projects in 2003 will further expand the PROPS Committee's projects with the development of a marine firefighting manual and a subsea pipeline reporting project. In these ways, Cook Inlet RCAC makes certain that citizens are a part of the prevention and response process.

Geographic Response Strategies

Pollution prevention is a key component of Cook Inlet RCAC's mission and pre-planning response strategies is one way we are working with stakeholders to minimize the devastating effects on Cook Inlet's fragile ecosystem should an oil spill occur. This is the focus of our Geographic Response Strategies (GRS) Project. The strategies are formed using certain criteria including environmental sensitivity and wildlife habitat considerations; risk of oil spill impact which is largely determined by surface current and wind direction; and perhaps the most challenging - the ability to provide protection. A GRS workgroup collects input from experts in each of these areas and gathers local knowledge from residents to ensure safe, realistic plans for each site.

Cook Inlet RCAC partners with ADEC, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, Industry, and Prince William Sound RCAC to provide financial and logistical support for the program. In 2003, Cook Inlet RCAC will also initiate a pilot program to integrate GRS into the Shorezone Mapping Project. This innovative

program will enable oil spill responders to quickly download critical information for protection of some of the most environmentally sensitive areas throughout the Cook Inlet.

Spill Response Drills

Through both staff and contracted experts, Cook Inlet RCAC participates in monitors spill response drills in Cook Inlet. Drills like the VOSS or "vessel of opportunity" system serve the dual purpose of maintaining a high level of spill awareness while educating area responders in the use of new techniques and equipment. In the 2002 VOSS drill, the U.S. Coast Guard, CISPRI, and local fishing vessels – over 100 participants in all - tested the Geographic Response Strategies designed for Jakalof Bay. As part of the exercise, they deployed two sizes of boom and various mooring systems and observed the equipment's effectiveness during tidal changes. Another goal of the exercise was to refine communication between vessels and to develop joint logistics between

various task forces within the larger group. Such measures decrease the risk of injury during an incident response by making participants more familiar with the operation of response machinery.



A sample of a Geographic Response Strategies map developed to assist spill responders in protecting highly sensitive habitat like salmon spawning streams.



Cook Inlet Subsea Pipelines

Cook Inlet RCAC, in conjunction with the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and other regulatory agencies, hosted a forum in January 2002 to address the questions about the condition of area pipelines. Industry panelists provided the public with a wealth of information and solicited public input on spill and prevention issues. The forum also provided detailed presentations on the current status of Cook Inlet oil pipelines.

This winter, Cook Inlet RCAC succeeded in negotiating an agreement with the Cook Inlet subsea oil pipeline operators to voluntarily provide a pipeline status report on a biannual basis. The report will include the operational status of the lines, repairs made, and future activities. Cook Inlet RCAC will hire an independent third-party contractor to review the information and make recommendations on the pipelines to the PROPS Committee.

Marine Fire Fighting

Through its PROPS Committee, Cook Inlet RCAC has recently begun the development of a marine fire fighting manual for the Cook Inlet area. As with other projects, Cook Inlet RCAC will partner with interested organizations like the U.S. Coast Guard, local emergency services groups, and dock facility fire fighting teams to develop the manual. The product of this partnership will serve a valuable function in identifying the capabilities, means, and methods for activating available resources from local, state and federal agencies.



Responders deploy ocean boom from the CISPRI vessel *Seabulk Montana* during a recent VOSS drill in Jakalof Bay near Seldovia.



PUBLIC OUTREACH

An important aspect of Cook Inlet RCAC's mission is providing the public with information about Council activities. Cook Inlet RCAC believes that the public must stay informed and educated to be effective participants in the decision-making process and many of the Public Outreach projects in 2002 were designed to enhance citizen awareness.

