

# ALASKA RESOURCE REVIEW

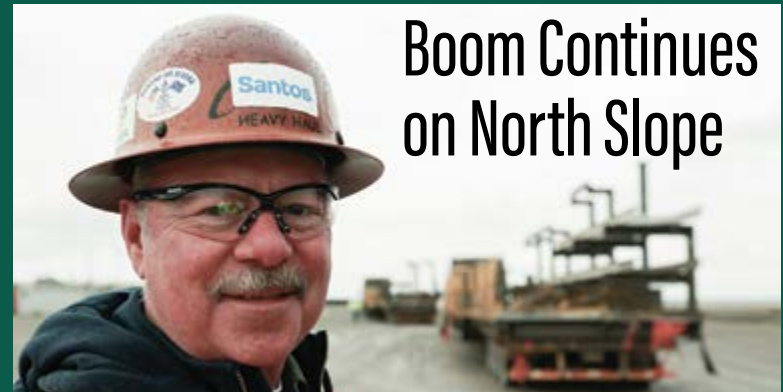


RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development



## ROUGH SEAS AHEAD

How Alaska's Fisheries Tackle The Challenge



Boom Continues  
on North Slope

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- New Battle Over NPR-A, D-1 Lands
- Complete Convention 2024 Details
- Rough Road for Haul Road Drivers
- New Milestones for Alaska Miners

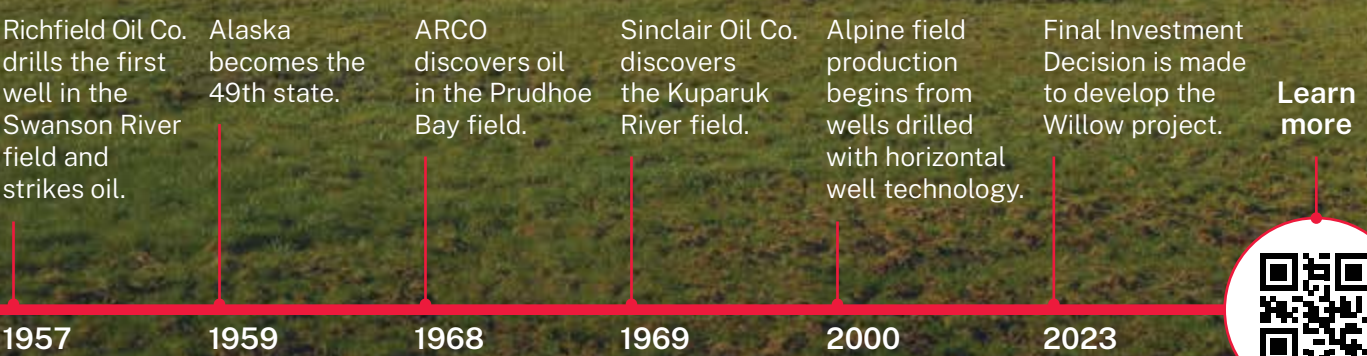
# Committed to Alaska for more than 50 years.

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Western North Slope, Alaska



Year	Event
1957	Richfield Oil Co. drills the first well in the Swanson River field and strikes oil.
1959	Alaska becomes the 49th state.
1968	ARCO discovers oil in the Prudhoe Bay field.
1969	Sinclair Oil Co. discovers the Kuparuk River field.
2000	Alpine field production begins from wells drilled with horizontal well technology.
2023	Final Investment Decision is made to develop the Willow project.

Learn more







“Let’s harness the momentum of this season to drive forward our projects, engage with stakeholders, and advocate for policies that align with our vision of sustainable natural resource development.”

— *Leila Kimbrell, Executive Director, RDC*

# WE MUST REMAIN PROACTIVE TO SPREAD OUR MESSAGE

**D**EAR RDC MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS, As we welcome the changing seasons, I reflect not only on the beauty and renewal that our Alaskan fall brings, but also on the significant challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in our work of promoting responsible natural resource development.

This time of year serves as a reminder of the cycles of nature — of growth and of regeneration. Just as the landscape transforms around us, so too must we continue to adapt our strategies to align with the evolving environment we operate within. In this category, Alaskans have a proud history of responsible resource development.

With the arrival of fall, we often think about the fruits of our labor — the tangible results of our efforts in managing and developing our natural resources.

This past year has been marked by remarkable achievements throughout all our industries, thanks to your hard work, commitment, and innovation. But even with that commitment to responsible resource development and innovation, some of our industries, particularly our fishing industries, saw challenges. Notwithstanding those challenges, we have made significant strides in promoting sustainable practices, embracing new technologies, collaborating with local communities, and advancing projects that respect both ecological integrity and economic viability.

With the changing seasons, we can expect other changes this year as well: Election season! As we approach the November elections, we must recognize that our environment, and the policies governing natural resource development

in Alaska, are also in a state of flux. The decisions made by our elected leaders will shape the future of our initiatives. It is our responsibility to remain engaged, to advocate for sound policies, and to ensure that the voices of those who depend on our resources are heard.

During this election season, I encourage each of you to be informed and involved. Participate in discussions, engage with your communities, and advocate for the principles of sustainability and responsible stewardship that are inherent to our Alaskan way of life. Let’s not only ensure that our work continues to thrive, but also influence the broader policy landscape to support long-term environmental health and responsible resource development.

As the days grow shorter, the air turns crisp, and we see the snow come down further on the mountains, I also want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude. Each of you plays an integral role in our success. Your dedication is the cornerstone of our achievements. Let’s use this season of reflection and change to not only celebrate our accomplishments, but also to set new goals for the coming year.

Looking beyond the November elections, I’m excited to see many of you at our 45th annual Alaska Resources Conference.

I hope you plan to join us Nov. 12-14 in Anchorage this year!

We have an exciting agenda planned to provide timely updates on new opportunities, projects, and prospects, to address key state and federal public policy issues, and to feature the latest forecasts and updates on Alaska’s resource development industries.

With nearly 1,000 registered last year, attendees included decision-makers from across all resource industries, support sectors, organized labor, Alaska Native corporations, federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as educators and students. As you read this edition of our Alaska Resource Review, you’ll see more updates about our conference but for the full information, including sponsorship and registration information, please visit our website at [akrdc.org](http://akrdc.org). You won’t want to miss it!

I am optimistic about what we can continue to achieve together. Let’s harness the momentum of this season to drive forward our projects, engage with stakeholders, and advocate for policies that align with our vision of sustainable natural resource development. Together, we can ensure that our efforts today lay the groundwork for a resilient and thriving environment for future generations.

In closing, I encourage you to embrace the changes that come with this season, both in nature and in our work. Let’s be proactive, stay connected and support one another as we face the challenges and opportunities ahead. Thank you for your hard work, your passion, and your commitment to our mission.

Together, we will continue to “grow Alaska through responsible resource development!”

Yours resourcefully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leila Kimbrell".

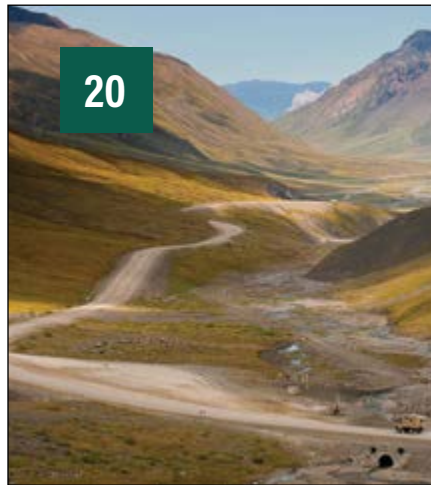
**PAGE 10**  
**CONVENTION 2024!**

Join us Nov. 13-14 for our 45th Annual Alaska Resource Industry Conference in Anchorage!



**PAGE 20**  
**HAUL ROAD PERILS**

The Dalton Highway, the lifeline to Prudhoe Bay and the North Slope, is becoming more difficult for truckers as maintenance lags.



**PAGE 24**  
**DUTCH HARBOR FOCUS**

Our annual Outreach Trip spent several days in Dutch Harbor, learning about the critical role and major challenges facing America's largest seafood port.



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**NEW BLM RESTRICTIONS**

A new attempt by the Bureau of Land Management to extend protected zones within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) puts current and future oil production at risk.



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PLEASE NOTE: RDC HAS MOVED OFFICES! Please update your records with our new physical and mailing address: 301 W. Northern Lights Blvd., Ste. 406, Anchorage, AK 99503





At Santos, we are proud to develop the world-class Pikka Project on the North Slope. Phase 1 will develop about 400 million barrels from a single drill site with first oil expected in 2026. And we are even prouder that our interest in Pikka will be net-zero on Scope 1 & 2 emissions!

# Santos



“Consider volunteering some of your time with the youth in your community. I encourage all of you to get engaged with this work. There is little that matters more!”

— *Scott Habberstad, RDC Board President*

# INNOVATIVE TRAINING KEEPS ALASKA'S FUTURE BRIGHT

**T**HE RESOURCE INDUSTRIES THAT MAKE UP ALASKA'S ECONOMY MADE GREAT PROGRESS THIS PAST SUMMER, ADVANCING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES THAT WILL KEEP ALASKANS WORKING.

As we enter fall, another of Alaska's resources returns to the classroom to prepare to enter tomorrow's job market. Alaska Resource Education (ARE) is right there, educating Alaska's most valuable resource on the job opportunities our great state affords them.

This past summer, ARE expanded their repertoire to include a Natural Resource Teacher Externship. The week-long field trip is designed to blend firsthand experiences and tours with in-classroom learning. This includes tours of both non-renewable and renewable energy, and minerals sites, to learn about the resources and the associated careers, as well as training locations and programs to help students move from high school into industry careers.

Training teachers about the importance of Alaska's natural resources, including oil and gas, mining, and renewable energy, is crucial in preparing the future workforce to understand and to value the state's unique natural and economic assets. The Natural Resource Management Externship for teachers is a 3-credit University of Alaska continuing education course. This year, the teacher credits for the course were sponsored by Marathon Petroleum. ARE is working with Hilcorp

to offer a future Natural Resource Teacher Externship to Prudhoe Bay and the heart of Alaska's energy sector.

Why does this matter so much to the future of our industries?

Consider this: teachers are all college-educated practitioners of their content area. And teachers really do not get enough credit for the challenging work they do. But when it comes to advising students about their future, college is what they know and where they direct their students. That is wonderful, and I am not and never would downplay the power of a college education, but there are many paths to get there.

I was a commercial pilot before I pursued a post-secondary education. Like me, many students need time for their passions to take hold. My passion for aviation led me to college. Many students don't know what they want to do for the rest of their lives when they graduate. Perhaps knowing that they can get an excellent job in an industry they love may ignite their passion, while providing both perspective and money, and making a college education more purposeful and affordable.

As part of the Anchorage School District's progressive Academies of Anchorage this fall and next spring semester, ARE is teaching a portion of a natural resource management year-long course at Dimond High School. The class syllabus covers Alaska lands: rocks, minerals, and

mining; electricity, renewable energy, non-renewable energy; economics; careers, and new technology. The spring semester will include oceans, fisheries, wildlife, the environment, maritime and mariculture, forestry, and a sustainable design challenge. The vision for the future is to offer this class for both the Dimond and West High School Natural Resource academy pathways.

