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."

Coastal image courtesy of CIRCAC & Alaska ShoreZone Partnership

Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, September 6, 2019 – 9:00 a.m.
Aspen Suites Hotel Homer
91 Sterling Hwy, Homer, AK 99603

COOK INLET REGIONAL CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL

BOARD MEETING

Raven Room, Aspen Suites Hotel
Homer, Alaska

Friday, September 6, 2019

****AGENDA****

8:30 am **Continental Breakfast**

9:00 am **Call to Order/Roll Call**

Approval of Agenda *(Action Item)*

Safety Minute *(Information Item)*

Approval of Minutes *(Action Item)*

- April 5, 2019 Board of Directors
- April 5, 2019 Annual Meeting

Welcome & Introductions

Welcoming Remarks

- Ken Castner, Mayor – City of Homer

Ex Officio Directors' Remarks

Public Comment *(3 minute limit per speaker)*

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

- Responsibilities and Update – U.S. Coast Guard
- Cook Inlet Pipelines Update – Tim Robertson, Nuka Research
- Dismantling of Drift River Oil Terminal and Seismic Testing Update – Hilcorp and Harvest Alaska LLC

12:00 noon **Break for Lunch**

12:45 pm **Executive Committee Report**

- 2018 Audit Report *(Available for Review)*
- Review of 2019 Statement of Financial Position & Budget (to July 31, 2019) *(Informational Item)*
- Review of Proposed Undesignated Funds *(Informational Item)*

1:15 pm **Executive Director's Report**

- Annual Recertification *(Informational Item)* **1**

1:45 pm **Status of Programs & Projects** *(Informational Items)*

- Environmental Monitoring Committee **2**
- Public Outreach Program **10**
- Prevention, Response, Operations and Safety Committee **12**
- Protocol Control Committee **15**
- Administration **16**

2:30 pm **Calendars & Miscellaneous** *(Informational Item)* **17**

Closing Comments

2:45 pm **Adjourn**

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
United States Coast Guard

Commander
Seventeenth District

P. O. Box 25517
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JUL 31 2019

Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council
Attn: Michael Munger, Executive Director
8195 Kenai Spur Hwy
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Dear Mr. Munger:

After review of the recertification package submitted by the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (CIRCAC) dated June 24, 2019, I certify the CIRCAC as an alternative voluntary advisory group permitted under Subsection 5002(o) of the Oil Pollution Terminal and Oil Tanker Environmental Oversight and Monitoring Act of 1990. This recertification terminates August 31, 2020.

Under the guidelines established by the Coast Guard in 2002, this re-certification fell under the streamlined inspection process and as such only substantive changes were reported by your office and public comment was not sought by the Coast Guard.

Prior to the November board meeting, I really enjoyed meeting members of your staff and the CIRCAC. The 7.1 earthquake that shook the top floor of the Anchorage hotel was no doubt one of the wildest starts to a meeting I have ever experienced. It served as a reminder that disasters or events can happen at any time and highlighted the importance of the planning and preparation that your organization oversees in promoting safety in Cook Inlet. I look forward to the Coast Guard and CIRCAC continuing to work together and enjoying less exciting meetings in the years to come.

Sincerely,

M. T. BELL, Jr.
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District

Copy: Sector Anchorage
CGD17 (dl)

EMC activities since last Board meeting, 5 April – 26 August 2019
Staff Report: Susan Saupe

Chemical and Biological Monitoring Program

Kamishak Bay/Lower Cook Inlet Intertidal Habitats – Data Analyses and Report Writing

1. For the Lower Cook Inlet Habitat Study that we've been conducting with the National Park Service (NPS), NOAA, and UAF since 2015, I've been working with closely with our computer programmer/GIS contractor, co-Principal Investigator/algal specialist, and an NPS statistician to compile all of our intertidal data and conduct data analyses and report writing. This has required a lot of trips to Anchorage and Juneau over the past four months.

   To ensure we are accurately completing the deliverables of the four-year project, we submitted a "pre-draft" report at the end of June to the funders at Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). During the course of the project, numerous opportunities arose to expand the project by taking advantage of new technology and opportunities, but we wanted to ensure we didn't go too far down a new path at the expense of any original goals. We have received comments back and are delivering a formal Draft to BOEM in September. That will go for formal review and once we receive comments back in October, we will address any issues and submit the Final Report by the end of the year.

2. Activities in 2019 include the completion of one component of our larger dataset; the photo interpretation of four years of photo quadrats to enhance coverage of the smaller subset of point-contact quadrats sampled on-site. As one of our deliverables to BOEM, we are providing recommendations for future monitoring methods and as part of that we wanted to compare two very different data collection methods for these habitats. One would include sending multiple people out to collect a lot of photographs of quadrats to cover as much habitat as possible on-site. Future interpretation of those photographs could then be conducted by either (1) identifying the algae into broad categories such as "filamentous reds" or "foliose greens," etc…or (2) identification to the lowest taxonomic level possible by an algae taxonomist with extensive knowledge of Alaskan seaweeds. Regardless, the photo-quadrat method will only allow interpretation of algae shown in the photograph and would miss any "understory" species. The second method requires expertise on-site where detailed taxonomic identifications are made throughout the layers of algae. This takes extra time on-site, so data is collected from fewer quadrats, lowering replication and areal coverage. For our project we did both – photo-quadrats analyzed post-field season and point-count quadrat data collected on-site. We are presenting the trade-offs in effort and data quality in our report to BOEM.