Electronic Outreach

Cook Inlet RCAC's Public Outreach program uses a variety of methods to get its message out to citizens. The monthly newsletter, *Council Briefs*, highlights Cook Inlet RCAC activities and calls attention to current issues being discussed by the Council and its Committees. One goal for 2002 was to increase the subscriber base by making the document more accessible electronically. Cook Inlet RCAC adopted a full-color Portable Document Format (PDF) for easy download and viewing and during the year pushed its subscriber list to over 300. In early 2003, Cook Inlet RCAC will unveil exciting changes to its web site – www.circac.org. The site showcases information about the Council and its Committees and will have a new look and feel that makes navigating the information that much easier for visitors. All of the new features like the CIRCAC Library will be scaleable to easily accommodate adding new information like scientific reports and links to other informational web sites.

Community Visits

Director of Public Outreach Steve Howell makes regular community visits to talk with local citizens about goals of the organization. Visits often include presentations to clubs, city and village councils, students, and interviews with local media. In the past year, these visits have been the vehicle for providing citizens with information on prevention and response programs like GRS as well as scientific studies like EMAP and the Cook Inlet hydrographic study. With borough support, Cook Inlet RCAC published an informational brochure

titled "Cook Inlet: How the Pieces of the Puzzle Fit Together" as well as a volunteer information rack card to enhance these visits. Both publications are designed to increase public understanding of the importance of citizen participation and the opportunities for volunteering with Cook Inlet RCAC. At visits to special events such as COMFISH in Kodiak and the Alaska Forum on the Environment in Anchorage, these publications serve as another outreach tool alongside the Cook Inlet diorama and other display materials.

Education

Education is an important element of the Public Outreach program at Cook Inlet RCAC. In 2002, Cook Inlet RCAC developed an educational component to its hydrographic study in an effort to extend some of the benefits of its science program directly into area schools. As part of that study, students from 10 different Kenai Peninsula Borough schools ranging from Tyonek to Port Graham constructed and released nearly 10,000 cards along different transects in the Inlet to help determine the prevailing currents and identify keeper beaches. During the trips, they also deployed a "CTD" to measure conductivity (salinity), temperature and depth during the release times. That information has been assembled into data and graphs that are currently being presented to Minerals Management Service and others interested in understanding Cook Inlet hydrography.

Cook Inlet RCAC also hosted several visits from Kodiak schools and worked with Tesoro Alaska and Conoco/Phillips to provide the groups with an overview of these Nikiski plant operations. Students marveled at chemistry demonstrations and facility operations and asked dozens of questions during their tours. Cook Inlet RCAC regularly assists student and adult educational groups in an effort to increase public knowledge of oil production and transportation.

PROTOCOL COMMITTEE

The Protocol Control Committee is a technical Committee comprised of five members of the Board of Directors. The committee deals with issues related to state and federal contingency plans and other issues with time-sensitive comment periods.

Contingency Plan Review

One of Cook Inlet RCAC's primary mandates in the Oil Pollution act of 1990 is to review contingency plans for the regulated crude oil industry in Cook Inlet. Contingency plans outline the oil spill prevention measures that a company has implemented as well as detailed response scenarios and tactics in the event of an oil spill. The contingency plans are required by federal and state law and Cook Inlet RCAC is tasked in OPA 90 to review these plans. Cook Inlet RCAC works with state agencies and Industry during plan review to ensure that the public's interest is represented.

Non-Tank Vessel Regulations

The committee has also been actively involved in the development of the Non-tank Vessel regulations. These regulations are a positive step forward in response readiness for freight vessels, passenger ships and fishing vessels. The regulations were finalized on November 27, 2002 and will be fully implemented by May 27, 2003. Cook Inlet RCAC participated in the development of the regulations and is a named contingency plan review participant in by state regulation.

Best Available Technology

During the 2002 session, the Alaska Legislature provided the Alaska Department of Conservation with a capital project appropriation of \$250,000 to review and appraise best available technologies (BAT) for oil spill prevention and response in Alaska. Because of its interest and expertise in oil spill prevention and response, Cook Inlet RCAC will participate in the project work group to assist ADEC in determining the best manner to proceed with the effort.



John Kwietniak, Incident Commander for a Tesoro table top oil spill drill, leads his spill response team at the CISPRI command center.

