COOK INLET REGIONAL CITIZENS ADVISORY 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."

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

September 11, 2015 * Seldovia Conference Center * Seldovia, Alaska

# COOK INLET REGIONAL CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL

**BOARD MEETING**
****AGENDA****
**Friday, September 11, 2015**
**Seldovia Conference Center**
**Seldovia, AK**

**8:30 am** **Continental Breakfast**

**9:00 am** **Cook Inlet RCAC Board Meeting**

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

**Approval of Agenda** *(Action Item)*

**Approval of Minutes** *(Action Item)*

April 17, 2015 1

- **Welcome & Introduction of Audience & Guests**
- New Ex Officio Appointment
  - Steve Russell, AK Dept. of Environmental Conservation

**Welcoming Remarks**

- Tim Dillon, City Manager – City of Seldovia

**Public Comment** *(3 minute limit per speaker)*

**9:30 am** **Presentations on Related Activities**

- Larry Burgess, HSE Manager – BlueCrest Alaska Operating, LLC
- Bruce Webb, Vice President – Furie Alaska
- Tara Reimer-Jones, President/CEO/COO – Alaska SeaLife Center
- Todd Paxton, General Manager – Cook Inlet Spill Prevention & Response, Inc. (CISPRI)

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| **10:15 am** | **Executive Committee Report** *(Informational Items)* | |
| | • Independent Financial Audit | |
| **10:30 am** | **Executive Director's Report** *(Informational Items)* | |
| | • Draft 2016 Proposed Operating Budget | **8** |
| **10:50 am** | **Status of Programs & Projects** *(Informational Items)* | |
| | • Environmental Monitoring Committee | **10** |
| | • Public Involvement Program | **26** |
| | • Protocol Control Committee | **31** |
| | • Prevention, Response, Operations & Safety Committee | **33** |
| | • Administration | **38** |
| **12:00 pm** | **Break for Lunch** ***(Lunch will be provided)*** | |
| **12:45 pm** | **Executive Session** | |
| **1:15 pm** | **Calendars & Miscellaneous** *(Informational Item)* | |
| | **Closing Comments** | |
| **1:25pm** | **Adjourn** | |

# EMC Staff Report: Activities since April 2015 Committee Meeting
*Susan Saupe*

## Chemical and Biological Monitoring Program

### *Intertidal Studies*

1. I'm continuing to work with contractor Bill Driskell on the rewrite the 2002 Intertidal Reconnaissance Survey Report and integrate data into a contaminants database for serving on AOOS data portal. I briefly met with him in August to discuss fall schedules for completing this, as it has been difficult to get time from these contractors who are heavily involved in closing out Deep Water Horizon contaminant databases for the Trustee Agencies. The USCG is close to accepting a settlement, which will significantly reduce the work this team will be putting towards the DWH and we will have better leverage to get some time from them. We are doing the rewrite and new compilation of data to ensure a more complete and integrated data set that can be accessed by agencies preparing Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Environmental Assessments, (EA) and other documents associated with Cook Inlet lease sales and development. This information will also be incorporated into a database being built with the National Park Service (NPS) as part of the study described below. Finally, we will work to provide the results in a format that can be served on the Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT) and the Cook Inlet Beluga Ecosystem data portals.

2. In May I flew a helicopter survey with NPS to assess potential sampling sites for our planned June vessel-based surveys in the Kamishak Bay areas. For the June sampling, I was Chief Scientist onboard the R/V Island C for our work associated with the project *Evaluation of Nearshore Communities and Habitats; Ecological Processes in Lower Cook Inlet.* This project is funded by BOEM through an inter-agency agreement with NPS. Heather Coletti of NPS is the overall Project Manager and we signed an agreement between NPS and CIRCAC for components of this study. Our field work took place during a low-tide series in mid-June and included intertidal and subtidal sampling, focusing on low angle, wide, boulder- and bedrock-ramp habitats in western Cook Inlet and Kamishak Bay. Onboard participants included Dr. Tahzay Jones, Sarah Venator, and Sam Stark NPS, Drs. Konar and Iken from UAF, Mandy Lindeberg of NOAA, and Cathy Coon of BOEM. Overall, this project includes compiling historical data, developing a habitat model, conducting reconnaissance surveys, and field surveys. I've provided copies of our past studies to include in the GIS-linked database being developed for this project. The plan is to link this data to AOOS data portals, including CIRT.