3. I organized a two-day in-person workgroup in Anchorage in late April where all of the Principal Investigators described their data sets and how we should best be integrating and presenting our data. We worked with an NPS statistician and GIS mapper to narrow our analysis plans and worked from that template in the following months.

4. Vaito'a and I submitted annual financial and progress reports to NPS under our Cooperative Agreement, detailing expenditures and CIRCAC activities between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019.

5. In early August 2019, CIRCAC received the signed amendment to our Cooperative Agreement with NPS to complete the project. CIRCAC has been leading all field planning and logistics, and most of the intertidal invertebrate and algae data collections and compilations. This agreement included $44,000 ($40K to project, $4K to admin) for contractual support. We had submitted the amendment to NPS in December, but the submission by them was delayed until January due to the federal furlough, and the process took many more months than normal due to a new Dept. of Interior requirement that these types of amendments be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. These funds are reflected in our most recent EMC budget.

Coastal Habitat Mapping Program

ShoreZone

1. July 17-18 was our annual ShoreZone Partners meeting in Portland. In prior years, it has been hosted in Alaska and called the Alaska ShoreZone Partners meeting, but we decided in planning meetings to hold the meeting outside of Alaska to emphasize the strides the Alaska program has made to coordinate with and/or integrate data sets from BC, Washington, and Oregon.

   I provided the Introduction (*Introduction to ShoreZone Imaging, Mapping and Shore Stations*) and led work sessions on the *Shore Station Data Base & Fish Atlas*; the *AOOS ShoreZone portal*; *ShoreZone Use, User Needs, and Available Tools*; and *Outreach and Education*. During the first day there was a great range of presentations, including survey and database updates and examples where SZ data and imagery have been used in research, A smaller, more focused planning team worked through a range of subjects and issues on the second day.

2. The Alaska ShoreZone Program website hosted by NOAA is currently being transitioned from flash to javascript since flash is discontinuing support of their product in 2020. As that happens, the Shore Station database will also be moved to the javascript site, but we will be working with contractors to update the data to include the dozens (or more) of taxonomic changes that have taken place over the years and will be redesigning the data and imagery interface. As part of that process, we will also develop a new ShoreZone Shore Station data visualization layer to be served on AOOS data portals, including the Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT). We are seeking additional partners to expand the effort to include all shore stations from Alaska.

3. On August 17, I conducted a workshop for K-12 teachers held at Kasitsna Bay Laboratory on the use of ShoreZone data and imagery in the classroom. We covered examples for classes in art, history, natural history, anthropology, and current events (including science). I also worked on a demonstration of oil permeability in different beach sediments that I was going to link to our ShoreZone geomorphic and habitat data and imagery as part of an on-the-beach session with the Girls on Ice program. Unfortunately, I was unable to follow through as I was called in for potential jury selection that day (I had warned them that was a possibility).

4. As mentioned in the April staff report, all of the Alaska Peninsula pressed algal specimens collected during the CIRCAC-led ShoreZone shore station survey conducted in 2016 were scanned by Mandy Lindeberg of NOAA using the high resolution large-bed digital scanner

CIRCAC purchased. Using all of those specimens we collected and pressed in the field, Ms. Lindeberg and taxonomist Sandra Lindstrom compiled a collection catalog, taxonomic tree, and a complete species list from the entire study area. This was included in the final report submitted to BOEM and was recently published for the authors as a NOAA Tech Memo:

Lindeberg, M. R., and S. C. Lindstrom. 2019. *Assessment and catalog of benthic marine algae from the Alaska Peninsula, May 2016*. U.S. Dep. Commerce, NOAA Technical Memo. NMFS-AFSC-389, 22 p + Appendices.

It can be viewed and/or downloaded at https://www.afsc.noaa.gov/Publications/AFSC-TM/NOAA-TM-AFSC-389.pdf

Mandy and Sandra are working on compiling a similar NOAA Tech Memo using all of our pressed specimens form the lower Cook Inlet habitat study that will be released later this fall or winter. I will provide a link to download that document when it becomes available.

5. I am working with ShoreZone mappers at Coastal and Ocean Resources, Inc. (CORI) to compile photographs and captions for a "Human Impressions" photo exhibit and booklets. It is loosely based on the prior "Coastal Impressions" and "Arctic Impressions" exhibits and booklets. CIRCAC designed and funded the first exhibit and booklet "Coastal Impressions: A Photographic Journey along Alaska's Gulf Coast," as well as an art exhibit based on a selection of ShoreZone photographs. NOAA's Amy Holman has contracted with CORI to produce a compilation of photographs and captions that use ShoreZone imagery from throughout Alaska to demonstrate how human's have used and are using the coast. A planning team of CORI, Mandy Lindeberg, and I identified several dozen categories and flew the video imagery to find good examples for each category. We also decided to add a component that brings in historical information for many of the subjects. A good example is the Scotch Cap Lighthouse on the south end of Unimak Island that we are using as an example of a tsunami's impression on the human use of the coast – there's a great ShoreZone photo taken in 2011 and there are historical photos showing the facilities prior to them being destroyed by a tsunami in 1946. The deliverables are due to NOAA at the end of August and they will decide how they want to move forward with developing a full exhibit and/or the booklet.

