



*"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."*

## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kenai, Alaska

Contact: Lynda Giguere, Director of Public Outreach (907) 398-6205

### **Cook Inlet RCAC wants Regional Stakeholder Committee for Kulluk Tow Incident**

The Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (Cook Inlet RCAC) has recommended that the Unified Command of the Kulluk Tow Incident activate a Regional Stakeholder Committee as part of the Incident Command System (ICS) to promote the sharing of information and expertise between stakeholders and emergency responders.

A Regional Stakeholder Committee (RSC) is a primary component of the Kodiak Sub-Area Contingency Plan, which recommends activating RSCs for significant incidents. Membership of the RSC depends on where the incident is located and the interests or jurisdictions of affected communities, landowners, and special interest groups. Cook Inlet RCAC already has a presence in both the Kodiak and Anchorage Incident Command centers. Activating the RSC will ensure that a direct conduit is established between the region's stakeholders and the Unified Command to express their overall concerns and share expertise, as well as comments and recommendations on incident priorities, objectives and action plans directly to the Unified Command.

"Activating a Regional Stakeholder Committee to include people and organizations that are most knowledgeable and vested in the region will only serve to strengthen the response," said Cook Inlet RCAC Executive Director Mike Munger.

In addition to actively monitoring the incident, Cook Inlet RCAC is placing all its planning and response tools at Incident Command's disposal. For example, the Cook Inlet Response Tool or CIRT, which was launched today through the Alaska Ocean Observing System, has already been made available to the Unified Command. CIRT provides high resolution imagery and full-streaming video, along with weather and oceanographic sensors for the Kodiak Island area, as well as the entire Cook Inlet Region.

CIRT joins a growing number of Cook Inlet RCAC projects that are already integral to emergency response agencies, such as Geographic Response Strategies, Priority Places of Refuge and the Cook Inlet ice forecasting system. Cook Inlet RCAC initiated the Alaska ShoreZone coastal mapping project in 2001, and completed surveys and mapping of the entire Kodiak Island archipelago's shorelines in 2005. The ShoreZone program is now a state-wide initiative involving over 30 local, state, and federal agencies.

Cook Inlet RCAC is a Federally-mandated citizens' organization, formed under the Federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA90) whose mission is to represent the citizens of Cook Inlet in promoting environmentally safe marine transportation and oil facility operations in Cook Inlet. In pursuing this mandate, the Council strives to help protect the environment, fisheries, economic vitality, and recreational interests of Cook Inlet through engaging in environmental research and monitoring, oil spill prevention and contingency planning.

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*Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council \* 8195 Kenai Spur Hwy, Kenai, AK 99611-8033  
Phone: (907) 283-7222 \* Fax (907) 283-6102*

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