

Kodiak, Alaska
July 8, 2014

Rear Admiral Daniel B. Abel
Commander, 17th Coast Guard District, USCG
c/o Docket Management Facility (M-30) US. Dept. 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

I have been a member of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizen's Advisory Council, representing the Kodiak Island Borough, for several years now. During that time, I have been impressed with the professionalism of the staff and the dedication of the other members of the Council. I am happy to recommend Cook Inlet RCAC for recertification without reservation.

The relationship between the staff of the Cook Inlet RCAC and the Alaska Petroleum Industry is quite positive. Staff has arranged opportunities for Council members to become familiar with various petroleum operations including: a day long visit to the Drift River facility, a visit to the Operations Center for the Alyeska Pipeline and a planned fly in visit to a drill platform in Cook Inlet.

In December 2013 the Shell drill rig Kulluk broke free from tow vessels and grounded on the south east coast of Kodiak at Sitkalidak Island. The citizenry of the Kodiak Island Borough, where fisheries are economically most important, were particularly worried about potential oil spills from the vessel as the winter weather conditions went from bad to worse. The Staff of Cook Inlet RCAC coordinated with Shell, the Coast Guard and the community to facilitate communication of information regarding the event, helping to ease concerns.

Plans are developing for a plant to Liquefy Natural Gas in Cook Inlet for shipment of Alaskan natural gas to Asian Cities, with completion some years out. Projections include a large LNG vessel transiting the Shelikof Strait every day. Such traffic will pose a significant change for Kodiak fishermen working in the Shelikof. Keeping the Council, and the organizations they represent apprised of such developing plans is an important responsibility for Cook Inlet RCAC.

Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council is doing an excellent job and should definitely be recertified. The Staff is professional and dedicated to developing a robust understanding of Cook Inlet while helping to maintain it and its surrounding environs. The group's scientific program is first class, addressing important questions as enumerated on their web site. If I can be of any assistance in your deliberations please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dr. Scott Smiley
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