Macrocystis

1. Since our last survey of the Kodiak, Afognak, and Shuyak Island *Macrocystis* beds, two additional reports of *Macrocystis* kelp in the area have been reported. One was several years ago for several plants observed on the east side of Afognak Island and a very recent observation of extensive beds in Zachar Bay in Uyak Bay on the west side of Kodiak. This last sighting is a western range extension. I have been talking with several researchers about collaborating to conduct a new survey of the area and work on a genetic comparison of the western Gulf of Alaska kelps compared to other areas. This kelp grows in thick beds very near shore and has implications for oil spill risk and oil retention, and is likely to respond to changes in sea surface temperature and circulation related to climate change.

Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT)

1. AOOS (via their database developers at AXIOM Data Science) recently migrated the Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT) to their Next Generation User Interface. CIRT was initially

developed for EMC by AXIOM, but recently the PROPS committee has been sponsoring integration of a Geographic Resources Information Database (GRID) of into the on-line data access and visualization tool. Vinnie and I will be providing training on the ShoreZone, CIRT, and GRID on-line tools to Marathon Petroleum personnel in September.

2. As part of the migration of the CIRT tool on the AOOS data portal, the ShoreZone imagery and habitat data were also transferred and are still accessible. I've been "stressing" the imagery tool to find weaknesses or registration errors in linking the imagery to the track-line and the database developers at AXIOM have been very responsive. Sometimes I hear back immediately and they are able to fix something right then. If not, they have worked to resolve the issues I've found so far.
3. We will be adding data layers to the CIRT tool, including data from our hydrocarbon database. Initially, however, we are working NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Sciences (NCCOS) National Status and Trends (NS&T) to develop a data portal to integrate contaminants data from our Integrated Cook Inlet Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (ICIEMAP), the southcentral Alaska coastal bays and estuaries EMAP, CIRCAC's archived study results (1993-2002), and a depositional habitat study by MMS (now BOEM). We are working with the Kachemak Bay Ecological Characterization to first serve data from Kachemak Bay. Based on that visualization tool, we'll expand out to include the most recent contaminants data, which is our ICIEMAP database. From there, we will work backwards to include older data. A portion of these database will be one of the final deliverables to BOEM for our Lower Cook Inlet Habitat study report, as well, focusing on hydrocarbons. We have also been asked to provide recommendations for monitoring contaminants associated with Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) activities in lower Cook Inlet that may impact nearshore subsistence species in lower Kachemak Bay near Nanwalek and Port Graham.

Physical Oceanography

1. NOAA's Cook Inlet Operational Forecast System (CIOFS) circulation and hydrographic model transitioned from developmental mode to operational mode this past month, and from NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) branch to its National Centers for Environmental Predictions (NCEP). This was a decade-long effort by NOAA that started with deployments of current meters and Acoustic Doppler Current Profilers (ADCPs) throughout the Inlet. The model will predict water levels, three-dimensional currents, temperature, and salinity based on inputs of meteorological and hydrological conditions. Its scope includes Cook Inlet and Shelikof Strait. This model can be used operationally by NOAA's Office of Restoration and Response for oil spill modeling in the event of a significant spill. At this time, it is not available for web-access or public use for several reasons. Below is a quote from a recent email I was copied on from NOAA's Amy McFadden to NOAA's Kris Holderied regarding this issue:

> *"In the case of CIOFS, the grid is very large. Because the output (and I'm speaking to the model data here, not the graphs and figures etc) is disseminated as individual hourly files, if you want 72 hours' worth of data, you need to make 72 requests to their server as the files are un-aggregated. This takes a very long time.*
>
> *This issue is not unique to the CIOFS model, it's just exacerbated because the grid is so large Some of the other ROMS models do have virtual aggregations of the last week or so of model*

output that can improve things. But unfortunately, these do not reliably work. So yes, we can access it, and we can load it into our WebGNOME model. However, we haven't listed it on the GOODS website as that website is not suited to data requests that take hours to fulfill.

The good news in all this is that we have a meeting with COOPS and IOOS folks about these issues later this month so hopefully some progress can be made."

2. Both PROPS and EMC have strong interests in an operational Cook Inlet water level and 3-D circulation model. Thus, both committees have dedicated funds towards certain aspects of making model predictions available for oil spill planning and response. We also have a long history of conducting or supporting physical oceanographic data collecitons to support improved model development and testing. As well, in the mid-90s, PROPS developed a simple desk-top oil spill trajectory model that was invaluable for drills and contingency planning. It is no longer operational and was based on a very simplified interpretation of Cook Inlet's circulation (e.g. model had to be "hinged" to simulate density-driven currents). We will be working with PROPS, AOOS, and NOAA to work towards developing a tool that takes advantage of the new high resolution CIOFS model that can be made available for on-line use as an oil spill trajectory model. This will likely involve (1) model tests against observational data, (2) a second Cook Inlet Modeling Workshop that focuses on the current operational models in the Inlet, (3) a White Paper summary of discussions and conclusions at the workshop, and (4) development of an on-line tool.