Dimond teacher Cat Walker, who is also Alaska's Teacher of the year in 2024, is leading the charge. Cat is embracing the support of ARE to make her classes more hands-on and well rounded. Many other teachers will follow her as the pathway grows in her school and beyond. This collaboration is changing student perspectives on careers in Alaska's resource-driven industries.

ASD recently held its first Freshman Academy Career Expo. I went down to the Dena'ina Center to check out the Expo, and what I saw was incredible. Approximately 4,000 students were engaging with adults in their community about jobs that they find interesting. You could see relationships developing as students asked about the career paths of the hundreds of adults who volunteered their time.

As we work to build Alaska's future workforce, collaborations like these will surely pay huge dividends. More than that, students are seeing how much their community cares about them, about their success today and tomorrow.





The Natural Resource Management class at Dimond High School is changing student perspectives on careers in Alaska's resource-driven industries.





“Messaging what Alaska can provide our young and returning professionals can be just as important as the economic benefit, sometimes more so.”

— *Connor Hajdukovich,*  
*RDC External Affairs and Policy Coordinator*

# SELLING ALASKA TO THE NEXT GENERATION

**IT'S NO SECRET THAT FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, THERE HAS BEEN A TREND OF OUTMIGRATION IN WORKING AGE ALASKANS.**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development reported a 0.2 percent drop last year, marking the 11th year in a row of net population outflow. To put a finer point on it, according to the same study we currently have two job openings for every one unemployed person.

Alaskan leaders have taken notice. This last legislative session we saw the state legislature putting a heavy focus on trying to quell outmigration and maintain a vibrant workforce in the state. Though this issue has been topical recently, it is obviously not a new problem, nor is it a problem that can be solved easily or quickly. Economists have cited many factors contributing to outmigration including a competitive national labor market, rising housing costs, high cost of energy, and aging infrastructure in the state.

These statistics paint a bleak picture for our state's future, but we will never stop our youth from wanting to experience life outside of Alaska, nor should we discourage them from doing so. No one can blame young people for wanting to experience life outside of our somewhat isolated state, but how do we make sure young Alaskans are returning with newfound passion and experience?

The economists would say we need to provide access to good-paying jobs, options for career advancement, and build more modern housing. These are all solutions that we should absolutely continue to work on. In fact, the industries RDC represents — mining, oil and gas, fisheries, tourism, and forestry — do a great job of providing solutions to these economic problems by providing some of the highest wages, diverse career paths, and interesting work in the state.

That said, there are also other ways to inspire the next generation to come back to Alaska. Beyond these economic barriers, there is a frame of mind that makes people want to work and live in Alaska. Is Alaska cold, dark, and isolated from the outside world, or is it a vibrant and exciting last frontier filled with work that matters and people who value community and time in the outdoors? I personally embraced the latter message wholeheartedly when I decided to move back to Alaska.

Perspective matters more than ever in the digital world we live in where young people are spending their time day-dreaming about extravagant lifestyles and gaining relevance through 15 minutes of online fame. Messaging what Alaska can provide our young and returning professionals can be just as important as the economic benefit, sometimes more so.

For RDC's part in changing young perspectives, you'll see our organization

supporting a number of groups that are engaging positively with the younger generation of Alaskans. RDC partners closely with Alaska Resource Education (ARE) who are doing an excellent job teaching Alaska's youth about the exciting opportunities in Alaska's resource developing industries and ensuring that young Alaskans are aware of the career paths available in our state. The Anchorage School District Academies of Anchorage initiative is also a bright spot in changing perspectives, getting kids thinking about in-state career options early in their schooling.

Velocity is another organization seeking to break the typical mold by providing an honest and constructive voice for resource developing industries to the current and future workforce. I've also seen RDC and its members partner with local schools and universities to provide career fairs, internships, workshops and more, to highlight the skills needed in Alaska's job market.

As part of RDC's commitment to engaging with the next generation of Alaskans, we are putting on our second annual Emerging Leaders and Established Professionals opening reception at our 45th Annual Resources Conference where our members are encouraged to invite their company's young professionals and new faces to engage with our board members and industry leaders.

We hope to see you there!



# ALASKA OIL AND GAS UPDATES

## ConocoPhillips buys most remaining Chevron oil holdings on North Slope

ConocoPhillips has signed a \$300 million deal to buy portions of the Kuparuk and Prudhoe Bay oil fields owned by Chevron USA.

ConocoPhillips announced the deal, which is expected to close by the end of the year, Oct. 3.

Chevron has been seeking to sell its North Slope assets since at least 2022, and reporting by Northern Journal earlier this year showed that the company had been considering a sale to a small, independent Texas firm.

Pontem Alaska Midstream, the firm in question, failed to close that deal, records show.

ConocoPhillips' purchase doesn't include Chevron's stake in the Endicott oil field, the company confirmed, and the status of that holding isn't clear.

ConocoPhillips' purchase comes amid a general withdrawal from the North Slope by other large oil companies, including BP — which sold to Hilcorp in 2020 — and Chevron.

The trend on the North Slope has been toward smaller, privately held oil companies like Hilcorp, but ConocoPhillips is a notable exception. It has invested heavily in the Willow oil project within the National Petroleum Reserve and this week completed delivery of a large oil production unit to Kuparuk.

— **James Brooks, Alaska Beacon**

## Hilcorp again eyes Interior Alaska for oil exploration

Oil and gas company Hilcorp appears to be moving toward new oil and gas exploration work in Alaska's Interior, according to public documents released by state land managers.

Hilcorp on Sept. 19 applied to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to install water level gauges in Birch Creek, not far from the Yukon River, "in support of oil and gas operations."

Hilcorp has previously explored in the area in a partnership with Doyon, the Native-owned regional corporation for Interior Alaska. The original agreement covered exploration of 1.6 million acres; just 3% of that area was selected by Hilcorp for further exploration this year, Doyon says on an informational web page.

"Plans for specific activities for the

remainder of 2024 and 2025 are still in progress, but Hilcorp and Doyon will continue providing regular status updates to leaders in the region," the page says.

The area is relatively close to the Trans-Alaska pipeline, but it's also near the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge, which could complicate any plans for development.

— **Nathaniel Herz, Northern Journal**

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# 45th Annual Alaska Resources Conference Schedule

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**Tuesday, November 12th | 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**

- **Event:** Emerging Leaders Opening Reception
- **Location:** Williwaw Social, Downtown Anchorage
- **Details:** Kick off the conference by celebrating Alaska's future in resource industries! Join us for an exciting evening of networking with industry leaders, RDC board members and emerging leaders in resource industries. Enjoy light appetizers and beverages.

**Wednesday, November 13th | 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

- **Event:** Alaska Resources Conference – Day 1
- **Location:** Dena'ina Center, Downtown Anchorage, 3rd floor
- **Details:** The premier event for Alaska's resource industries begins! Hear from industry experts and leaders about key topics shaping the future of Alaska's resource sectors.

**Wednesday, November 13th | 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**

- **Event:** Opening VIP Reception
- **Location:** Dena'ina Center, Atrium
- **Details:** Wrap up Day 1 with our exclusive VIP Reception hosted by Santos. Mingle with industry professionals while enjoying light appetizers and beverages. (Open to all attendees)

**Thursday, November 14th | 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

- **Event:** Alaska Resources Conference – Day 2
- **Location:** Dena'ina Center, Downtown Anchorage, 3rd floor
- **Details:** The conference continues with engaging presentations and discussions, concluding at 2:00 p.m.

***Stay tuned—our online agenda is coming soon!***



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ConocoPhillips' production module for its Nuna project being delivered to Oliktok dock.

# ANOTHER BUSY WINTER SET FOR NORTH SLOPE

ConocoPhillips, Santos on track to achieve milestones on projects

**BY TIM BRADNER**

**IT WILL BE ANOTHER BUSY WINTER ON ALASKA'S NORTH SLOPE.**

ConocoPhillips and Santos are continuing construction of their new Willow and Pikka fields. Santos aims to complete

all pipeline installation this winter and is commissioning its new seawater treatment plant delivered this summer to Oliktok Point, where it will operate on a shore-fast barge.

ConocoPhillips will also finish installation and commissioning of a new production module for its small Nuna project, which will produce an undeveloped deposit in the Kuparuk River field. Nuna is to begin production in 2025 with a peak rate of 20,000 barrels per day.

Santos is still on track to begin production at Pikka in mid-2026, with a first phase peak rate of 80,000 barrels per day. Phase two development at Pikka is expected to follow the start of phase one, Santos has said.

ConocoPhillips' Willow development is expected to start up in 2029 with a peak rate of 180,000 barrels per day. All three projects will add new oil to North Slope production, which has been declining for years.

The pace of work on Willow and Pikka



has pushed up employment in the state's employment and construction industries. Construction was up almost 15 percent in July and 13 percent in August, year-over-year, while oil and gas jobs were up about 7 percent in both months compared with the same periods of 2023.

In other North Slope developments, there's not a lot of information yet on three exploration wells drilled last winter east of Prudhoe Bay, in the eastern North Slope, by Armstrong Oil and Gas and Apache, its partner. Armstrong did tell Petroleum News that it found oil in two of the wells, but also that weather prevented completion of the third well.

Presumably, that will be completed this winter, during which Armstrong also plans three more wells. No details were released on what Armstrong found earlier this year.

Developments at two discoveries in the central North Slope south of Prudhoe Bay includes one by U.K.-based Pantheon Resources and a second by 88 Energy, an Australian explorer.

Pantheon, working through its Alaska

subsidiary Great Bear Petroleum, has been drilling and evaluating its "Ahpun" discovery for some time and is now working on permits for a "hot tap" connection to the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, which is nearby.

If the project proceeds, the company will be working on its first four production wells and a water/gas injection well. An existing production facility used in a long-term flow test of the Alkaid 2 well will be upgraded to handle natural gas liquids, Pantheon said on its website.

The oil Pantheon will produce is of a higher quality than the current crude oil moving through TAPS, so the effect will be to upgrade the overall value of TAPS throughput when the new oil is blended in. Pantheon expects to make a Final Investment Decision on its project in late 2025 or 2026, it said.

88 Energy is meanwhile still evaluating its Hickory 1 discovery well in the same area as Pantheon's finds and also near TAPS and the Dalton Highway. Hickory 1 was drilled in early 2023, with flow tests conducted that spring from two reservoir intervals where oil

was found.

The company is now working on plans for a long-term production test. The oil found at Hickory 1 is also of high quality, similar to that discovered by Pantheon.

In another development, Finnex Operating, now the owner of the small Mustang field, is expanding the operations pad by five acres to allow for new facilities. This signals intent by Finnex to move Mustang to production.

Mustang is between the Kuparuk River and Alpine fields and is adjacent to a pipeline connecting the two larger fields, an advantage for Finnex. Mustang was discovered and partly developed by Brooks Range Petroleum, a small Alaska independent. Brooks Range hit financial difficulties when the state of Alaska reneged on promised exploration tax credit payments.

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, or AIDEA, had helped Brooks Range in financing and had to foreclose on loans. AIDEA, the state development corporation, then sold Mustang to Finnex.