3. In July, I worked with NPS to write and submit a proposal to BOEM to extend our the project *Evaluation of Nearshore Communities and Habitats; Ecological Processes in Lower Cook Inlet* for four years to include sampling additional habitats. A component of the project also includes compiling hydrocarbon and other contaminant data for the areas at risk from potential activities associated with the proposed OCS federal lease sale areas in lower Cook Inlet. This will be leveraged with existing EMC projects to accomplish similar goals. The proposal was submitted by NPS to BOEM, with a significant portion of the budget proposed to be subcontracted through CIRCAC.

### *Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Study*

I am working with AOOS database managers to compile the information from this study so it can be incorporated into the Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Data Portal that is being developed by the AOOS data management team for National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). I am also on the steering committee for developing the portal and we've met numerous times this summer to focus and prioritize datasets that need to be gathered and compiled. We are also working to incorporate some of the CIRT data layers, as well as other available data related to Cook Inlet beluga whale habitat and prey. In early September, I received a call from Dr. John Reynolds of Mote Marine Laboratory asking if I would work with them to prepare a series of 4 manuscripts about our work with sediment and tissue PAHs and our prey abundance study for submission for a special journal of the Marine Fisheries Review. I will be working with them and our other contractors for earlier CIRCAC PAH studies to clarify our plans for this.

### *Database GIS (Compiling Data)*

I met with contractors to continue compiling our historical contaminants data. I've also put out feelers to co-PIs from our ICIEMAP study about a series of published manuscripts or special volume for Cook Inlet. Field work conflicts from most of us have precluded moving forward with that this summer. I also worked with NPS to submit a proposal in July to BOEM to extend our Intertidal Sampling (above) that included a component for working with CIRCAC to compile historical hydrocarbon data for Cook Inlet into several of the AOOS geo-referenced data portals. If the proposal is funded, it will allow us to extend the work we are already in the process of doing to also include non-CIRCAC studies (e.g. MMS depositional area study).

## Coastal Habitat Mapping Program

### *ShoreZone and Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT)*

1. I worked with Coastal and Ocean Resources, Inc. (CORI) to submit a proposal to conduct ShoreZone surveys along the Alaska Peninsula to close a gap in data in the western Gulf of Alaska. We received notification from BOEM in late August that funding for this project was approved and we will begin planning meetings in September. CIRCAC had originally submitted a proposal to ADEC for funding for this but the state budget issues precluded their funding the project after they had originally committed to funding aerial surveys. The proposal to BOEM was submitted with Dr. Carl Schoch of CORI as project lead, with me as Co-Principal Investigator. CIRCAC will lead on the shore-station component of the project; CORI will lead for the aerial surveys and will do the significant work required to obtain "harassment" permits for sea lions. We plan to do aerial surveys in May and shore-stations surveys in May, June, or July. We hope to integrate additional shore work related to GRS ground-truthing and will work with NUKA to plan this work.

2. I'm continuing to work with AOOS and their database developers at Axiom to finalize a report of our activities associated with a project that was funded by the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership to train resource users and oil spill responders in the use of the Cook Inlet

Response Tool (CIRT). We held several workshops, a one-day workshop in Homer in March at the Kachemak Bay Science Conference and a shorter, two-hour workshop in June at the Kenai River Center in Soldotna. I participated as a presenter/trainer at both and now we are summarizing a report of our training efforts, the feedback we received from participants, and the improvements made to the data portal.

3. I gave a presentation on ShoreZone and its integration into the Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT) at a ShoreZone session at the American Fisheries Society's annual meeting in Portland in August. The title of my talk was *Protecting Coastal Habitats through Improved Oil Spill Planning and Response: Web-based Data Portals and Visualization Tools for Integrating Resource Data with ShoreZone*....[Whew....the title is a talk in and of itself!]

4. We've had several Alaska ShoreZone Partners steering committee meetings to move the partnership activities forward and to ensure coordination among all agencies and organization. We've also begun our planning meetings to organize the annual Alaska ShoreZone meeting in October for developers and users of ShoreZone to present accomplishments and uses of the program. Over the next several weeks we'll narrow the focus of the workshop. We've decided on a one-day workshop this year, with opportunity for "spill-over" meetings to address issues about the program that might need further discussion after being brought up in the presentations. Last year we had a series of focused-workshops about public outreach and database integration prior to the actual annual full-day meeting. This time, we're focusing less on the side meetings.

