



Update from the Board of Directors
Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council

Grace Merkes, representing the Kenai Peninsula Borough

The Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council Annual and Board of Directors meeting was held virtually on April 9th, 2021. Remote meetings continue as a precaution to protect the health and safety of CIRCAC Directors and staff.

Representatives from Hilcorp provided an update on the natural gas pipeline leak that was identified on April 1st. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) was notified that same day. The product being released was processed dry natural gas, containing more than 98 percent methane. The leak occurred between Hilcorp-owned Platform A and the Nikiski shore facility. The pipeline provides fuel gas to Platform A and Platform C. The pipeline has since been shut in and an investigation into the cause of the leak is ongoing. This same pipeline experienced a leak in 2017. The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) has issued a corrective order that the pipeline be replaced within one year. CIRCAC will continue to monitor the progress of both the investigation into the leak and the planning process for the pipeline's replacement.

We also received an update from ADEC Commissioner Jason Brune. Funding levels for the state's Division of Spill and Response (SPAR) remain a concern. We support calls for an increase to the state's motor fuel tax to more appropriately maintain SPAR funding levels and also call on the administration and legislature to ensure the department is adequately staffed to respond to potential spills and provide necessary oversight of contingency plans. An adequate and experienced staff is critical in protecting against potential threats to public and environmental health and protecting the safety of Cook Inlet's resources.

During our annual meeting, we recognized the service of Cindy Sanguinetti, our transcriptionist, who has been with the organization since 1991. We thank her for her exemplary work and dedication to the mission of CIRCAC. We also elected new officers and recognized individuals for their contributions to the organization over the years.

Our next meeting is scheduled for September and its location will be determined at a later date.