Oil Fate and Effects Programs

1. At the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GOMRI) Oil Spill and Ecosystem Conference from 3-8 February 2019, I met with Dr. Nancy Kinner of CRRC and other scientists conducting research on Marine Oil Snow. During one of the meetings, we discussed a potential pilot project **[see number 3 below]** to conduct in the summer of 2019 to look at the potential deposition of marine snow in offshore areas in Cook Inlet and the Kodiak area. Specifically, we would continue supporting the work done so far in Kachemak Bay by expanding the sampling to include flux measurements at deeper depths and to extend sampling to include the spring phytoplankton bloom. In addition, we would conduct short-term sampling on Portlock or Albatross Bank offshore of Kodiak as a pilot project for "shallow water marine snow events."

   As part of this research, we have Principal Investigators from numerous research institutions interested in working with us to conduct detailed background chemical analyses of sediments and marine snow, and potentially conduct mesocosm experiments in the Netherlands that would include benthic invertebrates. Since our initial meeting in February, we have had several teleconference planning meetings to tighten up the pilot-study methods and develop a longer-term plan for approaching additional partnering organizations.

2. We continued to support Jesse Ross graduate research on marine snow in Kachemak Bay in 2019. This year we planned for him to arrive earlier in the season to hopefully capture more of the spring bloom period. He was able to successfully sample throughout the summer (through July) and will be writing up his results for his M.S. thesis defense this winter and for several publications. He presented at a NOAA open house at the Kasitsna Bay Laboratory in July and will present his data this winter, hopefully at our December Board Meeting and potentially at the Alaska Marine Science Symposium again.

3. As a follow-up to the discussions described in #1 above, I planned a short research charter to Albatross and Portlock Banks to collect pilot data for a proposal to be submitted with NOAA, CRRC, and others. We wanted to get marine snow aggregate flux data to the lower water column in areas on top of both banks. Remember, these extensive and very far offshore shallow banks (<60 m on top) overlap with portions of the Alaska Dispersant Use Pre-authorization Zones of the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT). Several years ago we had submitted comments regarding our concerns of marine snow aggregates as a mechanism to bring dispersed oil to the very productive benthic habitats in these areas and recommended, at a minimum, that there be seasonal considerations for pre-authorization.

   The research was planned for two days and I spent weeks trying to find a vessel that could work that far offshore (>60 miles) in potentially heavy weather or be a small, quick vessel that could run in and out each day. But, due to the incredible salmon runs in Kodiak this summer, it seemed that every possible boat was under contract for tendering. Also, the short length of the charter made it a not very desirable charter for most owners. Given that there was an incredible weather window arriving, we didn't want to lose the opportunity so I ended up chartering a vessel from Homer on very short notice, which doubled the charter length to account for transit time. The timing of the weather window occurred when I had commitments that I couldn't get out of so contracted with a researcher I had worked with on the Icebreaker Healy in 2012. Dr. Alex Ravelo has extensive boat experience and was available on short notice. I wrote up a quick priority list for sampling that provided options based on how much actual sampling would be possible given the very long distances and potential weather changes. Luckily, they had flat calm weather and sampled everything on the list and even added some additional stations.

   Prior to writing up the plan, I contacted Dr. Suzanne Stromm who is a Principal Investigator with the Northern Gulf of Alaska Long Term Ecological Research (NGA LTER) project that has a transect line that runs right across Albatross Bank. I wanted to overlap with a few of their stations, if possible, so we would have concomitant oceanographic data as a context in which to interpret our flux data. We knew we wouldn't be able to coordinate sampling from their vessel, the R/V *Skuliaq* operated by UAF, because they can't wait for up to 6 hours per deployment as the sediment trap drifts at each station. But, we were able to include their stations in our sampling efforts and successfully collected at three of their stations. I will be working with Dr. Nancy Kinner and Dr. Lisa DiPinto of NOAA to write up the research needs for our proposal and have had several planning teleconferences so far.

Technical Review Program

1. On February 19th, ADEC issued a Notice of Proposed Issuance of an Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) **General Permit** to Discharge to Waters of the United States - Oil and Gas Exploration, Development and Production in State Waters in Cook Inlet. We reviewed the permit and associated fact sheet, mixing zone model results, and other associated documents. The review period ended May 22nd and CIRCAC comments were presented to the Protocol Committee for review, revision, and approval.

   The Cook Inlet General Permit proposed to authorize certain discharges associated with oil

and gas exploration, development, and production into specific areas of Cook Inlet. The Permit would cover state waters in Cook Inlet, including the coastal waters within the baseline north of the southern tip of Kalgin Island and landward of the 3 nautical mile demarcation of the territorial sea. The Permit replaces the expired 2007 general permit AKG315000 for discharges to state waters. Drilling fluids and drill cuttings associated with geotechnical surveys and horizontal directional drilling to support subsea pipeline construction are also covered under the Permit. The Permit would also authorize mixing zones for certain discharges, including discharges from a previously zero-discharge platform. The Permit and Fact Sheet provide details regarding the pollutants of concern, mixing zones (where applicable), and specific monitoring requirements for each discharge.