***Coastal Impressions***

CIRCAC Public Outreach Director, Lynda Giguere, worked with the Kenai Visitors Center to schedule the summer-long showing of our *Coastal Impressions: A Photographic Journey along Alaska's Gulf Coast* exhibit. I went down in mid-May to set out how the large-format photographs should be grouped and exhibited in the gallery space. Lynda and Jerry completed the hanging of the exhibit and Lynda organized a wonderful opening night reception on May 28th. We had good attendance and great feedback from participants. We were recently asked by the Visitors Center if they could extend the exhibit into November. After that, there is a good possibility that the NPS will ship both exhibits (The Gulf of Alaska and the Arctic exhibits) to be on display at several venues on the east coast and at DOI headquarters. We will be printing a second full copy of the exhibit so that we can still take advantage of opportunities to display it here in Alaska.

## Physical Oceanography and Oil Fate and Effects Programs

*1.* In June, I participated as a proposal reviewer for the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GOMRI) on proposals related to toxicity of oil and dispersed oil. Although I can't discuss specific proposals, my participation with this group that focuses on the Gulf of Mexico is that I am exposed to some of the most recent research on issues that are also of concern in Alaska. For example, much of the information I learn from being part of these proposal revue teams and by participating at workshops and conferences helps me understand what might be pertinent to our areas of concern. Much of the research conducted by GOMRI has applications to Arctic or sub-Arctic conditions and the research they are conducting using GOM environmental conditions can be revised or expanded to include colder temperatures.

*2.* OSRI is co-funding a research project looking at potential toxicity of dispersants in cold temperature environments, using Alaska fish species. The original project plan was to use Arctic Cod in the experiments, exposing the fish to North Slope crude, Corexit 9500, and realistic Arctic nearshore water temperatures. The OSRI science advisory committee approved a shift to fingerling Chum salmon for the experiments, due to difficulties in culturing the Arctic cod. I played "middle-man" in getting crude oil for the experiment, with the CREL facility shipping 20 liters of North Slope Crude to me in Anchorage for distribution for this and other OSRI studies. I will also be following this study closely and when they have refined their methods, we might consider expanding the study to include Cook Inlet crude and/or conditions mimicking our suspended sediment loads.

*3.* I am waiting to see final products from the *Dispersants Workshop for the State of Science for Dispersants in Arctic Waters*. I was part of the planning team last year for this series of expert meetings during the week of January 5-9 in Seattle:

Monday*: Efficacy and effectiveness*
Tuesday*: Physical transport and chemical behavior*
Wednesday*: Degradation and fate*
Thursday*: Toxicity and sub-lethal impact*
Friday*: Public health and food security*

These expert meetings were a result of a request after a Senior Executive Seminar for an Arctic Spill of National Significance (SONS) when they identified the need for a definitive evaluation of the state of the science for dispersants and dispersed oil. The expert groups were carefully selected to facilitate the evaluation of the science in each category and the goal was that each group would provide a list of unanimously agreed upon points that they believe are known about dispersants and dispersed oil
(from the point of their category) and that can be supported in the scientific literature. As well, to identify knowledge gaps, they were to agree on a list of major uncertainties. The findings from this meeting will inform the planning of the SONS drill.

4. I worked with Vinnie and a contractor at Nuka to finalize comments on the proposed changes to Subpart J of the National Contingency Plan, which amends requirements regarding the use of dispersants, and other chemical and biological agents to respond to oil spills in waters of the U.S. In the past several years, EPA and others have conducted

research on improved laboratory protocols for dispersant and bioremediation efficacy. As a result of this research and the lessons learned during the Deepwater Horizon event, EPA is proposing several amendments to Subpart J. Their fact sheet states that the proposed Subpart J amendments
seek to ensure that:

- chemical and biological agents have met efficacy and toxicity requirements,
- product manufacturers provide important use and safety information, and
- the planning and response community is equipped with the proper information to authorize and use the products in a judicious and effective manner.

We submitted comments by the 22 April 2015 due date after they were approved through the Protocol Committee. If you are interested, I can provide copies of our final comments and a print-out or electronic version of a presentation I gave to the Protocol Committee describing our recommended comments. I'll bring several copies to the meeting.

**Technical Review Program**

We continued working on Phases II and III of the Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR) Project with contractors at NUKA Research. This project has been taking place in phases and we are nearing completion of Phase III:

- Phase I: Developing data input process for DMRs
- Phase II: Inputting one year of data (including QA/QC) and demonstrating on-line access
- Phase III: Providing mechanism for "automated' summary graphics, updated monthly to accommodate ongoing data entry
- Phase IV: Automating comparison of DMRs to permit limits and reporting requirements.