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Core samples from minerals drilling. Graphite One to begin permitting mid-2025.

# NEW MINING PROJECTS GAINING MOMENTUM

Donlin Gold,  
Graphite One moving  
ahead with efforts

**BY TIM BRADNER**

**WORK IS CONTINUING ON IMPORTANT NEW ALASKA MINERALS PROJECTS INCLUDING THE LARGE DONLIN GOLD PROJECT NEAR THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER AND GRAPHITE ONE'S PLANNED NATURAL GRAPHITE MINE ON THE SEWARD PENINSULA NORTH OF NOME.**

Donlin Gold has submitted preliminary engineering for its Large Dam Permit to the state Department of Natural Resources and

the agency plans to have an initial review of the application by mid-2025, the DNR said.

The project is a joint-venture of Barrick Gold, a major mining company, and Nova-Gold Resources, a junior explorer. With an estimated 39 million ounces of gold resources, Donlin Gold is one of the world's largest known gold deposits.

Donlin has been in exploration and advanced development planning for years and has secured all of its major federal permits. The Large Dam Permit, issued by the state of Alaska under federal laws, is the last remaining major permit for the project.

However, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may have to revisit part of its environ-

mental analysis of the project. In a lawsuit brought by tribal groups, Alaska U.S. District Court Judge Sharon Gleason said the Army Corps failed to adequately consider the risk of a large release of mining waste in its 2018 Environmental Impact Statement for Donlin Gold.

Tribes fear the effects of the mine on salmon streams. The project is on lands owned by Alaska Native corporations.

Graphite One, meanwhile, says it will start work on a feasibility study of its planned graphite mine on Alaska's Seward Peninsula early next year with plans to permitting the project in mid-2025.

If permits and financing are secured



construction could begin in 2027 and production in 2029. The company's state mining claims cover the largest natural graphite deposit in the U.S. The site is 18 miles north of Nome, a historic gold mining community.

In production, Graphite One would produce 175,000 tons of natural graphite ore per year, enough to supply 8 percent of U.S. needs. It will be the first domestic mine producing graphite mine in the U.S. since the last mine closed in 1995,

America is now dependent on China for natural graphite, which is used in variety of computer, military and other technologies including batteries for electric vehicles.

Graphite One was formed in 2012 when it acquired rights to the graphite deposit, which was discovered in 1902 and saw limited production during World War I. The company completed a pre-feasibility study in 2022 that considered a smaller mine, but the company said potential customers advised it to revise its plan and develop a larger project.

With that advice, Graphite One scaled the plan to up to 175,000 tons per year and completed a summer, 2024 exploration program as part of a feasibility study for a larger mine.

The U.S. Department of Defense had awarded a \$37.5 million grant to the company to help finance the feasibility study, which will pay for 50 percent of the feasibility study cost and will speed development of the project by five years. The defense department program is part of the federal government's effort to aid development of minerals important for defense.

There will be new estimates of measured and indicated resources developed in the feasibility study needed for a 20-year mine life, but Graphite One Vice President Mike Schaffner said the known graphite resources in the area are much larger. The feasibility study estimate will be based on the drilling done to date at the ore body, he said.

Graphite ore will be concentrated at the site to a 95 percent purity and transported in containers by truck to 18 miles Nome, which is also engaged in an expansion of its port. The ore will be further concentrated to a 99 percent purity to be shipped to a manufacturing facility Graphite One is also developing in the Lower 48.

Graphite One would manufacture materials for anodes used in batteries. The company also plans a battery recycling unit as part of the project.



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# MEET ERNEST SCHEYDER: KEYNOTE SPEAKER

‘The War Below’ author brings wealth of resource development experience

BY LEE LESCHPER

**ERNEST SCHEYDER IS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR THE 45TH ANNUAL RDC ALASKA RESOURCE CONFERENCE.**

He is the author of “The War Below,” the just-released book chronicling the gulf between the need for critical minerals to fuel the green energy transition, and the many tradeoffs to launching new mines in the United States.

Scheyder has made a career reporting on resource development, telling stories seldom getting told.

He is a senior correspondent for Reuters, covering the green energy transition and the minerals that it requires. He previously covered the U.S. shale oil revolution, politics, and the environment, and held roles at the Associated Press and the Bangor Daily News. A native of Maine, Scheyder is a graduate of the University of Maine and Columbia Journalism School.



He works now in Houston and this will be his first trip to Alaska. Growing up in Maine, he says he has always appreciated the outdoors including hunting and fishing.

Scheyder spent a few minutes talking with us about his work and the book, which looks through the

lens of rare earth projects in the U.S.

“What I wanted to do with the book was help audiences across the United States and really the world to explore the complex supply chain that is part of this critical minerals revolution that is taking shape right now,” he said.

“The book for me is an outreach of my job at Reuters where I write about critical minerals. Before I wrote about critical minerals, I wrote about oil and gas for a long time. I spent about two years in North Dakota writing about the Bakken Shale oil revolution that really changed that state’s economy.

“And, for me, the linchpin really was that this is so much more than just the energy transition. It is all the electronic devices we use every single day — cellphones, laptops, televisions — they’re all built with these critical minerals as well. So where, and how, we get the building blocks for these devices matters.

“And so, what I wanted to do with the book was to bring this idea of choice to the reader, because I don’t think we are having

these broad conversations right now, about what are the choices we are willing to make.”

Americans have to choose, if they want these energy transition devices, and want an electronic based future, where and how those critical minerals, as well as more common metals like copper, are mined, he said. But it’s not just mining, but the complete supply chain, that matters, he added.

“The more I reported these issues in my day job, the

more I realized the average consumer is not considering these issues or even fully aware. But I realized during the covid pandemic that the issue of supply chains was one that the average person was aware of and was thinking through.

“As an example, masks. It was a shock four years ago to learn that the United States does not make masks. And they say, how could this be, how could the U.S. export manufacturing of these simple yet essential articles of medical equipment to another country?”

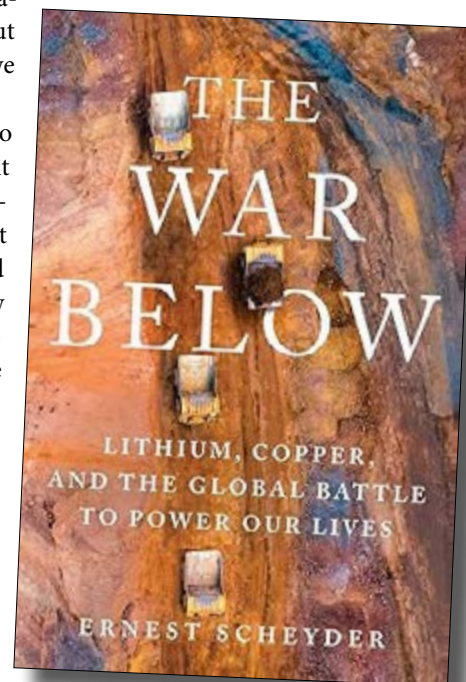
“I argue in the book that really indecision is a decision. And so that was my goal with the book.”

Scheyder devotes chapters to a number of different rare earth projects, most still in development. He looks at broad issues from Indigenous rights to local community interaction and transparency with mining neighbors.

“For example, what does a mining company owe a neighbor community? And the entire narrative thread is around the tensions between biodiversity and climate change.”

He does not draw conclusions for the readers, instead in the tradition of good journalism, provides facts on all sides of the complex issue, and challenges readers to draw their own conclusions.

His keynote address at the RDC annual conference should continue that goal.



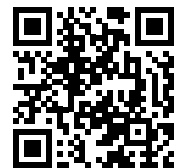




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# ALASKA SEEKS SALES OF CARBON OFFSET CREDITS

Alaska Native Corporations currently in carbon offset market

BY TIM BRADNER

## THE STATE OF ALASKA HOPES TO LAUNCH A NEW FOREST INDUSTRY.

But instead of selling logs, the state will sell carbon credits, certificates that encourage landowners to protect standing forests, so they will continue absorbing and storing carbon.

Trees absorb and store carbon dioxide and also release oxygen through photosynthesis, a chemical process.

The concept is simple.

Carbon dioxide stored in state forests can be reliably estimated. Companies engaged in industries that release emissions, such as oil and gas firms, can purchase certificate, also known as carbon credits, to offset their emissions with carbon dioxide stored in trees. One credit equal one ton of carbon reduced or removed from the atmosphere.

The landowner, the state in this case, guarantees that the forests will sequester more carbon year over year. The carbon credits are registered with one of several carbon registries that have been formed in recent years.

The registries have standards. Landowners, or their agents, must be able to demonstrate that trees on given lands are capable of storing the carbon. There is also an ongoing inspection process to verify that the forests remain intact.

Carbon credit sales from forests is a new industry in the U.S. and it is in the initial stages of development. Some companies, working under requirements by state or federal regulators, register their carbon credits under a compliance carbon program, like California's Cap-and-Trade or Washington's Cap-and-Invest programs, where emissions reductions are mandated.

Carbon dioxide stored in state forests can be reliably estimated. Companies engaged in industries that release emissions, such as oil and gas firms, can purchase certificates, also known as carbon credits, to offset their emissions with carbon dioxide stored in trees. One credit equals one ton of carbon reduced or removed from the atmosphere.

Alternatively, credits can be sold into the "voluntary" market, where the purchases are made by companies to meet corporate goals for reducing emissions.

When Alaska's program begins, it will sell credits on the voluntary carbon market, according to Trevor Fulton, manager of the state's new Carbon Offset Program in the state Department of Natural Resources, or DNR.

Carbon credits are now being sold on exchanges by Alaska Native corporations, which are private landowners. Since these are private contracts, the details including the sales prices, are confidential.

One oil and gas operator, Santos Ltd., has signed up to purchase credits from an Alaska Native corporation so that it can meet corporate "zero emissions" goals for its new Pikka oil project on the North Slope.

The state's program, which will sell carbon credits for forests on state lands, was authorized by the Legislature in 2023. DNR has developed regulations under which the program will be implemented and a Request for Proposals was recently published for a developer who will help the state to:

- select the appropriate forest lands
- deal with technical aspects like how carbon adsorption rates can be estimated and verified, and
- choose a carbon registry in the vol-

untary market where the state's credits can be offered.

DNR is considering forest tracts in the Tanana Valley State Forest in Interior Alaska and the Haines State Forest in Southeast, but forested state-owned lands in the Matanuska-Susitna and Kenai areas will also be considered.

The program will also allow continued commercial timber harvests such as those now done on the state forests. Once it is operating, Alaska will have the largest or one of the largest forest carbon offset programs in the nation.

Gov. Mike Dunleavy, who sponsored the legislation creating the program, said new revenues paid to the state can help support forest remediation and improvement, such as removal of timber damaged by spruce bark beetles and reduction of fire hazards near communities.

The revenue potential is uncertain, but consultants to the DNR estimated that they could be in the \$80 million per year range based on three potential pilot programs.

Fulton, of DNR, also said carbon credit programs are helping support new industries in other states and nations, such as the manufacture of carbon "bio-char" from damaged or waste wood that is sold for agricultural or industrial purposes.