Public meetings were held in Homer on March 26th, Kenai on March 27th, and Anchorage on March 28th. Permit documents can be found at

https://dec.alaska.gov/water/wastewater/oil-gas

A presentation by ADEC on the proposed permit can be found at

https://dec.alaska.gov/water/wastewater/oil-gas

2. On April 24th, ADEC announced that they had prepared an Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) Draft Permit AK0053309 available for a 30-day public review. This was a proposed **Individual Permit (IP)** for Cook Inlet Energy, LLC, Osprey Platform. This platform was originally developed as a zero-discharge platform for produced water and has been operating as such since its inception. The General Permit (GP) above also included produced water discharges from the Osprey Platform in the proposed permit, so Cook Inlet Energy likely applied for an IP in case the GP was challenged in court. Comments were originally due on May 27th, just 5 days after the comments on the GP were due. As per numerous requests, they extended that deadline, though by only 5 days. We reviewed the permit and associated fact sheet, mixing zone model results, and other associated documents. The review period ended May 31st and CIRCAC comments were presented to the Protocol Committee for review, revision, and approval. I can find no link on ADEC's website to the draft permit or fact sheet so I can forward pdf copies to anyone who requests it.

3. On April 1st, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a proposed rule to authorize the take of marine mammals incidental to oil and gas activities in Cook Inlet, over the course of five years (2019-2024) by Hilcorp Alaska LLC. The proposed rule was available for public comment through May 1, 2019. Covered activities included 2D seismic nearshore surveys between Anchor Point and Kasilof, 3-D seismic surveys offshore in their OCS lease blocs, geohazard surveys in the lower and middle Inlet, exploratory wells in the lower and middle Inlet, exploration and development on the Iniskin Peninsula, Trading Bay and North Cook Inlet Unit well abandonment activities, and Drift River terminal de-commissioning. I compiled comments and our contingency-plan review contractor edited them for submission to Protocol. I presented to Protocol via teleconference to provide background and my concerns and recommendations and they approved them for final submission to NMFS by the deadline. They can be seen at http://www.circac.org/wp-content/uploads/Taking-of-marine-mammals.pdf.

   The proposed rule, supporting documents, and the final rule (which was just published on 31 July 2019) can be found at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-

authorization-hilcorp-alaska-llc-oil-and-gas-activities-cook-inlet-alaska.

Additional or Upcoming 2019 Activities

1. As a Board Member on the Oil Spill Recovery Institute (OSRI) Advisory Board, I attended the Workplan Committee Meeting on July 23rd, in Anchorage where we developed a proposed budget and workplan for submission and approval by the full Board at the September 11 meeting in Cordova.
2. As a new board member of the Alaska Research Consortium (ARC), I've participated in ARC Board meetings (via teleconference) on January 14th, March 5th, and June 19th. I was asked to join this group to provide the perspective of marine research in the Kodiak region towards their mission of "Supporting sustainable fisheries and marine science in the north Pacific."
3. I've been asked to develop and present training of on-line data tools (NOAA ShoreZone and Cook Inlet Response Tool) to Marathon Petroleum on September 16th (? Date not confirmed) and to ADEC Spill Prevention and Response on September 19th. Both on-line tools (NOAA ShoreZone website and AOOS Data Portals) have transitioned to new programing and image serving platforms, so I will be revising what I've used for training in the past.
4. EMC met in Homer on 20 August 2019 where they received a number of presentations by scientists and educators conducting projects in Kachemak Bay and lower Cook Inlet. They approved potential carry-over funds into the EMC workplan and budget.

Public Outreach Report to the Board – April to September 2019

Exhibits

Kenai Peninsula Fair, Industry Appreciation Day and Pacific Marine Expo (in November)

Special Projects

CIRCAC partnered with Marathon Petroleum Corporation on a joint $2500 annual scholarship for students entering the AVTEC Maritime Training Center. AVTEC will administer the scholarship which it intends to award by December of each year.

CIRCAC announced our 2019 Capt. Barry Eldridge (vocational and technical studies) and James Carter (environmental) and Memorial Scholarships: Christopher Knox (Anchorage King Career Technical School—a first), and Nikiski High School graduate Alie Minium (pictured above at left visiting the Kenai Fair booth).

On August 19, the Director of Public Outreach attended and assisted at the EMC meeting in Homer.

e-Newsletters since last board meeting

August – AVTEC Scholarship, CIRCAC Recertified, Ice Cameras upgrade, Board meets in Seldovia, Clean Pacific and Updates from Committees

July – (No newsletter this month)

June – CIRCAC applies for recertification, meet EMC Public Member Dan Urban, CIRCAC participates in two-day drills in May, oil spill data available, Kodiak Chamber announces new Executive Director, calendar of events

May (No Newsletter this month)

April – Update from the Executive Director, CIRCAC announces appointments and elections, CIRCAC names 2019 scholarship recipients, CIRCAC announces 2018 Annual Report

Paid Advertising

Since our last board meeting, we bought two ads with the Alaska Business Monthly to coincide with their oil and gas and environmental issues (June and September).