In June, I met with EMC member, Ted Rockwell, and our NUKA contractor, Brett Higman, to discuss moving forward with Phase IV and the best ways to obtain agency review of and support for the project. Ted has provided additional review of the project database. Our contractor is again on leave for several months, but will begin working on the project again this fall.

## Additional Activities

1. The workplan committee of the Oil Spill Recovery Institute met in Cordova in July where we approved a FY16 work plan for submission to the full OSRI board in September. When our meeting got over early, I was invited to go out to collect aerial survey data for nearshore forage fish on a very beautiful, clear Prince William Sound day.

2. I attended one day of technology conference in August sponsored by OSRI and organized by NUKA Research and Planning. The focus of the conference was to bring developers of oil spill technology together with agencies and industry to discuss the gap that exists between funding for developing new technology and getting proven technology to the stage where it is successfully marketed.

3. NOAA hosted the first meeting of the Kachemak Bay Area Habitat Blueprint (KBA HB) Implementation Team in July to discuss how to move forward with implementation of the Blueprint. Attached is a one-page brochure about it. We'll have a seat as a member of this steering committee and I've attached a one-page summary about the KBA HB.

4. In May, the Alaska LNG (AKLNG) environmental, pipeline, and permitting teams hosted a meeting to learn about Cook Inlet available data. I gave a presentation about CIRCAC's work in the Inlet to date and the types of data available and Molly and her team provided a demonstration of the AOOS Data Portals for making data more accessible, with a focus on the Cook Inlet Response Tool.

5. In June, participated at an AOOS meeting to prioritize data needs for upper Cook Inlet. We also covered costs for Dr. Steve Okkonen to attend so that he could provide a more detailed summary of what we know of Cook Inlet oceanography and to highlight data gaps.

6. In June, I met with a sub-contractor to the AKLNG team who is working on their Environmental Impact Statement to provide more detail about Cook Inlet's physical environment.

7. In June, met with Lynda Giguere, our Public Outreach Director, in Juneau to work on 25 year anniversary booklet/website. Also worked on newsletter article about the June field sampling.

NOAA
Habitat Blueprint

# NOAA Selects Alaska's Kachemak Bay as New Habitat Focus Area

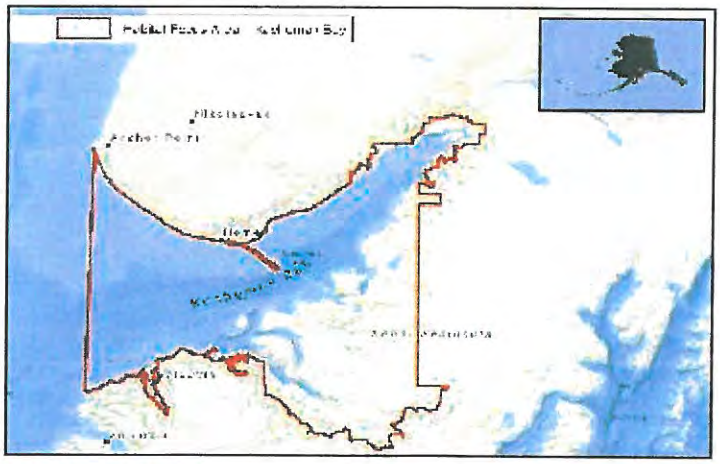
Kachemak Bay, located in southern Cook Inlet, has been selected as the next Habitat Focus Area under NOAA's Habitat Blueprint.

## A Marine Researcher's Paradise

The value of Kachemak Bay habitats has been recognized by the bay's designation as a State of Alaska Critical Habitat Area, and as a National Estuarine Research Reserve. In fact, Kachemak Bay is the largest reserve in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, and provides unique opportunities for long-term monitoring and research activities, habitat mapping, watershed studies related to salmon habitat, and training and education programs in the area.

Because of its water circulation patterns, the bay provides a remarkably fertile environment for both fish and shellfish. The abundance of marine life draws waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as land mammals such as moose and bears. Marine mammals—some of which are threatened or endangered—live in the bay year round, including otters, seals, porpoise, and various species of whales. Kachemak Bay supports important recreational, subsistence, and commercial fishing, marine transportation, tourism.

*An eagle at sunset on Kachemak Bay.*



## A Habitat in Need

Although Kachemak Bay has amazing marine resources, the region has experienced significant declines in shrimp and crab that have not recovered despite fisheries closures. The ecological richness is vulnerable to impacts from development activities in Cook Inlet and to changes in ocean acidity and hydrodynamics due to retreating glaciers. While there is an extensive scientific body of knowledge of the ecological and hydrodynamic processes, NOAA and its partners have yet to synthesize that knowledge and integrate it into resource management for the express purpose of restoring these fisheries.