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# DALTON HIGHWAY, LINK TO SLOPE, IN TOUGH SHAPE

Rough conditions slow delivery times, add costs for truckers, producers

BY TIM BRADNER

**TRUCKERS ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE DALTON HIGHWAY, THE NORTH-SOUTH STATE ROAD THAT CONNECTS NORTH SLOPE OIL FIELDS WITH INTERIOR ALASKA.**

It isn't just a trucking issue: It's a big problem for the oil and gas industry, and for the state.

The Dalton is a critical surface transportation link that supports shipments of equipment and supplies to the North Slope oil fields and northern sections of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, or TAPS. The 414-mile road was built in the mid-1970s to support construction of TAPS.

Here's the issue: The highway is in poor shape for a number of reasons. Changing weather, which is related to climate change, has brought a lot more summer rain, north of the Atigun Pass. This creates big pot-holes, rough "washboard" road conditions and erosion along road shoulders. Permafrost thaw problems are increasing, particularly in the Coldfoot area south of Atigun Pass.

"The discontinuous permafrost areas where there is differential settling and melting are the biggest problem areas. Unfortunately, they stretch from where you come down off the Chandalar Shelf (south of Atigun) at about Mile Post 234 on south to Fairbanks," said John Perreault, northern region spokesperson for the state transportation agency.

Because of these changes, the spring and fall "transition" periods from winter are also getting longer, which means the winter driving season, when roads are frozen and more stable, are shorter.

Sen. Robert Myers, R-North Pole, who



Dalton Highway in the Brooks Range. Permafrost thaw is creating problems for the roadbed.

chairs the transportation committee in the state Senate and is a Dalton Highway trucker himself, said problems ironically occur more frequently on parts of the Dalton now paved than on gravel sections.

That's because pavement deteriorates quickly when exposed to tough weather and climate conditions. Driving is good for a few years on new pavement, Myers said, but then pot-holes and frost heaves appear, creating problems for truckers.

A gravel road is actually easier to main-

tain in the long run, because it just takes more gravel laid down periodically, along with grading, he said. Myers said he is sometimes slowed to 10 miles per hour when driving the road to navigate obstacles safely.

Jamie Benson, executive director of the Alaska Trucking Association, said wear and tear on equipment and breakdowns, from flat tires to broken air bags, slows truckers'

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22





State Sen. Robert Myers, R-North Pole, (right) discusses Dalton Highway at Alaska Industry Support Alliance conference in Fairbanks last summer.

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Winter brings better driving conditions on Dalton Highway.

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20**

transit times to the slope. This is also an unusual year for the Dalton because new industry activity on the North Slope has added a lot of traffic.

There are also tourists that truckers have to watch for, from ordinary campers to hunters, motorcycles and even bicyclists, Benson said. Although the Dalton Highway is public, “the road does not lend itself to safe transit for the ordinary citizen,” pursuing recreation, she said.

Dalton Highway and Elliot Highway maintenance budgets for the State Department of Transportation of Public Facilities, or DOTPF, have been holding steady, but there is an increase this year in projects, where parts of the road are being rebuilt.

About \$118.5 million is being spent this year on three projects on the Dalton and an

additional \$44 million on reconstruction and rehabilitation on the Elliot Highway, which trucks traverse from Fairbanks to the start of the Dalton near Livengood,

Workforce issues, however, are a big problem for the DOTPF as in many industries, Perreault said. DOTPF is having trouble recruiting and retaining people, he said. Myers believes one third of the maintenance positions budgeted to the Dalton are vacant. Perreault said 18 positions are unfilled.

Myers said the state transportation agency did hike maintenance and operators’ wages 14% this year but pay and benefits are still below what the City of Fairbanks pays for equivalent positions, he said, and much lower than private companies pay on the North Slope and even contractors working for DOTPF.

Perreault agreed.

“Pay is lopsided between what private

industry and the state is currently offering. This affects both recruitment and retention,” he said. “There have also been statewide (state) payroll issues that have taken weeks to months to resolve, impacting individuals as well as morale. These are starting to be resolved but there is still a backlog,” he said.

The cumulative effect of these problems is longer delivery times for equipment and supplies to the slope that will raise costs for North Slope companies. More wear and tear, and repairs needed, adds costs for truckers, which will push up rates up. Driver fatigue because of longer trips is also a growing concern.

There have also been reports of damage to sensitive equipment moved up the Dalton by truck, Excess vibration due to rough road conditions loosened some connections in modules that were trucked north that required repairs once on the slope, adding



costs and delays.

Weather, climate change, workforce shortages and funding are all factors in Dalton Highway problems, but Myers said the internal procedures within DOTPF may play a role, along with broader political influences within the Legislature and public.

It is a bit of a mystery, he said, how oil and gas companies can keep oil field roads well maintained on the slope in conditions that are similar to those along the Dalton. Myers said he can typically drive at 25 mph on oil field roads even in bad weather, which isn't the case on the Dalton.

No doubt budgets and better pay for personnel are important, but maintenance procedures and the equipment used may be factors too. There should be more communication and collaboration between oil producers and the DOTPF to share best practices, he said.

There are also broader political influences at play. A problem is that the Dalton is far away and out of sight for most Alaskans, who are more familiar with the state's major highways like the Parks, Richardson, and Seward Highways.

There are also problems within the Legislature when it comes to transportation funding. The key decisions on spending are made by the Finance committees of the House and Senate and, more important, by transportation subcommittees of the Finance committees. Typically, the full Finance committees and the full House and Senate go along with the subcommittee recommendations, so legislators on the subcommittees play key roles.

Another factor is that it's usually popular to fund capital, or construction, projects because construction creates jobs for constituents and spending with local businesses. Yet another factor in highway transportation is that construction is funded mostly by the federal government at a 90 percent reimbursement, while operations and maintenance are mostly state-funded. That gives legislators a built-in bias toward highway construction over maintenance because it brings in more federal dollars with fewer state dollars spent.

This year the Alaska Trucking Association, Alaska Support Industry Alliance and the Alaska Oil and Gas Association are

working to educate candidates for legislative offices as well as current legislators on the importance of maintaining the Dalton.

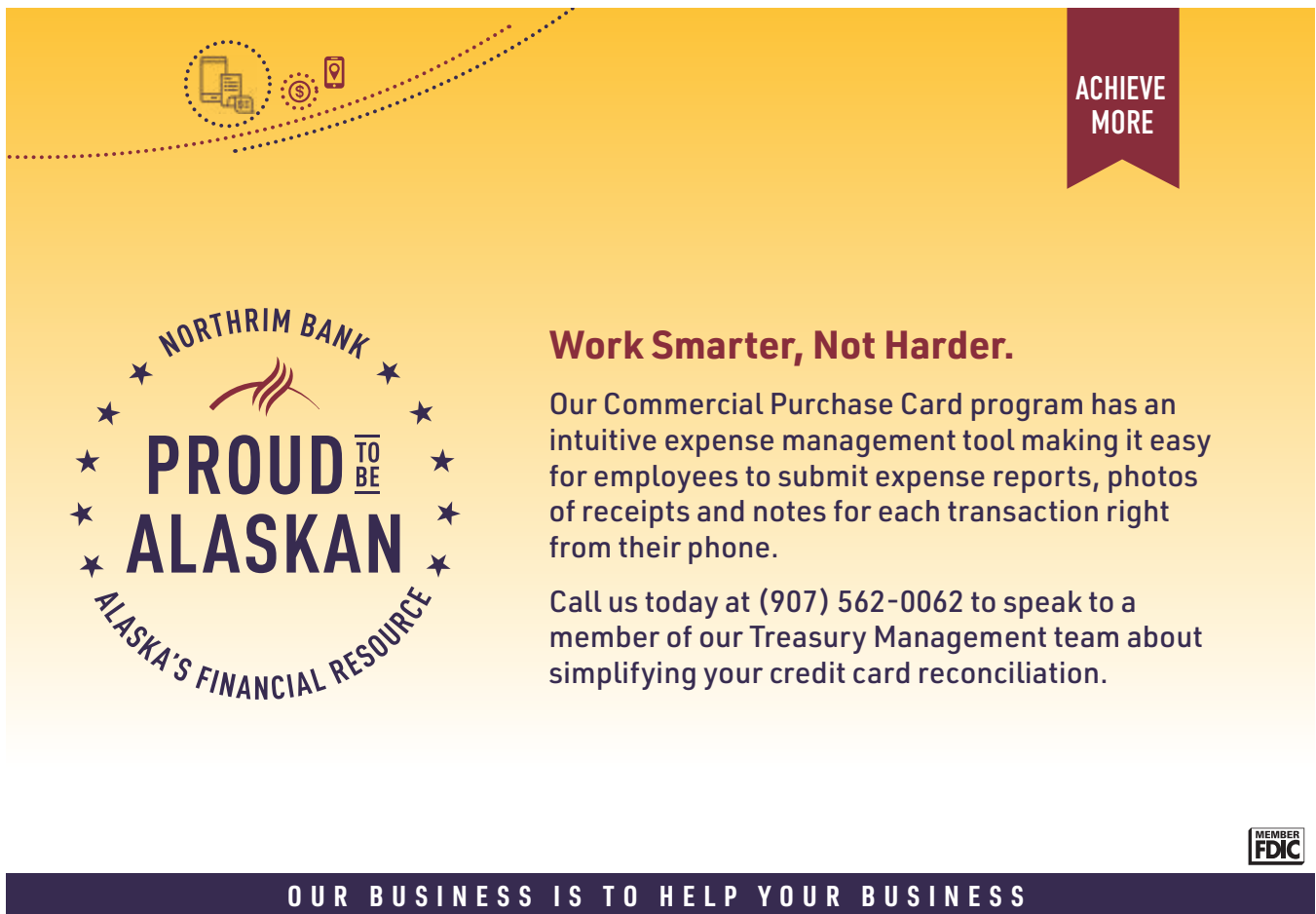
It's important to help the public understand the connection between the Dalton and its upkeep and the state's economy to which the North Slope petroleum industry is important.

But now there's another issue, the federal government.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which owns lands through which much of the Dalton is built, is now asking for more lengthy environmental assessments for gravel borrow pits along the road.

The delays in permitting these means DOTPF crews and contractors have to move gravel greater distances from pits BLM had approved to sites where repairs are being done. That adds time and cost.

This may be just a bureaucratic wrangle because the state does these assessments as part of its National Environmental Impact Statements for the Federal Highways Administration. However, BLM now wants its own assessments, according to sources familiar with the situation.



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Each year our RDC board of directors makes an Outreach Trip to one of our member cities. These trips give our board members a real first-hand look at the glory and challenges of our important Alaskan cities. This summer that destination was the City of Unalaska, Dutch Harbor! We got to tour the history of one of Alaska's oldest ports, while learning about the seafood industry that makes this America's biggest seafood port. That includes challenges this year with seafood harvests, as well as innovations the industry is making to be both more efficient and more sustainably sensitive to the marine environment.









# ALASKA FEDERAL LANDS AT HEART OF FIGHT

Lands in decades-long dispute include the vital TAPS corridor

BY TIM BRADNER

**A DECADES-OLD FIGHT WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OVER OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF MILLIONS OF ACRES OF ALASKA LANDS IS NOT CLOSE TO BEING RESOLVED. IN FACT, THINGS MAY NOW BE MORE COMPLICATED, AND WORSE FOR THE STATE.**

Lands in question include the vital Trans Alaska Pipeline System corridor.

