

June 30, 2014

Rear Admiral Daniel B. Abel
Commander, 17th Coast Guard District
United States Coast Guard
c/o Docket Management Facility (M-30)
U.S. Department of Transportation
West Building Ground Floor
Room W12-140
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590-0001
Re: USCG-2014-0414; Cook Inlet RCAC Recertification
Dear Admiral:

I write in support of Cook Inlet RCAC's recertification as both a board member representing Alaska Native Organizations, and as a member of the Cook Inlet Risk Assessment Advisory Panel.

I have been impressed with Cook Inlet RCAC's management of the navigational Risk Assessment Project. Once completed, this will represent the first comprehensive risk assessment for the Cook Inlet region. I consider this an enormous accomplishment. Cook Inlet RCAC was instrumental in launching the project and securing funding. Under the Council's steady management, the risk assessment is now nearing completion.

As a board member representing Alaska Native Organizations, I believe Cook Inlet RCAC has done an excellent job in promoting environmentally safe operations and marine transportation in Cook Inlet. As a member of the Prevention, Response, Operations and Safety Committee, I am learning a great deal about how these operations work and have a role in monitoring industry's spill response efforts. As a member of the Environmental Monitoring Committee, I am involved in committee work being done to determine whether oil industry operations are causing adverse impacts to Cook Inlet's ecosystem, which is of particular interest to my stakeholders. I urge you to recertify CIRCAC as the citizens' advisory group for Cook Inlet and appreciate having this opportunity to comment.
Sincerely,

Michael Opheim
Representing Alaska Native Organizations