



United Cook Inlet Drift Association

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Date: June 24, 2020

Addressee: Matthew T. Bell, Jr.
Rear Admiral
United States Coast Guard
Commander 17th Coast Guard District

Re: CIRCAC Reauthorization

Admiral Bell:

United Cook Inlet Drift Association (UCIDA) represents 585 commercial salmon drift gillnet permit holders in the Upper Cook Inlet area of Alaska. Please accept these comments on behalf of UCIDA in support of the reauthorization of Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC).

UCIDA is writing in full support of recertification of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council. For 30 years, 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. Cook Inlet Commercial Fishermen rely on clean water to keep our salmon healthy and sustainable for future generations.

CIRCAC has been proactive in identifying risks and developing recommendations to address them; an example is the recently completed Cook Inlet Pipeline Integrity Assessment. Through this project, a full catalog of Cook Inlet's undersea pipeline system was documented allowing a panel of experts, operators and the public to recommend risk reduction measures before problems arise.

Working with industry, CIRCAC has also been able to achieve the long-term goal of closing the Drift River Oil Terminal on the West side of Cook Inlet. Situated at the base of Mt. Redoubt, Drift River posed a significant safety

hazard in the event of a natural disaster. Now, that oil is transported via pipeline, greatly reducing unnecessary risk.

CIRCAC's science program provides valuable data about coastal habitats, physical oceanography and oil behavior. Current research will generate new information about how biological debris interacts with oil as it moves through the water column.

CIRCAC's accomplishments in the last three years include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Completing multi-year near-shore habitat assessment
- Launching groundbreaking study of marine snow as an oil transporter
- Advocating for a strengthening of oil spill prevention and response regulations
- Increasing public outreach efforts through new, local advertising, exhibits and expanding audiences for its newsletter, website, and social media
- Expanding Geographic Response Information Database (GRID) in scope and accessibility
- Working with regulators to maintain a robust Vessels of Opportunity program
- Upgrading the Cook Inlet Ice Monitoring Camera Network with modern video technology

Since its inception, CIRCAC has formed and strengthened partnerships and encouraged consensus decision-making. Through this process, CIRCAC brings a varied group of stakeholders together to create environmental monitoring and oil spill prevention programs to promote safe production and transportation of oil in Cook Inlet.

I strongly urge the U.S. Coast Guard to recertify CIRCAC so that it can continue to build on its work and positively impact the future of Cook Inlet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

David Martin, President
United Cook Inlet Drift Association