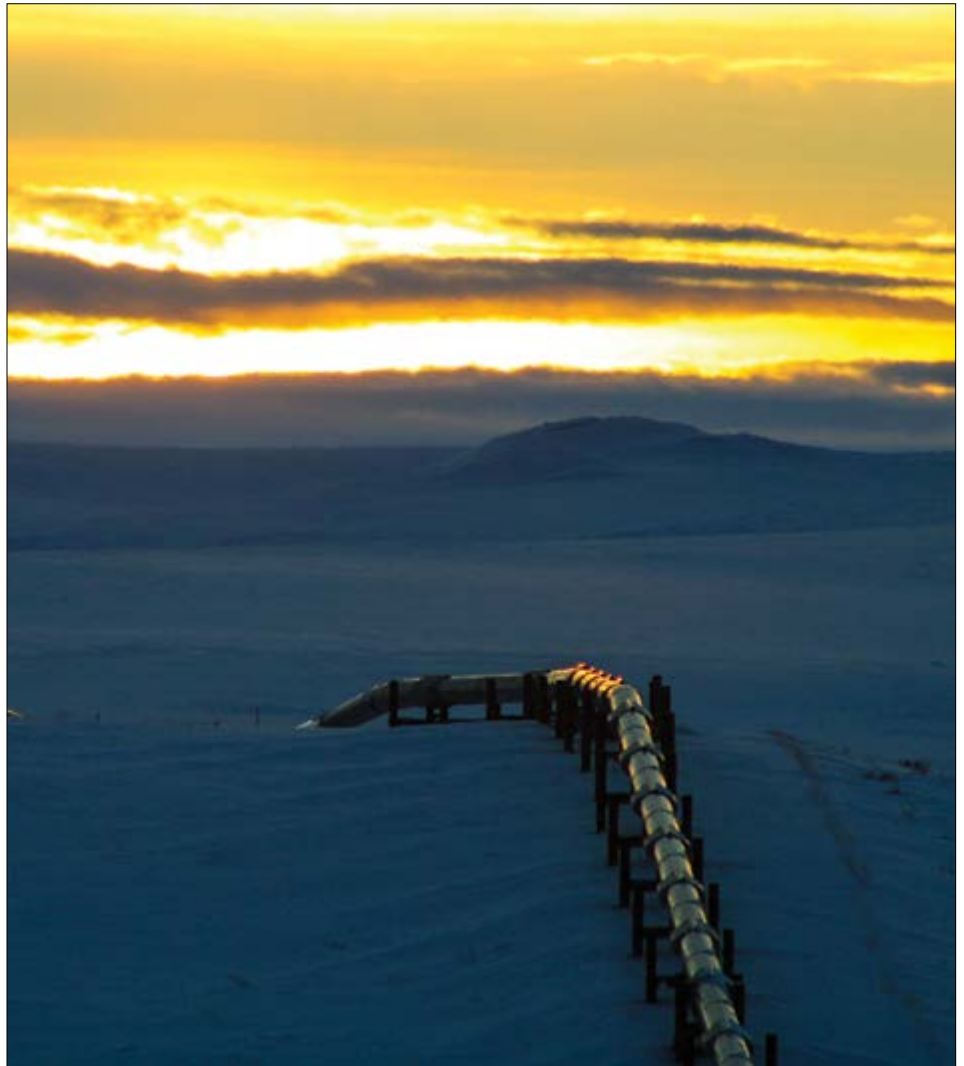
The core issue is the status of Public Land Orders, or PLOs, dating from the 1970s, that closed access to public lands. The orders were issued as the Alaska Native Land Claims Act, or ANCSA, was passed by Congress.

The PLOs removed the land from disposal and other forms of entry such as mining for the purpose of study and classification. In total, almost 160 million acres of land were set aside in Alaska for this simple purpose.

The land orders were intended to be temporary when first put in place. They were done so the newly-formed Alaska Native regional and village corporations had the best options to select lands promised by the 1971 Native claims act. The corporations were able to choose about 45 million acres.

Lands were also withdrawn and held to allow the federal government time to plan new national parks, wildlife refuges and wild and scenic rivers. These protected areas were finally created in the Alaska National Interest Lands and Conservation Act, or ANILCA, in 1980, which involved about 100 million acres.

But when those conservation units were created and a great compromise between land use and conservation in Alaska had been achieved, the PLOs remained. Approximately 160 million acres remained in limbo for years, still closed to new mining claims and for state land conveyance.



Trans Alaska Pipeline System in winter. State of Alaska seeks control of pipeline land corridor. The federal government is resisting.

On August 27, U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland announced with great fanfare that 28 million acres of federal lands in Alaska would remain in a protected status indefinitely. This was inclusive of lands in Interior and western Alaska.

Haaland's action reversed a decision made in the final days of the Trump administration to lift the PLOs, which BLM had been recommended internally as no longer necessary.

She claimed that the Trump decision

would have opened the 28 million acres to mining claims and other extractive activities, but also that the action would also have removed the federal subsistence priority from millions of acres.

The subsistence priority could have been affected somewhere between 44 and 117 rural Alaska Native communities, had the PLOs on the 28 million acres been lifted, Haaland said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28





# STATEHOOD TO ANCSA AND ANILCA: LONG HISTORY TO ALASKA LAND ACTIONS

There's a history to those 28 million acres held in limbo, and possibly aimed for preservation, by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland.

These are the "d-1" lands, a relic of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971, or so, that were withdrawn under Public Land Orders that were temporary at the time but now, over 50 years later, never released.

But this was just part of a series of major Alaska land actions that began with statehood in 1959.

Before Alaska became a state the bulk of its 365 million acres, except for the Tongass and Chugach National Forests and Denali National Park created by Congress, were federally-owned "public domain" lands administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

These were open to mining claims and homesteading.

It was when Congress awarded Alaska 102 million acres in 1959 as its statehood land entitlement that a great Alaska land game began. It continued through 1971 when 45 million acres were returned to Alaska Natives in ANCSA and to 1980 with enactment by Congress of the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands and Conservation Act, which put over 100 million acres of Alaska lands into protected status.

In the carving up of Alaska's lands one could argue Alaska Natives came up short with 45 mil-

lion acres. National conservation groups, which played a long-range strategy when they saw ANCSA moving through Congress in 1970, achieved putting 100 million acres into new Alaska national parks, wildlife refuges and national forests. The state has meanwhile achieved most of its 102 million-acre land entitlement with about 5 million acres left to select.

When ANILCA passed in 1980 Denali National Park was greatly enlarged to six million acres and the 19.2 million-acre Alaska National Wildlife Refuge was created, with big parts of both of conservation land units put into congressionally-designated wilderness, the most restricted form of land protection under U.S. law.

Large new national parks were created like 75-million-acre Gates of the Arctic in the Brooks Range and the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, at 13.2 million acres, in eastern Alaska, with many of these lands designated as wilderness.

There were big unresolved issues left in the wake of these actions. The unresolved 28 million acres of "d-1" lands is one of them. Another is the status of 1.5 million acres in ANWR's coastal plain left open for its oil and gas potential by Congress in 1980, under Section 1002 of ANILCA, is still controversial.

In 2019, under President Donald Trump, the 1002 area was opened to leasing for exploration. In 2020,

after he took office, President Joe Biden effectively closed the area, cancelling leases that had been sold. National conservation groups, continuing their long-game strategy, are pushing to have the 1.5 million-acre coastal plain designated as wilderness along with much of the rest of ANWR.

Many of these actions violate the spirit of compromise Alaska negotiated in 1980 with national conservation groups. This includes the "no more" clause of ANILCA, which promised no more Alaska lands being put into wilderness. Another example is the federal government ignoring a provision of ANILCA on the promise that a road corridor across a part of the Gates of the Arctic park will be made available for access to state-owned lands in the Ambler Mining District in northwest Alaska.

The Department of the Interior denied the state permission to build the road through the corridor. It is needed to reach areas where mining companies are exploring. The state has filed a lawsuit over the denial.

But there is also de facto new wilderness created by federal administrative land actions, such as new rules in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska allowing expanded protected areas, which the U.S. Bureau of Land Management is now pursuing.

— Tim Bradner



**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26**

“Continuing these essential protections, which have been in place for decades, will ensure continued access and use of these public lands,” by local villages and tribes, Haaland said in an August 27 press release.

However, in a separate but related action, her Interior Department reneged on a commitment made in early 2024 to fairly review the transfer of lands along the TAPS pipeline corridor.

This north-south corridor extends from state lands on the southern North Slope, to the Yukon River and includes the Dalton Highway as well as the pipeline. Its control is vital to Alaska’s economic future.

What’s surprising is that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management was well along in July in a process that would transfer the corridor, which is held in Public Land Order 5150.

BLM had concluded internally that the remaining PLOs no longer served a public purpose and recommended their termination including PLO 5150 and the pipeline corridor.

However, when the agency released the final Environmental Impact Statement for the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan, which included PLO 5150, the plan to release the corridor was not included.

The PLOs remained intact, contrary to the advice of BLM’s own staff.

Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan said this points to a likely intervention by the White House into the plan agreed on by the BLM with the state, Sullivan wrote in an August letter to Tracey Stone-Manning, BLM’s national director.

“Your decision to abruptly abandon the public process associated with lifting the PLO 5150, without notice, at the same time

that far-left environmental groups are trying to shut down the Trans Alaska Pipeline System raises questions regarding potential collusion between the Biden administration and the Lower 48 radical environmentalists,” Sullivan wrote.

BLM cited “workload” issues as its reason for failing to fulfill the agreement with the state in a June hearing of U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which infuriated Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who was at the hearing. Sullivan said he considered this an “affront” to Alaskans.

In the Senate committee hearing Tracey Stone-Manning said the decision not to move forward with the PLO 5150 transfer was made through internal discussions within her agency and that there was no input from the White House.

Alaska BLM director Steve Cohn told



state officials he was ready to move forward with the transfer, but the final decision was held up by questions from the Interior Department's Washington, D.C. office.

Stone-Manning told the Senate committee that BLM simply lacked the resources to do the environmental assessment needed for the PLO 5150 termination.

Meanwhile, Sullivan said it was no coincidence that in June a coalition of environmental groups petitioned the BLM to begin drafting a plan for the dismantlement of TAPS and restoration of its right-of-way years before the most recent federal pipeline corridor lease for the pipeline is set to expire, which is in 2037.

This may be the real reason the federal government, at least under the Biden administration, wants to retain control of the pipeline corridor by leaving PLO 5150 in place and blocking the state's land selections along TAPS.

Termination of the TAPS lease is 13 years in the future but given the need for a new Environmental Impact Statement on either an application for a third 30-year extension or dismantlement of the pipeline, planning must begin soon.

Environmental groups want to be able to influence this with the federal government, and not the state, continuing to control the TAPS corridor.

Wrangling over the PLOs is just another chapter in the decades-old debate about land allocations and management in Alaska. Before Alaska statehood, which came in the late 1950s, all lands in Alaska except the Tongass and Chugach national forests and Denali National Park were "public domain" lands open to mining claims and homesteading.