## Public Outreach Report to the Board – September 11, 2015

Our communication strategy continues to employ as many tools at our disposal as possible while remaining flexible enough to allow us to take advantage of opportunities that come our way, such as combining an opening reception with a 25th anniversary celebration (more below)..

We participated in trade shows and exhibits, and found many opportunities to make presentations to publicize projects and initiatives. We launched an extensive paid media radio campaign, which I believe is doing much to increase brand recognition. We are steadily gaining new subscribers to our newsletter, and have made more information available online through our website.

Below is a recap of the key strategies we've employed in 2015.

***Coastal Impressions* Exhibit and Reception**– On May 28, CIRCAC jointly hosted a reception with the Kenai Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center (KCCVC) marking the Grand Opening of *Coastal Impressions: a Photographic Journey along Alaska's Gulf Coast* as well as our 25 years in Cook Inlet. In addition to the beautiful imagery of the Gulf coast, the exhibit includes CIRCAC's informational booth with our mission statement and list of programs. We promoted this event through news releases, online and paid ads in Homer and Kenai newspapers, as well as through our e-newsletter and during public speaking engagements, posters and invitations sent by the KCCVB. The event was well-attended by people familiar with CIRCAC and many who were meeting us for the first time. The KCCVC is extending the exhibit through October.

**Trade shows, Community Visits and Conferences** –In 2015, individual directors attended or participated in the following events, or met with the following individuals or groups:

Alaska Marine Science Symposium (Anchorage)
American Fisheries Society (Washington)
AMOP Technical Conference on Environmental Contamination and Response (BC)
Clean Pacific Conference (Vancouver)
ComFish Expo (Kodiak)
Geographic Response Strategy Workshop
GOM Ecosystems Science Conference
Industry Appreciation Day (Kenai)
Kenai Chamber of Commerce Luncheon (Kenai)
Kenai Rotary Club (Kenai)
Kachemak Bay Science Conference (Homer)

***Cook Inlet Navigator* e-Newsletter** – Our monthly online newsletter, Cook Inlet Navigator, continues to gain subscribers and generate media hits and, with 369 active contacts, is consistently viewed by a respectable 30% of recipients or higher. This year, we have employed the newsletter to announce the winners of our CIRCAC Scholarship Program, help solicit membership to the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee, market the Coastal Impressions Exhibit, introduce the public to the Board of Directors

through profiles, honor past members, and recount our 25 years of accomplishments in Cook Inlet, among other things. These newsletters are posted on our website under Public Outreach.

**Paid Media:** In May, we launched a Cook Inlet-wide (minus Anchorage) paid media campaign for radio to heighten public awareness about our work and increase brand awareness. One of our goals was to distinguish ourselves from CIRI (Cook Inlet Region, Inc. and PWSRCAC (Prince William Sound RCAC), which was something that happened when we called ourselves Cook Inlet RCAC. In the ads, we again promote our acronym CIRCAC.

The ads are running throughout the Peninsula to September 2015. Working with a media buyer and producer, and with input from staff, we created and placed two 60-second ads and one 30-second ad designed to reach our targeted Kenai Peninsula audiences. (Anchorage was prohibitively expensive.) At the end of the run, we will evaluate the ads' effectiveness in reaching audiences either through our newsletter or other tool such as Survey Monkey. The ads are posted online through our Media Link here: http://www.circac.org/media/

**2015 Earned Media (which mentions CIRCAC) to date:** The Alaska Legislature dominated the news cycle for the first half of 2015 and beyond; however, we still managed to earn positive coverage about the new Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee, Alaska ShoreZone and Cook Inlet Response Too (largely through the efforts of our Science Director to promote these CIRCAC initiatives). Coverage we've earned since last board meeting are highlighted in bold.