We revised three radio ads and are rotating those with our other ads through August 18. We are planning to extend our radio ad buy into the fall and creating new ads to promote our scholarships.

We also purchased a print ad with the Peninsula Clarion leading up to Industry Appreciation Day, in addition to previously advertising for ComFish, the Shorebird Festival, Visitor Guides and at the Kenai Airport.

News Releases

08.07.19 – CIRCAC partners with Marathon Petroleum, AVTEC for new scholarship program
08.05.19 – CIRCAC recertified through August 2020
04.22.19 – CIRCAC announces 2019 Scholarship Awards

In the News (Earned Media)

- 08.21.19 – KDLL Radio featured the Executive Director, President of the Board and Director of Public Outreach on their hour-long talk show
- 08.09.19 – CIRCAC recertified (Petroleum News)
- 04.08.19 – Public asked to comment on pipeline infrastructure efforts, Peninsula Clarion
- 05.26.19 – Critics say state attempts to expand drilling waste that can be released in Cook Inlet, Anchorage Daily News
- 05.22.19 – State agencies at odds over new law to address “orphan” oil wells, Alaska Public Media

PROPS Staff Report

Harbor Safety Plan Workgroup

The annual review of the Harbor Safety Plan (HSP) began on March 25 of 2019 and ended April 24. The HSP workgroup received three recommendations for changes. Comments to add information about Port MacKenzie were provided by the MatSu Borough representative and there was a request to add contact information for all response vessels operating in Cook Inlet. These changes will be presented at the next Harbor Safety Committee meeting for approval to be included in the HSP.

Alaska Inland and Arctic and Western Alaska Area Plan Committee Meeting

Staff attended the Arctic and Western Alaska Area Plan Committee meeting hosted by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Fairbanks. This was the first meeting held for the Inland Plan committee in the transition to the Area Plan construct. The new Arctic & Western Alaska (AWA) Area Plan format was introduced along with the Inland Area Plan at this one-day introduction for committee members. U.S. Coast Guard and EPA personnel explained the new format, what types of information will be kept in the two documents, and why the change is being done. This meeting focused more on the Inland plan and introduced Inland Plan members to the work that has been done within the Western Alaska Plan. Staff will continue to attend all committee meetings to provide CIRCAC's expertise and voice in the development of the new document.

Additionally, staff is a participant in the AWA Geographic Response Strategy workgroup, the AWA external communications workgroup, and the Exercise and Training Subcommittee.

Alaska Regional Response Team Meeting

Staff attended the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) meeting hosted in Fairbanks. Staff heard presentations on Alaska Tribal Governments and Tribal Organizations along with a review of actions since the last meeting, Statewide Planning Committee update, Discussions regarding the ARRT and its committees, Area Committee reports and a presentation on the State-of–the Science of Dispersants and Dispersed Oil in the U.S. Arctic Waters.

Mr. Doug Helton, of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), presented on the findings final report on the State-of-the-Science of Dispersants and Dispersed Oil (DDO) in U.S. Arctic Waters. He noted that there are differences in ecosystem and areas of potential dispersant use in the Arctic. He also spoke on the findings of the risks to workers, the public, and subsistence users – particularly the difficulty in attributing symptoms to the DDO versus general work stress and the lack of data. He also highlighted that there has been very little research on food safety, particularly in regards to the very high consumption rates of local populations in the Arctic.

Clean Pacific Conference

Staff, CIRCAC Board, and Committee members attended the 2019 Clean Pacific Oil Spill prevention and response conference hosted in Vancouver, B.C. This three-day event consisted of various technical presentations by subject matter experts and panel discussions. CIRCAC staff presented information regarding CIRCAC's history and the development of projects that required partnerships and collaborations. The presentation focused on the "Public" component to oils spill prevention and our successes at partnerships with industry and agencies using the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA90) as our guide.

Pipeline Inventory and Infrastructure Study

This ongoing study sought to assemble a comprehensive pipeline inventory that focused on regulated crude oil pipelines in and around Cook Inlet, to identify agency jurisdiction, pipeline conditions, inspection and maintenance protocols, and monitoring parameters. This CIRCAC project was a partnership of Federal and State regulators working with industry to discuss pipeline systems, the preventative maintenance protocols in practice, how pipeline conditions are monitored and maintained, and the leak detection systems used and their maintenance. The facts and details were disclosed individually and privately, between project staff, regulators, and industry with an emphasis on obtaining facts and details about the pipelines without apprehension or concern of penalty. The study culminated in a two-day event beginning with a public meeting on the first day where staff presented CIRCAC's role in pipeline oversight. The second day consisted of private meetings facilitated by using an expert panel to conduct open and frank discussions with each pipeline operator to learn everything they could regarding pipeline system construction, operation, maintenance, and overall integrity. The expert panel was then tasked to compile a final report concluding with recommendations for risk reduction measures to carry forward. The report is pending completion.