Alaska statehood changed this. The state was given rights by Congress to select 105 million acres of the approximately 365 million acres in Alaska to support its economic development.

This was a brilliant success after the state selected North Slope lands with oil potential, and which resulted in large discoveries. However, it also alerted Alaska Native communities that the state could now select lands affecting their access to local wildlife.

It also caused Native groups to assert their Aboriginal rights to lands in Alaska, which had never been terminated or clarified by Congress.

In turn, this led to the Alaska Native

"I'm infuriated that this public land order limbo impacts Alaskans who are still owed 5 million acres of land from the federal government as promised in our Statehood Entitlement dating back to 1959, since the lands contained within these orders are among the highest interest to the State of Alaska.



"Despite commitments from BLM to fairly consider lifting public land orders in Alaska, and after a year of negotiations between DNR and BLM staff specifically about the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor, the Biden Administration continues to arbitrarily lock up Alaska by extending public land orders far beyond Congress' intended purpose.

"DNR and the Dunleavy Administration will continue to fight to unlock access to public lands and natural resources on behalf of the people of Alaska."

— *John Boyle, Commissioner,  
Alaska Department of Natural Resources*

land claims movement in the 1960s and the passage of ANCSA in 1971. However, ANCSA also set the stage for decisions by Congress on what to do with the remaining several hundred million acres of public domain lands after the entitlements of Alaska Native communities and the state were satisfied.

That led, finally, to the passage of ANILCA in 1980, establishing new national parks, forests, and wildlife reserves. It is the

leftovers from all that, the approximately 160 million acres still in limbo in the PLOs, which are still of concern.

Environmental groups prefer the limbo because the lands are blocked to entry and thus become informal park lands.

Alaskans want the PLOs lifted not only to allow economic development but also the state's opportunity to gain title to its remaining state land entitlement as well as control of the vital TAPS corridor.

# SEAFOOD INDUSTRY SEES CONTINUED CHALLENGES

Many factors faced are outside of Alaska's ability to control

BY TIM BRADNER

**THE ISSUES BEDEVILING ALASKA'S SEAFOOD INDUSTRY SHOW NO SIGNS OF ABATING. BUT THERE ARE SOME SIGNS OF OPTIMISM IN THE RECOVERY OF FISHERIES THAT HAVE BEEN DEPRESSED.**

Markets, however, are another story.

But as long as Alaska sticks to its science-based fisheries management practices, the basic resource can be sustained. Eventually, markets will recover but the hit to Alaska's economy from all of the problems is now estimated at \$1.8 billion in the last year, according to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Some crab fisheries show signs of recovery and Alaska's important sockeye and pink salmon fisheries appear stable, although there are issues in some areas.

The big Bering Sea pollock fishery also appears stable, although the pollock harvest in the Gulf of Alaska has been cut due to an unusual incident of king salmon bycatch that forced fisheries managers to curtail harvesting.

Scientists believe ocean conditions affected by climate change are at the root of problems in many of Alaska's fisheries. What's important, however, is that state and federal managers have tools to manage these difficulties and have done so, although the remedy can be painful for many Alaskans, said Douglas Vincent-Lang, Alaska's Commissioner of Fish and Game.

"We are seeing the impacts of changing ocean conditions and climate on our fishery resources. The result is some species winning while others are losing," Vincent-Lang wrote in a lengthy analysis prepared for the new Joint Legislative



Adverse markets and changing ocean conditions challenge Alaska's fisheries.

Seafood Task Force, which met recently.

"Sockeye salmon, pollock and cod seem to be benefiting from current conditions while species such as king salmon, king crab and coho salmon are not," he

wrote. The challenges to fishery managers, and harvesters, get more complicated with fisheries managed under limited-entry and rationalization, Vincent-Lang wrote.



“This makes it difficult for fishermen to switch from one fishery that may be under performing to a better performing fishery,” he wrote.

Many fisheries are under stress, but Vincent-Lang sees signs of modest recovery in some areas.

Halibut stocks are showing signs of improvement. Pacific cod in the Bering Sea was adversely affected by the 2016 marine heat wave, but is now holding steady. The pollock fishery remains strong and healthy. Bristol Bay red king crab stocks are increasing as are Tanner crab.

Snow crab is also showing improvement and Dungeness crab stocks appeared to actually benefit from the 2016 marine heat wave, Vincent-Lang wrote.

Salmon fisheries are a mixed bag.

Sockeye runs are strong, while king salmon are weak, and pink salmon have been volatile with large even- and odd-year swings that makes planning difficult for harvesters and seafood processors. There is wide variability

even in sockeye fisheries, with Bristol Bay runs strong and Kodiak and Chignik showing weakness.

Science-based management strategies, based on escapement goals in the case of salmon, give the state the tools needed to manage these variations, Vincent-Lang wrote.

In fact, science-based management has been at the core of state fisheries policy since Alaska became a state in 1959. The concept of sustained yield management to preserve fisheries and using tools like escapement is embedded in Alaska’s constitution.

However, many problems are outside of Alaska’s ability to control, ocean conditions being the prime example. There’s also inflation, uncertainty over fuel costs and labor issues. These affect many industries including Alaska fish processing companies.

Many Alaska seafood companies and harvesters are more vulnerable because they work in remote, high-cost

locations, and this year there are thin economic margins.

In domestic markets, seafood prices are under pressure because of consumers’ belief seafood is more expensive than other protein like chicken. Sensitivity among consumers is a problem in an economy where grocery prices have risen sharply.

What complicates this is that in export markets, where Alaska has traditionally been strong, the strong U.S. dollar makes seafood imports from the U.S. expensive.

The new ban on Russian seafood has taken effect and will create new market opportunities for Alaskans to fill the void in domestic markets.

The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute is positioned to organize a new marketing initiative, and the Legislature approved a \$10 million special appropriation for this. Gov. Mike Dunleavy vetoed the funds from the state budget, however.


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# BLM CONSIDERS NEW NPR-A PROTECTED AREAS

Lawsuits filed by  
North Slope residents,  
oil and gas companies

**BY TIM BRADNER**

**THE INK WAS HARDLY DRY ON THE U.S. INTERIOR DEPARTMENT'S SIGNATURE LAST SUMMER ON RESTRICTIVE NEW RULES FOR THE NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE-ALASKA WHEN THE DEPARTMENT BEGAN PLANNING FOR EXPANDED "PROTECTIVE AREAS" WITHIN THE RESERVE.**

This fall, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Interior agency charged with administering the NPR-A, published a call for public comments on whether the protected areas should be expanded.

The presumption is that conservation groups will ask for expanded protected areas and, as long as the current management of the Interior Department is in place, the agency may agree.

There is, of course, a problem with this. One is that the newly-minted management plan says expansions can only be done every 10 years. A plain reading of the rule would make this is year one assuming the start date is 2024, when the new rule became effective.

The BLM glosses over this with a different interpretation, however, arguing that the last change in the NPR-A rules came in 2013 under Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. That would put us at year ten.

Not so fast, says Kara Moriarty, CEO of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association.

In fact, changes were made to the rules, and the protected areas, in 2020, which would put us at least in year three.

Lawsuits have been filed by North Slope residents as well as oil and gas companies over BLM's new rules and the call for expansions of protected areas, so eventually a judge will have to sort things out.

Meanwhile, the uncertainty this causes imposes real costs on Alaskans and the petroleum industry.



**Caribou in National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.**

ConocoPhillips, for example, would like to explore potential new Willow discoveries on leases it holds in the NPR-A. Santos, Ltd. is concerned that its exploration of leases it holds could cover an extension of the new Horseshoe discovery from state owned land

into the petroleum reserve. Explorer Bill Armstrong, who heads Armstrong Oil and Gas, would like to drill on leases his company holds in the NPR-A, and where he

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 34**





believes a new Pikka or Willow discovery might be made.

Armstrong must be taken seriously because his company led the exploration that led to the Pikka find along with other North Slope discoveries.

The NPR-A land management rule put in place in June is already the subject of multiple lawsuits.

“This undermines the intent of Congress, which has long designated the NPR-A as a critical area for oil and gas production to support Alaska’s economy and the nation’s energy security,” AOGA CEO Moriarty wrote in mid-September a letter to the BLM.

“The RFI (request for information on protected areas) represents another step toward implementing the rule that disregards this intent, jeopardizing the balance between responsible development and conservation in the NPR-A,” Moriarty wrote.

There is no need to modify the protected Special Areas at this time. The new rule allows reconsideration of these every 10 years.

BLM claims the last evaluation was in the Integrated Activity Plan for the reserve approved in 2013, Moriarty said. But in a 2020 Integrated Activity Plan the BLM reviewed all five Special Areas and made changes in three of them, she said. In 2022 the BLM reassessed the IAP and confirmed that it was still adequate.

AOGA is also concerned about the lack of transparency in the new call for comments. “Instead of establishing a publicly accessible outreach docket, BLM has asked for comments to be submitted by email, a private format which diminishes the transparency of stakeholder engagement,” Moriarty said.

“The current RFI process, with its limited visibility and lack of transparency, runs contrary to the practices BLM has historically followed,” she said. The new RFI creates considerable new uncertainty because of the potential for expansion of the Special Areas, making it more difficult for companies to make investment decisions.

Alaska’s congressional delegation has also waded into this.

In a joint letter to Alaska BLM Director

Steve Cohn, also written in mid-September, Alaska senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan and Rep. Mary Sattler Peltola said, “BLM’s actions are simply not a reasonable interpretation of federal law, let alone the best interpretation of federal law.” The agency has upended its management mission in the NPR-A from one led by responsible resource development to one defined by relentless conservation. BLM should have allowed the courts to review and decide on the multiple challenges to the final rule before issuing the RFI. The agency should instead use the next IAP process to decide the future of Special Areas.

“The process by which BLM is undertaking the RFI is not transparent, will hide relevant information from policymakers and the public, and any decisions based on it will be unilaterally made behind closed doors without a true public process,” the delegation wrote.

Throughout the development of the new NPR-A land management rule the BLM has failed to engage with North Slope communities and tribal groups, the delegation said.

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This reluctance to engage locally is illustrated in the request for information itself, which says that rather than publishing any information received from the public the BLM instead may post the responses on its website and may use the information that it finds suitable, the delegation's letter said.

"BLM's use of 'may' here is a clear indication that BLM will pick and choose specific information, as it sees fit, to tailor its likely decision to expand Special Areas," the delegation wrote.

There have been protected areas in the NPR-A for years, in fact since the reserve was transferred from the U.S. Navy (it was then Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4) to the BLM in 1976 federal legislation. But the notion that protected areas can be periodically changed, and enlarged, is new with the land rule adopted last summer.

For example, since 1976 coastal areas important to migrating waterfowl as well as Teshepuk Lake, a large freshwater coastal water body have been off-limits to oil and gas development. These restrictions were maintained even during the pro-development administration of President Donald Trump.

To some extent this was a difficult pill to swallow for the oil and gas industry and the state of Alaska, which shares in petroleum royalties from production in the reserve, because some of the most prospective geology for oil and gas discoveries lies under the coastal areas, which are mostly ecologically-sensitive wetlands.