- **06.04.2015 – CIRCAC–25 years protecting Cook Inlet, KDLL Radio**
- **05.23.2015 – Harbor Safety Committee seeking members, Peninsula Clarion**
- **04.22.2015 – Online tool aids oil spill response, Peninsula Clarion**
- **04.22.2015 – Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee prepares to seek members, Peninsula Clarion**
- 03.27.2015 – Some big programs start small but grow, Petroleum News
- 03.11.2015 – New technology helps prepare for spills, explore coastal areas, Homer News
- 03.11.2015 – Scientists, managers, and public connect at Kachemak Bay Science Conference, Homer News
- 02.20.2015 – Getting up close and personal with Alaska's coastline, Alaska Dispatch
- 01.19.2015 – Alaska seafood marketers prepare for sockeye blitz, Alaska Dispatch

**Annual Report**—We published our 2014 Annual Report in April and continue to distribute copies through public appearances and event, committee and board meetings. This year's Annual Report highlighted the completion of the Cook Inlet Navigation Risk Assessment.

**Directors Synopsis**—The Directors Synopsis, a summary of board meeting proceedings, continues to be a useful tool in promoting communication between board members and their stakeholder groups.

**www.circac.org:** Our website has been designed to serve as CIRCAC's primary archive, with the capacity to grow and expand as needed. We are currently working on creating an online report to mark our 25-

years of accomplishments (as opposed to a printed booklet, but will make available a PDF for downloading); our goal is to complete this project by the December board meeting.

The website also accommodates YouTube videos, which enabled us to embed the CIRCAC Presentation, narrated by Board President John Williams, online: http//www.circac.org/who-we-are/

**Photography/flickr:** Our online photo gallery is growing and can be viewed via our website: www.circac.org. This is an ongoing project, and we welcome photo submissions from Board members.

**Social Media:** Facebook and Twitter are platforms for sharing information, photos, news and comments. CIRCAC's accounts were created in anticipation of staying relevant as a timely source of information during major spills or events. We are considering boosting our Facebook audience through paid Google Ads to generate more participation and interest.

**Special Projects:** The Public Outreach Director recently attended a meeting with the Science and Research Director, Axiom and Nuka Research to discuss the online interactive mapping project. This project involves hosting a website with detailed information about Cook Inlet's oil and gas infrastructure, combined with the Cook Inlet Response Tool data layers. The Public Outreach component will be to provide seamless access to the information through the CIRCAC website. Since there has been a great deal of changes in Cook Inlet as a result of new acquisitions and other transitions, this project entails updating and gathering more current information on the platforms and pipelines, among other things.

**Ship Stick Thumb Drives:** We have used the CIRCAC presentation and Coastal Impressions ship sticks at presentations and as giveaways at our information booth, events, receptions and conferences.

**Scholarship Program:** We promoted the new CIRCAC Memorial Barry Eldridge and Jim Carter Scholarships through PSAs, our newsletter and at ComFish to solicit applications. Despite getting a late start to generate publicity, we received more than 18 applications. The Director of Administration who conceived of and developed the project continues to refine the program with the input of the committee composed of three CIRCAC directors; Carla Stanley, Bob Flint and Scott Smiley.

The winners of the CIRCAC Scholarships are highlighted in our newsletter and their photos and background information have been posted on the website: http://www.circac.org/outreach/scholarship-program/

## Protocol Committee

The Protocol Committee reviewed and submitted comments regarding 40 CFR Parts 110 and 300: National Oil and Hazardous Substances Contingency Plan Proposed Rule; noting that the proposed revisions would strengthen Subpart J by promoting a science-based approach to the use of chemical and biological agents for oils spill response.

Additionally the Committee reviewed and submitted comments regarding the Aurora Gas, LLC. Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan. Some of the recommendations made by the Committee noted the lack of specificity in the projected timeline for the Incident Management Team and that the plan refered to the Unified Command as an option rather than a requirement.

Quorum could not be attained for the following comments that were reviewed and submitted by the executive Director.

Comments were submitted regarding the proposed Decommissioning of Oil Spill Response Equipment Caches throughout Alaska. Our comments pointed out in part that "...the availability and access to response equipment ensures those recoverable amounts of spilled oil can be controlled, contained and recovered; not left to dissipate into the environment. Coast Guard response equipment fills a specific niche and provides a mechanism to place aid where needed and protection to the environment when needed."

Comments were submitted regarding the Cook Inlet Energy, LLC Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan for Cook Inlet Region Exploration Operations. Our comments noted the Plan to be clear and thorough, providing the basis for both on-land and on-water spill response noting only minor issues and clarifications requiring further attention.

## PROPS Staff Report

### Cook Inlet Sub-Area Contingency Plan Workgroup

CIRCAC staff attended the second Cook Inlet Sub-area meeting; present were representatives from the USEPA, USCG, Witt|O'Briens (an Incident Management Team contractor that is extensively involved in response activities), ADEC, ADF&G, and NOAA Fisheries. As a result of the ongoing reorganization of the ADEC Spill Prevention And Response (SPAR)/Prevention Preparedness and Response (PP&R) programs, there will be some shifting of personnel and duties, but the staff that started the Sub- Area plan review will work to assist the new ADEC personnel with planning functions.