Ice Monitoring Cameras

Staff has been working to update and expand the Ice Monitoring Camera Network (previously the Ice Forecasting Network).

Work on the cameras on the Middle Ground Shoals (MGS) "A" platform and the Granite Point Platform had been contracted and has been completed. The MGS "A" platform has two cameras onboard, one of which has been having issues for two years and the second camera has just recently had some issues, prompting replacement of both cameras. The Granite Point platform camera displayed corrosion issues that required camera replacement and is now completed. Our contractor will also accomplish a new camera installation on the Tyonek platform and is in progress, completion is contingent on the platform's renovation work in the area of the camera site. All replacement cameras have included the use of electrical current isolation kits in an effort to eliminate corrosion cause by induced current.

CIRCAC's technical support for the cameras has been the same I.T. contractor we use for in house computer support. Our contractor has developed an evergreen operation and maintenance manual for the camera system to be used by future system support contractors and staff. This manual is being developed to provide future personnel with background and technical information about the systems' development and operational components. It should provide all technical details about the system's components, development parameters, and logic.

Geographic Resource Inventory Database (GRID)

The GRID project is moving forward nicely. We have completed Phase One of the project. In this phase, data was collected for many Cook Inlet Communities. We have held a workshop to test the program and identify areas for improvement. Now the GRID program is scheduled for testing at the Marathon tabletop drill exercise to be conducted in October.

Staff and our primary contractor will conduct training for the IMT groups that are targeted to use GRID prior to the drill exercise. Our contractor provided drill injects to thoroughly exercise the software within the drill scenario in an effort to tax the program and the users.

GRS development

Staff has begun work to develop GRS's for stream crossings along the truck route used by the tank trucks carrying crude oil from the BlueCrest Cosmopolitan facitlity. Staff has begun the preliminary work with our contractor to develop a scope of work, timeline, and a work plan and a budget, that will include participation by ADEC, EPA, USCG and BlueCrest Energy to ensure a comprehensive approach to the finished product. The scope of work will include evaluation and prioritization of each stream crossing along the truck route followed by development of response strategies for each crossing that qualifies for a GRS. Once the sites are identified and strategies refined the "new" GRS sites will be forwarded to the Area Committee's GRS workgroup for inclusion in the GRS catalog. After the sites are evaluated by the GRS workgroup they will be in line to be tested by actually deploying the GRS. As each GRS is deployed, refinements will be made to the strategies, personnel, equipment used, and possibly site location to ensure the GRS adequaltely protects the resources it is intended to safeguard.

Drill Planning

Tesoro/Andeavor/Marathon

Staff participated in the drill planning for a tabletop exercise scheduled for October that has a deployment component for the Sea Otter Rehabilitation Center (SORC) in Seldovia scheduled in August. The drill scenario focuses on a worse case discharge of a stricken tanker within Cook Inlet that had lost propulsion and ran aground spilling approximately 210,000 bbls of crude. To facilitate the drill design certain elements were considered out of play. One such element was tanker self-arrest. In order to better serve the drill scenario in the geographic area selected it was necessary to allow the tanker to go aground. The drill design and planning team followed the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidelines. HSEEP provides a set of guiding principles for exercise programs, as well as a common approach to exercise program management, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. Marathon follows the HSEEP guidelines to design, manage, and assist drill/exercises to comply with the requirements of the National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (NPREP) and the requirements to test the State required Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (ODPCP). Other members of the drill design team included representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the CIRCAC Alaska Native Group representative, and Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response Inc.

Drills/ Deployments

Glacier Oil and Gas

Staff was unable to attend this annual drill. However, we were represented by a qualified observer/evaluator to participate at the drill exercise. The drill evaluation was positive and confirmed the exercise demonstrated the plan holders ability and capacity to respond to the scenario provided for the drill and to fulfil their contingency plan requirements.

Protocol Control Committee Staff Report

Since our last Council meeting the Protocol Control Committee has reviewed and commented on the:

Review and/or Approval of Comments Regarding the Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Draft Permit

Our comments noted that under EPA's Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELG), zero discharge is the national standard for produced water in coastal waters. This includes all coastal waters in Alaska, except in Cook Inlet where oil and gas facilities are provided an exemption allowing the discharge of produced water and drilling wastes. Further, noting that ADEC has relied on this exemption in developing the draft Osprey Individual Permit (IP) and in proposing new produced water discharge coverage. We pointed out that it is our belief that it is ADEC's responsibility to the citizens of Alaska to ensure that EPA conducts a reanalysis of the Cook Inlet exemption for the coastal subcategory in their Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELGs). In their last reanalysis of the Cook Inlet exemption, EPA noted that "*efforts are underway to decrease the amount of produced water that needs onshore transfers, such as through injection pilot tests at several extraction platforms. Therefore, even these discharges of produced waters are of a declining nature. Because of this, based on its review, no additional review or action is appropriate at this time.*" We now know this to be untrue and asserted that the ADEC must insist on a reanalysis based on true conditions. Our comments went on to say that in response to our request to extend the public review comment period for the Osprey IP (along with the draft General Permit-GP), ADEC "elected to stay on the current public notice schedules." This was despite strong justifications by CIRCAC (and others) that the scope of the draft GP and the overlap of its review with two additional Cook Inlet Individual Permit reviews complicated the review process.

