



May 24, 2017

Rear Admiral Michael F. McAllister
Commander – 17th Coast Guard District
United States Coast Guard
709 W. 9th Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Attn: Lt. Jonathan Dale

Reference Docket #: USCG-2017-0289

It is my pleasure to write in support of recertification of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC). CIRCAC has been Cook Inlet's most effective organization for promoting programs to prevent spills, enhance safety in both marine transportation and oil facilities operations, and protect Cook Inlet's waters, shorelines, cultural, natural and wildlife resources.

No other organization has focused as much attention for as many years to identifying, assessing and mitigating risks in this region. Not only does CIRCAC advocate for better regulatory oversight and safety measures, they contribute concrete solutions on how to achieve those goals, including conducting risk assessments, sharing data, developing applicable tools and strategies, evaluate best available technology, public engagement, and thoroughly review contingency plans and regulations that prioritize prevention while promoting safety.

CIRCAC has been proactive in identifying risks and concrete recommendations to address them. Before the series of recent leaks in Cook Inlet, CIRCAC was already in the process of updating its 2000 subsea pipeline report and is now actively participating in scoping out a pipeline risk assessment with federal and state agency partners. CIRCAC also prompted the State to review policies and procedures in conducting oil spill response. Throughout all the incidents, CIRCAC was heavily involved in monitoring and providing resources. We were an active participant in the Unified Command for the Platform Anna spill providing local knowledge and expertise to influence the response. CIRCAC also served as a subject matter expert in the environmental monitoring plan following the Platform A gas line leak and participated in overflights to monitor impacts.

CIRCAC continues to strengthen oil spill contingency plans and recommend substantive changes to ensure facilities are adequately staffed and that the plans are executable.

CIRCAC has initiated a scholarship program to encourage the next generation of stewards committed to protecting and learning about Cook Inlet.

CIRCAC is expanding public awareness of Cook Inlet through opening the Tourism Stakeholder Group to include other vested interests in Cook Inlet, including tourism marketing councils, regional chambers of commerce, and other travel and tourism related industry representation.