The first section of the Sub-Area plan to be reviewed is the Resources Section. The EPA contractor has completed an initial review of the section; this included the information directory, but not the community profiles. At the last meeting, it was agreed that approximately two and a half months would be needed to complete information-gathering and outreach for updates to the community profiles. Responsibility for updating the community profiles will be shared by the three signatory agencies (EPA, ADEC, and the USCG). The workgroup will make an effort to close gaps in the profiles for technological advances since the 2004 update, (i.e. wireless hotspots, cell phone connectivity, repeater services available, etc.).

CIRCAC has a wide range of expertise and local knowledge, as well as strong contacts with industry partners. CIRCAC staff has already conducted an initial review of the section, which has been provided to EPA; who will incorporate those updates into the working draft, and then forward a clean draft to Witt/O'Briens for review and comment. When the time comes to solicit participation from industry, Witt/ O'Briens will coordinate with their client companies. Witt/O'briens will be sending information regarding coastal communities from the RCAC database, to the agencies updating community profiles, to help ensure current and accurate information.

The workgroup agreed that, instead of attempting to list all available response equipment, (especially for the private sector) the contact information for those entities and web links to any inventory lists available online would be listed. It was also agreed upon to arrange the community profiles so that they fall under their corresponding borough, since the borough (or the State, for an "Unincorporated Borough"), will almost always be a response partner.

### Harbor Safety Committee

The second meeting of the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee (Cook Inlet HSC) Managing Board (Board) was held as a teleconference on 7th July 2015.

At that meeting it was decided to remove the Marine Ferry seat since a representative of the Alaska Marine Highway System notified the Board of their wishes to be appointed as a non-voting ex-officio member because the State of Alaska cannot hold a voting seat. The seat for Ferry Operators was removed from the voting seats and a seat for the Alaska Marine Highway System was added as an ex-officio seat. Additionally the Board split the Response/Salvage Organization Seat. The Board felt that the spill response and salvage organizations should each have a seat so they created two seats replacing the Response/Salvage Organizations; one for Oil Spill Response Organizations and one for Salvage Organizations.

**Selection of Harbor Safety Membership:** The Managing Board reviewed the applications for membership on the Cook Inlet HSC; most membership seats were filled. Some seats were left vacant either because there were no applicants or the Board felt that the applicant would not be representative of the stakeholder group. The Board scheduled one more meeting to consider the creation of a non-profit corporation, funding, budget, and other items. The Board set the first meeting of the full HSC for 22 September 2015 at the Port of Anchorage.

At the most recent Managing Board meeting the Port MacKenzie seat appointment was discussed. The Port Manager for Port MacKenzie declined filling the seat citing work load and resource issues. After consideration the Managing Board decided to keep the seat vacant until such time as the Matsu Borough or the Port Manager for Port MacKenzie fills the seat. Until then the HSC will keep the Matsu Borough and Port Mackenzie Port manager informed of the HSC's progress.

There was further discussion of budget for the HSC and establishing the HSC as a non-profit corporation. CIRCAC's Executive Director addressed the HSC Managing board to inform the Board that CIRCAC could assume the administrative duties of the HSC on an interim basis as part of our membership role until the Committee is established as a 501 C3 Non-Profit.

## Clean Pacific Conference

Staff and PROPS members Bob Flint, Jan Hansen, and Robert Reges attended the 2015 Clean Pacific Conference held in Vancouver, B.C. While there members were able to see the latest developments in oil spill response equipment and incident management organizations. Additionally members we able to attend General Sessions where they heard presentations on topics such as *"How Non-Regulatory Harbor Safety Plans Enhance Spill Prevention"*, *"The Culture and Best Practices of Safe and Reliable Petroleum Transportation"*, *"The Basics of Dispersant Use and Value for Offshore Spill Response"*, and *"The Safe and Effective Use of Controlled Burning During an Oil Spill"*. Along with learning more about oil spill response this was also an opportunity for committee members to learn more about each other and to share their personal and professional experiences.