Approval of Comments Regarding (Andeavor / Marathon) Cook Inlet Vessel Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan

Our comments noted our appreciation for the number of improvements to the Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (ODPCP) incorporated over time, based on input from CIRCAC and others. We also noted our appreciation for CISPRI making their Technical Manual available. The Andeavor, ODPCP is well-written and thorough. As this contingency plan review was performed for a plan renewal, all sections of the plan were reviewed.

Other areas we commented on were:

- Reporting notifications - Clarify spill notification requirements regarding the vessel master's responsibilities
- External Notification Procedures - Updated contact information
- Response Scenario- More challenging scenarios – more comprehensive vessel master checklist – oil recovery estimates include nearshore systems
- Non-mechanical Response Information - description of the personnel, resources, and methods that will be used to monitor for environmental effects during dispersant use or in-situ burning.
- Bibliography - update referenced documents in the bibliography to include both the Arctic and Western Alaska Area Contingency Plan (ACP) and the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan (RCP).

Administration Report
Cook Inlet RCAC Board of Directors Meeting – September 6, 2019

Below you will find a brief update on the primary administrative tasks performed – or assistance provided – by your Administrative staff since the April 2019 Board of Directors meeting:

Recertification Application – CIRCAC submitted its application on June 24, and the Coast Guard District 17 received it on the 26th. The application has been reviewed by personnel, and on July 31 Rear Admiral Bell approved our application. CIRCAC has been recertified for the period September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020. This represents the 28th consecutive recertification without exceptions, conditions or findings.

Annual Financial Audit/Federal Tax – Lambe Tuter & Associates performed the field audit in early May. They concluded the audit in July and presented the findings to CIRCAC's Executive and Audit Committees on August 6. There were no exceptions or findings. Executive Director Munger praised Accounting and Grants Manager Vaito'a Heaven for leading our audit preparation. The Council's 2018 tax return has been signed and filed.

Board Elections/Appointments – The seats on the Council Board of Directors which terms are scheduled to expire in April 2020 are: Environmental, Alaska Native, Kodiak Island Borough and Kenai Peninsula Borough. The process for launching the elections and appointments begins in mid-November.

Grants – CIRCAC renewed its System for Awards Management (SAM) registration, and has updated our 'roles' in the ASAP and TAG grant systems we are active in. Vaito'a has undergone extensive training, and continues to take training modules.

Budgets – Development of the 2020 Operating and program budgets is underway.

Scholarships – The committee selected Alie Minium (Nikiski High School) as the recipient of the James Carter Scholarship for Environmental Science, and Christopher Knox (King Technical High School-Anchorage) to receive the Captain Barry Eldridge Scholarship for Maritime Studies. These are the first awards to students from either school. The awards have been paid to their respective schools.

Corporate Funding – All funding obligations to date for 2019 have been met.

By-Laws and Policies – As per Policy and Board direction, staff is engaged in an ongoing review of policies for necessary changes.

Continuity of Operations Plan – A draft Continuity of Operations Plan has been developed for CIRCAC. It is intended as a guide for staff in the event of a natural or man-made disaster potentially affecting CIRCAC operations, personnel and volunteers.

Organizational Support – Administrative staff participates with the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee and Kenai Peninsula's Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) as an Alternate Member (supporting Vinnie Catalano in the Primary role on both).

Support – Administrative staff supported directors, public members, staff and guests in logistics for meetings and travel, including but not limited to the Seldovia board meeting; Executive, Audit, PROPS, Protocol and EMC committee meetings; Clean Pacific Conference (Vancouver), Clean Gulf Conference (New Orleans) and others.

September 2019

September 2019

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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October 2019

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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sep 1	2 Labor Day - Office Closed	3	4	5	6 Board Meeting - Seldovia	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 8:00am Payday	14
15	16 CIRT, SZ, GRID Training Marathon	17 Western States Harbor Safety (Long Beach, CA)	18	19 12:30pm SZ, CIRT Training ADEC (Anchorage)	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 8:00am Payday	28
29	30	Oct 1	2	3	4	5

October 2019

October 2019

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November 2019

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sep 29	30	Oct 1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 8:00am Payday	12
13	14 Indigenous Peoples/Columbus/Explorers Day - Office Closed	15	16 Bosses Day	17	18 Alaska Day - Alaska Holiday	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 8:00am Payday	26
27	28 Clean Gulf (New Orleans)	29	30	31	Nov 1	2

November 2019

November 2019

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December 2019

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29	30	31				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Oct 27	28	29	30	31	Nov 1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 8:00am Payday	9
10	11 Veterans Day - Office Closed	12	13 Pac States/BC OSTF Annual Mtg. - Bellingham	14 Salish Sea Shared Waters Forum (Bellingham, WA)	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Pacific Marine Expo (Seattle)	22 8:00am Payday	23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving - Office Closed	29	30