

Regional Citizens' Advisory Council / "Citizens promoting environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers."

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MEMBERS

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 Bay

Community of
Tatitlek

Cordova District
Fishermen United

Kenai Peninsula
Borough

Kodiak Island
Borough

Kodiak Village Mayors
Association

Oil Spill Region
Environmental
Coalition

Port Graham
Corporation

Prince William Sound
Aquaculture
Corporation

April 6, 2017

Re: Support for HB177

Dear Members of the House Resources Committee:

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (Council) is an independent non-profit corporation whose mission is to monitor and promote environmentally safe operation of the Valdez Marine Terminal and associated oil tankers transporting oil from the terminal through Prince William Sound. We are writing to you to express our strong support for HB177, which would create a rapid response plan for threats from invasive species.

The Council's work is guided by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 and its contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. The Council's 18 member organizations span the entire Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS) region and encompass communities, commercial fishing, aquaculture, Native, recreation, tourism and environmental groups.

The Council's membership is comprised of Alaskans from communities that were directly and adversely affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill as follows:

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

During the Council's work over the past 27 years in partnership with industry and regulators, we have dealt with many issues involving oil tankers operating in Prince William Sound, including their discharge of ballast water. Over that time, we have monitored and advocated for measures to address the increasing threat from invasive species entering Alaskan waters, particularly through the vector of oil tanker ballast water discharged into Prince William Sound. Ballast water discharge and hull fouling are two of the many manners in which invasive species threaten Alaska.

In addition to supporting HB177, in the past the Council has supported the

formation of a statewide invasive species coordinating council. Alaska currently does not have an invasive species council while British Columbia and all other west coast states have councils focusing on preventing and responding to the spread of invasive species.

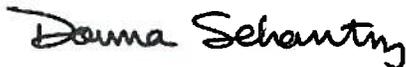
We think that state agencies such as the Alaska Department of Fish and Game have knowledgeable personnel who can make a major positive contribution toward reducing the threat and responding to the arrival of invasive species. However, these agencies need access to resources in order to adequately respond to potential invasions as well as a comprehensive plan to ensure a timely and organized response.

Having monitored the threat of invasive species and recognizing the risk to the health of marine resources that residents of our region depend upon for subsistence, food, and their living, the Council strongly supports HB177, which would create a rapid response plan and fund response to threats from invasive species.

The potential financial harm to our region's subsistence, fishing, and tourism industries is significant, and the creation of an emergency response plan appears to require only a modest investment. HB177 would help Alaska take necessary steps to address the threats from invasive species.

We have provided several links/references below that give additional information on the various risks associated with invasive species in Alaska. Thank you for your consideration of our views. Please let us know if we can provide you with more information.

Sincerely,



Donna Schantz
Executive Director

[NOAA's "Invasive Impact: What's the Status of Invasive Species in Alaska?"](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/06/06_24_15invasive_species_in_alaska.html)
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/06/06_24_15invasive_species_in_alaska.html

[University of Alaska Anchorage Institute of Social and Economic Research's "Managing Invasive Species: How Much Do We Spend?"](http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/2012_07-InvasiveSpecies.pdf)
http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/2012_07-InvasiveSpecies.pdf

[NOAA's "What are Aquatic Invasive Species?"](http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/pdf/best_management_practices/fact_sheets/Aquatic%20Invasive%20Species%20Overview.pdf)
http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/pdf/best_management_practices/fact_sheets/Aquatic%20Invasive%20Species%20Overview.pdf

[Alaska SeaLife Center's "Final Report to the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council Marine Invasive Species Program"](http://www.pwsrccac.org/wp-content/uploads/filebase/programs/nis/2012%20Economic%20Impacts%20of%20Marine%20Invasive%20Species(2).pdf)
[http://www.pwsrccac.org/wp-content/uploads/filebase/programs/nis/2012%20Economic%20Impacts%20of%20Marine%20Invasive%20Species\(2\).pdf](http://www.pwsrccac.org/wp-content/uploads/filebase/programs/nis/2012%20Economic%20Impacts%20of%20Marine%20Invasive%20Species(2).pdf)