

# Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

*Our mission: Citizens promoting the environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers*



**Who we are** The Council is a voice for the people, communities, and interest groups in the region oiled by the Exxon Valdez spill. Those with the most to lose from oil pollution must have a voice in the decisions that can put their livelihoods and communities at risk.

## Why we exist

### ***The Exxon Valdez oil spill***

March 24, 1989: The Exxon Valdez ran aground on Bligh Reef spilling an estimated 11 million gallons of North Slope crude oil into Prince William Sound, Alaska.

1,300 miles of Alaska shoreline was impacted, extending 470 miles from Prince William Sound into lower Cook Inlet, the Alaska Peninsula, all the way to the Kodiak archipelago.

- Estimated death toll for wildlife: 250,000 seabirds, 2,800 sea otters, 300 harbor seals, 250 bald eagles, up to 22 killer whales, and billions of salmon and herring eggs.<sup>1</sup>
- The people and economies of communities in the oil spill region suffered in the months and years following the spill. Commercial fishing, subsistence and tourism were especially affected.



### **Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90):**

After the Exxon Valdez spill, the U.S. Congress enacted OPA 90. This law mandated independent, non-profit, citizen oversight councils for Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet. Congress found that complacency on the part of industry and the government was a contributing factor to the spill.

## The Council's role

Defined by OPA 90 as an advisory council to combat the complacency that led to the Exxon Valdez spill by fostering partnerships among the oil industry, government, and local communities in addressing environmental concerns. Today the Council, regulators, industry, and the affected communities continue to work together to help prevent future oil spills and be prepared to respond should prevention measures fail.

## Our research

The Council's advice depends on quality research and accurate science about oil transportation safety and the environmental impacts of the Valdez Marine Terminal and tankers, as well as local knowledge and expertise.

The Council regularly retains experts in various fields to conduct independent research on issues related to oil transportation safety and performs a variety of functions aimed at reducing pollution from crude-oil transportation activities in and through Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska.

*A voice for citizens: [www.pwsrcac.org](http://www.pwsrcac.org)*

<sup>1</sup>Oil Spill Facts, Questions and Answers. [www.evostc.state.ak.us/facts/qanda.cfm](http://www.evostc.state.ak.us/facts/qanda.cfm). Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council. 26 July 2011.



### Board of Directors

The Council's Board of Directors represent communities and interest groups that were affected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

- Alaska State Chamber of Commerce
- Chugach Alaska Corporation
- City of Cordova
- City of Homer
- City of Kodiak
- City of Seldovia
- City of Seward
- City of Valdez
- City of Whittier
- Community of Chenega
- Community of Tatitlek
- Cordova District Fishermen United
- Kenai Peninsula Borough
- Kodiak Island Borough
- Kodiak Village Mayors Association
- Oil Spill Region Environmental Coalition
- Oil Spill Region Recreational Coalition
- Port Graham Corporation
- Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp.

### Advisory Committees

While the strategic direction of the Council's work is set by the Board, much of the Council's work is done through permanent volunteer committees made up of Board members, technical experts, and local citizens with an interest in making oil transportation safer in Alaska. A professional staff manage day-to-day operations, manage projects, and support the Board and committees in their work.

The Council's technical committees include:

- Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring
- Oil Spill Prevention and Response
- Port Operations and Vessel Traffic System
- Scientific Advisory
- Information and Education

