



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

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MEMBERS January 19, 2009

Alaska State
Chamber of
Commerce

Alaska Wilderness
Recreation & Tourism
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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

Prince William Sound
Aquaculture
Corporation

Honorable Sarah Palin
Governor of the State of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Palin:

Recently Representative Johnson introduced HB 12, "An Act establishing the Alaska Council on Invasive Species in the Department of Fish and Game." We feel this legislation is critical in helping to help protect our precious Alaska environments and economies from the threat of invasion by harmful non-indigenous organisms. Our support for this bill follows a letter we sent to you in November urging you to support the concept of an Alaska Invasive Species Council.

I am writing on behalf of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) which is an independent non-profit corporation whose mission is to promote environmentally safe operation of the Valdez Marine Terminal and associated tankers. Our work is guided by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, and our contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. PWSRCAC's 18 member organizations are communities in the region affected by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, as well as commercial fishing, aquaculture, Native, recreation, tourism and environmental groups.

We care about HB12 because of our experience and knowledge of invasive species issues. Invasion by non-indigenous aquatic species into Alaska waters, particularly Prince William Sound, is a serious and growing concern as huge volumes of oil-tanker ballast water containing such species continue to be discharged into the Sound. In partnership with governmental agencies and industry, we have supported invasive species research several years. PWSRCAC has also held a seat on the national Invasive Species Advisory Committee for over a decade now.

Thus it is that we see a state-wide council as critical to combating harmful invasive species. The purpose of the council would be to provide a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach for addressing the potential risks of harmful invasive organisms and agents throughout the state and to work toward preventing the future introduction of other new invasive organisms and agents to the state.

One only has to look at the rest of the United States to see the huge amounts of effort and money that has already been spent on harmful invasions. The prime example of this is in the Great Lakes region. The invasive zebra mussel

has virtually taken over the Great Lakes. Damage to water pipes, boat hulls, and other hard surfaces by zebra mussels in the Great Lakes is estimated at \$5 billion. We believe that the money spent on proactive coordination and planning through a state council will be minimal compared to dealing with the economic and environmental fallout from harmful invasions. We urge you to support HB12.

Sincerely,



John S. Devens, Ph.D.
Executive Director