Despite all of this, the reserve is not pristine wilderness.

It was created in 1923 by President Warren Harding as a reserve of potential oil discoveries for the U.S. Navy, after government geologists advised Harding that the region held oil prospects.

There was no exploration until after World War II, however, when the Navy mounted an extensive regional drilling program that yielded a small oil discovery at Umiat, near the Colville River at the southeast boundary of the reserve, and a natural gas discovery at Barrow (now Utiagvik).

The oil at Umiat was not a commercial-scale find but the gas field at Barrow was large enough to provide energy for the community, and still does.

It was only in recent years and with use of modern technology that companies have found commercial-scale deposits that are now being produced, at GMT-1 and GMT-2, and planned for development, as at Willow.



"Instead of establishing a publicly accessible outreach docket, BLM has asked for comments to be submitted by email, a private format which diminishes the transparency of stakeholder engagement. The current RFI process, with its limited visibility and lack of transparency, runs contrary to the practices BLM has historically followed."

— *Kara Moriarty, CEO,  
Alaska Oil and Gas Association*



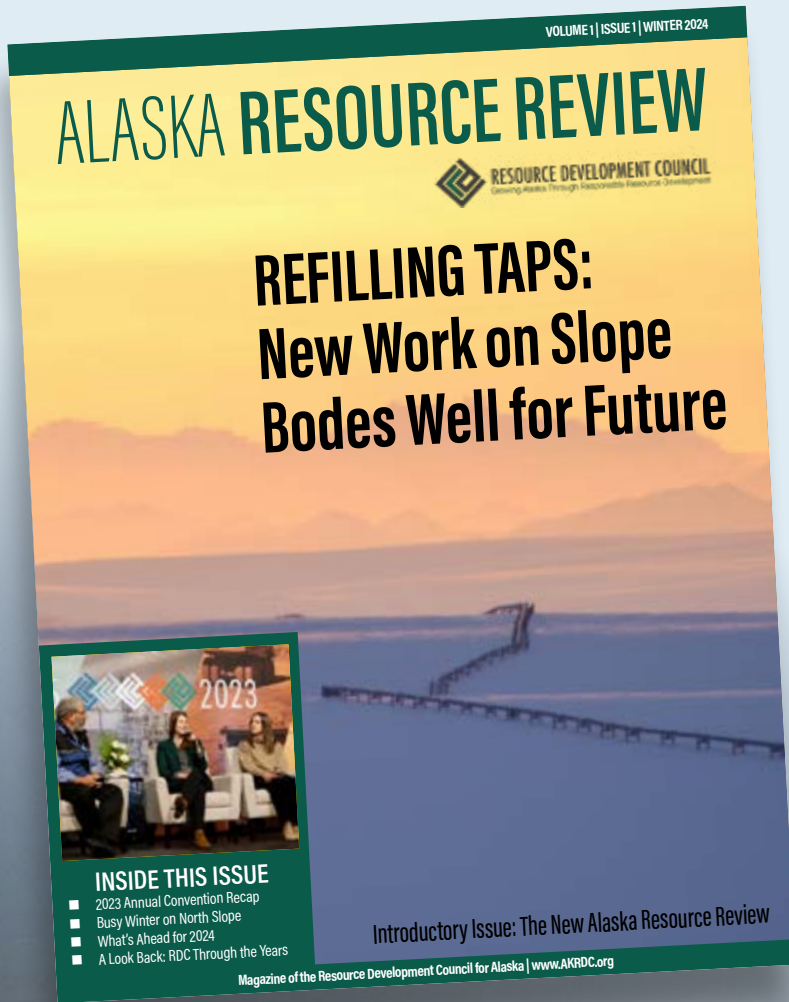
MINING

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**Welcome to the new Alaska Resource Review!** This magazine in both print and online editions is the new official publication of the Resource Development Council for Alaska. This publication is our newest tool to help the RDC in advocating for all five of Alaska's key resource industries—oil and gas, mining, fisheries, forestry, and tourism.

When the first issue of Resource Review was published in 1978, our organization was named the Organization for Management of Alaska's Resources Inc. (OMAR), and we were focused on building and maintaining the Trans Alaska Pipeline. We became the RDC three years later and our mission grew to represent all our resource industries.

On the following pages you will see just a few snapshots of Resource Reviews from the our first 40 years! It's both amazing and humbling how much the faces have changed, but the stories and the challenges remain the same!

In future issues of Alaska Resource Review, we will keep you abreast of key issues we need to address, what's happening inside the RDC and with our members, as well as putting a very human, Alaskan face on the people who get it done right in Alaska!

Our readership is now worldwide. Our goal is reaching key leaders with correct, current, compelling information on the importance of developing Alaska's resources for the good of both our state and our country.

We hope you enjoy our work here and support what we do. We encourage you to join this effort with suggestions, stories, or story ideas, and to share this publication both with others In your team but especially those beyond our borders and industries who need to hear these stories.

Enjoy!

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# TOURISM: JUNEAU BALLOT MEASURE DEFEATED

Ballot proposition would have reduced cruise ship days

BY TIM BRADNER

**A BALLOT PROPOSITION THAT WOULD HAVE REDUCED THE DAYS THAT CRUISE SHIPS CAN VISIT JUNEAU HAS BEEN DEFEATED, TO THE RELIEF OF THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND TOUR OPERATORS.**

Proposition 2, eliminating ship visits on Saturdays and the Fourth of July, was failing with over 3,873 “no” votes to about 2,600 “yes” votes.

The question was on the City and Borough of Juneau election ballot. Eliminating a Saturday visit would have cut \$30 million in visitor spending from Juneau’s economy, affecting 440 local businesses, and \$4 million in municipal tax and fee revenues. Annually, cruise ships contribute \$18 million in taxes and fees to the municipal government and create about 4,000 jobs.

For cruise companies, the problem Proposition 2 would have created is a disruption of a ship schedules. If Juneau were eliminated for a day, where would the ship go? Although defeated this year, the issue will be back. The strength of the “yes” vote indicates that the proposal will be back again, and industry officials are girding for future fights.

Meanwhile, it’s a little early for firm data, but tourism operators say the 2024 summer visitor season appears to be about level with 2023, a year that did show growth. Cruise ships, the big driver in the visitor industry, are expected to bring about 1.7 million passengers north this year, about even with last year, cruise operators say.

There’s mixed data on independent travelers, but one trend is that those visiting are spending more this year. Visitors to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, mostly independents, accounted for 20 percent of consumers’ discretionary spending in the



region in August, up from 16 percent in the same month last year. That’s according to credit card data tracked by the Mat-Su Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Winter tourism is doing well and the coming season is poised to grow both in Mat-Su and in Interior Alaska. September marks the start of the “Aurora” season in Interior Alaska, when the skies get dark enough to see the Northern Lights.

With aurora-watching a key winter attraction, Fairbanks saw an increase in its 2024 January-through-May municipal hotel/motel “bed tax” revenues of 31 percent, according to Explore Fairbanks, the regional visitor marketing bureau. However, rising prices for lodging accounts for some of that.

Daily room rates from January through June in Fairbanks averaged \$188, a 16 percent increase over the average of \$162 for January through June 2023. Fairbanks hotel and motel occupancy rates averaged 68 percent for the January through June period, a slight decrease from 70 percent for the comparable period of 2023.

Short term rentals in Fairbanks increased by 27 percent last winter and spring, tracking a similar increase in Mat-Su. The average daily rate for short-term rentals in Fairbanks was up 54 percent for the winter period, increasing from \$122 per day in

2023 to \$188 per day in 2024, McCrea said.

Local bed tax revenues in the peak winter tourism months of March and April revenues were \$518,024 and \$504,388, which is almost half of the peak summer revenues of \$1 million to \$1.1 million per month. In contrast, the November through February bed tax revenues were in the \$350,000 range per month.

Visitor data on independent travel is mixed. The overall impression among tour operators is that it is generally flat, but Explore Fairbanks said combined air arrivals and departures at Fairbanks International Airport were up 6 percent, which is slightly above pre-pandemic 2019 for the period. Another indicator for independent travel in the Interior is Alaska Railroad ridership, which was up 9 percent from January through July compared with the same months of 2023.

In another development, the National Park Service said tourism to Alaska’s National Parks, a key attraction, rebounded last year to pre-pandemic levels. About 3.3 million visitors visited Alaska’s 23 national parks in 2023, spending about \$1.5 billion during their visits, the park service said.

Total Alaska economic impacts of the national parks reached \$2.3 billion, the park service said.

# COOK INLET GAS SUPPLY CRUNCH STILL REMAINS

Enstar could see shortage in contracted gas supply in 2025

BY TIM BRADNER

## THE COOK INLET GAS SUPPLY SITUATION ISN'T GETTING BETTER.

Enstar Natural Gas Co. said it is facing a shortfall in contracted gas supply of about 6 billion cubic feet (bcf) in 2025, with an expectation that similar annual shortfalls will continue.

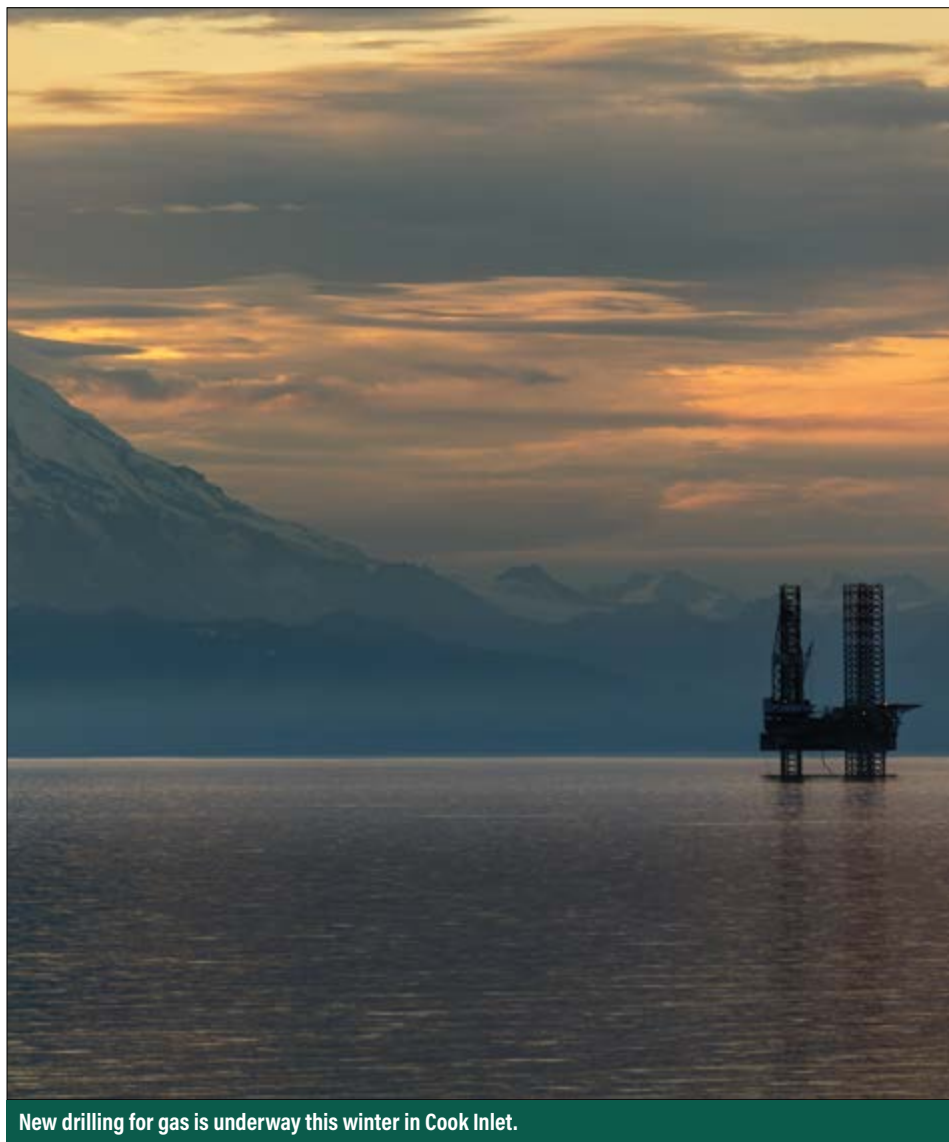
This is not a production shortfall, although that could happen in 2027. It results because Enstar has not been able to get the supply under contract. The utility needs 37 bcf to 38 bcf per year to meet Southcentral regional gas demand, which is mostly for space heating of homes and buildings.