## U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage Change of Command

Staff attended the Sector Anchorage Change of Command Ceremonies where Admiral Dan Abel presided over the time honored ceremony. Departing Captain Paul Mehler passed the duties of Commander, Sector Anchorage/ Captain Of The Port (COTP) Western Alaska to Captain Paul Albertson. The second half of the proceedings consisted of Capt. Mehler's retirement ceremony. Completing 25 years of service Capt. Mehler chose to retire here (Soldotna) and will be working for Tesoro as a Marine Superintendent overseeing vessel activities. In each part of the ceremony Capt. Mehler spoke of his partnership and friendship developed over his tour of duty with members of CIRCAC, Federal and State agencies, and Industry.

Captain Albertson assumed command of Sector Anchorage July 8th, 2015. Captain Albertson previously served in the rank of Commander as Deputy Sector Commander for Sector Anchorage under Capt. Jason Fosdick before attending the Navy War College in 2013. CIRCAC staff will continue to support the Coast Guard's mission in Cook Inlet and we look forward to strengthening the partnership forged over the last 25yrs.

## Drills

Staff attended a Hilcorp hosted drill at the CISPRI command center. The scenario centered on a 6.8 magnitude earthquake that caused tank ruptures at the Trading Bay Production Facility and a Cook Inlet Pipe Line (CIPL) pipeline break at a meter bldg., during transfer. Additionally the scenario included a reported loss of communications with CIPL. The overall spill amount was 44,000 bbls to ground with 75 bbls entering Cook Inlet. The scenario included 3 injuries. Staff worked to monitor the Unified Command (UC) activities and to provide advice and recommendations as needed. Staff also worked to aid the Public Information Officer/Joint Information Center (PIO/JIC) by monitoring social media activity and to assist in disseminating factual information using social media outlets.

**Administration Report**
**Cook Inlet RCAC Board of Directors Meeting – September 11, 2015**

Below you will find a brief update on administrative tasks performed since the last Council meeting.

- **Recertification** – The Council's Recertification application package to the U. S. Coast Guard for 2015/16 was submitted on June 12, 2015. We received a letter dated August 20, 2015 from Admiral Daniel Abel, approving our recertification through August 31, 2016.

- **Annual Financial Audit** – Principals of Lambe, Tuter & Wagner PC have presented their audit findings to the Audit Committee and the Executive Committee. In its unmodified opinion, the auditor found our records and processes to contain "no weaknesses", with "excellent controls in place" and no holes in our monitoring procedures. In a related matter, a Request for Proposals/Statement of Qualifications was released for independent financial audit and tax preparation for the years 2015 through 2017, generating three responses and two proposals. The Audit Committee will review the proposals and recommend one firm to perform these services for the next 3 years.

- **Federal Taxes** – Our 2014 Federal Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax Form 990 has been prepared and filed.

- **Corporate Funding** – All payments for 2015 have been received.

- **Corporate Renewals** – we have renewed our U.S. Coast Guard Basic Ordering Agreement, as well as our required state certifications.

- **Insurance Renewals** – Council and personnel insurance policies are in the process of being renewed for 2016.

- **Ex Officio Directors** – Due to retirements and agency reorganizations, several long time Ex Officio Directors have left their service to CIRCAC. We welcome the following appointments to these important positions: Captain Paul Albertson, United States Coast Guard (replacing Captain Paul Mehler), and Steve Russell, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (replaces Gary Folley). Additional appointments are expected soon for two remaining vacancies – U. S. Forestry Service (to replace Gary Lehnhausen), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (to replace John Whitney).

- **New Scholarship Offering** – The inaugural CIRCAC scholarship program, launched to coincide with our 25th Anniversary year, was a tremendous success. PROPS and EMC voted to allocate funds in order to provide a second $2,500 scholarship (the initial sum came from our Public Outreach program). Over 20 inquiries were received when the offering was first released in April, and 18 applications were received; six finalists were selected. The Scholarship Committee (Directors Carla Stanley, Scott Smiley and Bob Flint) interviewed the finalists and selected 2 to receive a ***James Carter Memorial Scholarship for Environmental Studies*** – Annie Looman, a graduating senior from Kodiak High entering environmental studies at UAF, and Kristina Benson, a second year geology student at UAA. Funds for both recipients have been dispersed.

- **Volunteer Recognition** – Several friends of CIRCAC were honored by the Kenai Chamber of Commerce this summer for service to the community. PROPS public member Scott Hamann received the Log Cabin Award; Robert Ruffner, retiring Executive Director of certified environmental member Kenai Watershed Forum, was recognized with the Community Service Award; and Arni Thomson, Director of certified commercial fishing group member the Alaska Salmon Alliance, received the Chamber's President's Award.