It's likely the shortfall will be met by Hilcorp Energy, the Inlet's dominant gas producer, or by HEX Alaska, a small Alaskan-based company that is also producing in the Inlet. Both companies are drilling new gas wells, but neither company can say now that new gas will be available.

Hilcorp has about 20 new gas wells planned this year, but it isn't known how many of those are being drilled to maintain production in existing reservoirs or whether any are targeted at new gas from separate accumulations.

HEX, however, is drilling for new gas from its Julius R platform in the company's Kitchen Lights gas field. In early October HEX began drilling a "sidetrack," a new lateral well drilled out from an existing well bore. The sidetrack was drilled about 6,000 feet to a prospect with good potential for containing gas, company CEO John Hendrix said.

A second sidetrack could be drilled, if the state Department of Natural Resources



New drilling for gas is underway this winter in Cook Inlet.

is able to grant relief of state royalty, to improve the economics of the well, Hendrix said.

"We're taking on this risk (for the first sidetrack) by ourselves. We're sticking our necks out," he said.

HEX needed a jack-up rig to do the sidetracks from its platform and Hilcorp Energy make its rig available, the only one in Cook Inlet. Hilcorp purchased the Spartan 151 jack-up rig from Spartan Drilling Co. last summer. Spartan has

been using the unit in the Inlet for several years, working for Hilcorp and other companies.

With wintry weather approaching, Southcentral Alaska residents hope to avoid a repeat of last January's problems with natural gas. Those were created by a mechanical malfunction in a gas storage facility operated by Enstar and it happened in a period of intense cold. Hilcorp Energy, Cook Inlet's major producer, keeps gas in storage for its customers and



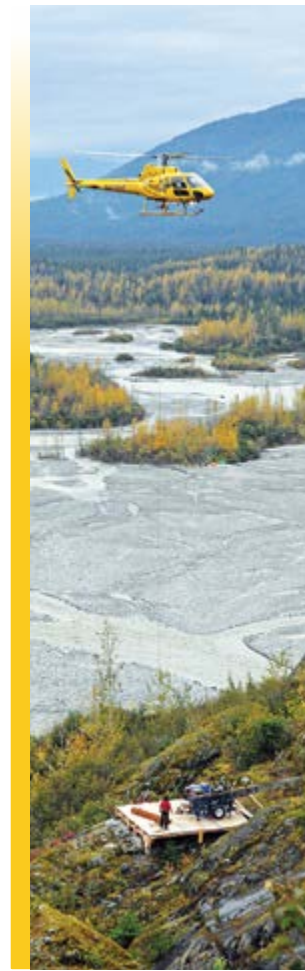
the company made extra gas available from storage last winter to help Enstar.

The problem last year was resolved, but it focused attention on the larger issue of a shortfall in the overall gas supply. Enstar may feel the first of that in 2025, but it will become more prominent in 2027 as overall gas production in the Inlet falls short of demand, state Division of Oil and Gas officials have said. The shortfall will increase by 2030 and beyond.

Regulated utilities are required to show they have resources on hand to meet consumers' requirements. As a fallback Enstar and the two regional electric cooperatives, Chugach Electric and Matanuska Electric Association, are working on a plan to import liquefied natural gas, or LNG.

Enstar has said it will have an LNG supply source under contract by January, but the LNG couldn't be delivered until 2029 or later. There will be an extra cost to this, also. Enstar's Alaska CEO John Sims also said the price of imported LNG could be about twice the approximate \$8 per million cubic feet now paid in Southcentral, although this would be for only the incremental supply needed.

There are also regulatory issues with any LNG import plan, and these will take time to resolve. The Regulatory Commission of Alaska must approve LNG purchases and the price as well as any capital investments needed to manage the liquefied gas.



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# RAIL TO NORTH SLOPE SHOULD BE REVISITED

Son of former governor touts improvements that could be beneficial

BY TIM BRADNER

**IN THE LATE 1960S, FORMER ALASKA GOV. WALTER HICKEL SAID A RAILROAD TO THE NORTH SLOPE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN LIEU OF A PIPELINE TO TAP LARGE NEW OIL DISCOVERIES.**

The Prudhoe Bay discovery was confirmed in 1969 and, as oil companies began discussions about how to get oil off the North Slope, a pipeline seemed the best prospect. Hickel's idea of a railroad wasn't taken seriously. It was even joked about within the companies.

It's likely the pipeline was the best option then, but the rail option was never seriously investigated.

Fast-forward to 2024.

For several reasons, it might now be worth a revisit, says Brian Murkowski, an energy consultant and also son of former Gov. Frank Murkowski, who championed Alaska Railroad expansions for years as a U.S. senator, then as Alaska governor, and now in retirement as a frequent commentator.

Frank Murkowski's vision was a rail connection to the Lower 48 through Canada. That would involve an extension of the present Alaska Railroad east from its northern terminus in Fairbanks to Delta and Yukon Territory at the Alaska-Canada border, where it would link with a railroad built north through British Columbia and Yukon.

That plan should be considered, but so could a rail extension north from Fairbanks, Brian Murkowski said. Limited work on a northern rail has been done, but the information is now dated.

"Prior to construction of the Haul Road

In January, Harvest Midstream, an affiliate of Hilcorp Energy, will begin selling liquefied natural gas, or LNG, at its new LNG plant at Prudhoe Bay. The Interior Gas Utility, the customer, will truck the LNG to Fairbanks. If rail were available, LNG could be shipped at a lower cost.

(now the Dalton Highway) and TAPS, the U.S. Department of Transportation prepared detailed alignment and engineering studies to extend rail 470 miles from Nenana to Prudhoe Bay," Murkowski wrote in a white paper he recently co-authored on the rail idea.



BRIAN MURKOWSKI

"The concept remained in the Alaska Railroad's extension plan until the mid-1980s, but then faded away due to lack of demand by the North Slope oil industry."

The transportation needs of the North Slope were met

by the pipeline for oil movement and by the Dalton Highway for oilfield support by trucking, Murkowski wrote in his paper.

The pipeline remains an efficient way to move oil, but over time North Slope production will decline and the per-barrel cost of moving oil will increase. At some point Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., the TAPS operator, has said the system will also encounter operating problems.

An expensive reconfiguration may be needed, such as "batching," or periodic operation of the pipeline with crude oil stored on the North Slope and shipped in batches. At that point, the per-barrel cost will rise substantially.

Rail might be an option in meeting this.

Not only is crude oil transport by train done in the Lower 48, but the flexibility of rail could reduce exploration and production costs for future activities on the Slope, allowing producers to book more reserves. It opens up possibilities of making petrochemical products on the North Slope and shipping them south by rail.

In January, Harvest Midstream, an affiliate of Hilcorp Energy, will begin selling liquefied natural gas, or LNG, at its new LNG plant at Prudhoe Bay. The Interior Gas Utility, the customer, will truck the LNG to Fairbanks. If rail were available, LNG could be shipped at a lower cost.

Harvest could also enlarge its plant, and the service could be extended to Southcentral Alaska, where there are looming shortages of natural gas.

LNG shipment by rail will need federal approval, but the Alaska Railroad conducted a demonstration of this under a special federal program to show it can be done safely.

Other products can be made and shipped from the slope. Alyeschem, a small Alaska-based company, is building a North Slope plant to make methanol for local customers. The plant could eventually make products and ship to elsewhere.

Rail could facilitate that, too, as well as mining development in the Ambler region. Since rail is two-way, equipment and materials can be shipped north as well as ore, LNG or crude oil shipped south.



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# ASRC ENERGY SERVICES, LLC. AND SANTOS LTD. WIN \$50M FOR CARBON STORAGE HUB

## Department of Energy funding to go toward North Slope site

**ASRC ENERGY SERVICES LLC AND SANTOS LTD WERE AWARDED A \$50 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT TO STUDY THE STATE'S FIRST MAJOR UNDERGROUND CARBON STORAGE FACILITY.**

The funding was part of \$518 million announced by the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) on Oct. 21 to support 23 selected projects across 19 states. The intent is to fight climate change by developing the infrastructure needed for national decarbonization.

According to a news release, ASRC Energy Services, LLC (Anchorage) and Santos, Ltd (Anchorage) plan to advance toward the development of a commercial large-scale CO<sub>2</sub> storage hub in the North Slope region of Alaska – The North to the Future Carbon Capture and Sequestration Hub and meet all requirements necessary to reach a financial investment decision for construction.

The project will leverage expertise and infrastructure in the region to maximize the utilization of resources and minimize environmental impact while supporting local economic development. The partners plan to drill one stratigraphic well, study transport options and assess the feasibility of CO<sub>2</sub> from area emitters, develop a storage field development plan, undertake National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

activities, and initiate application for an underground injection control (UIC) Class VI permit.

The initial hub design consists of two injection wells and transport pipelines for two localized regions of CO<sub>2</sub> emitters. The project plans to advance the development and deployment of carbon capture and storage in the industrial center of Alaska by providing a dedicated storage location for point source and direct air capture projects.

ASRC Energy Services (ASRC Energy) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), the largest business established and headquartered in Alaska for three decades. With nearly 40 years of experience working in the world's most challenging environments, ASRC Energy has earned its reputation as the service provider of choice to the energy industry.

Santos is a global energy company with operations across Australia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and the United States. The company provides reliable, affordable energy for progress and seeks to provide lower carbon energy over time. Santos' focus in Alaska is advancement of the Pikka Phase 1 project. Pikka will be net zero carbon emissions (equity share) which includes a single drill site, an oil processing facility, and other infrastructure to support production of 80,000 barrels of oil per day.

Santos is a global leader in Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology having recently completed and commissioned the Moomba Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) project in Australia. Moomba is now online and storing CO<sub>2</sub> in Cooper

Basin depleted reservoirs at full rate. Santos expects to inject approximately 250,000 tonnes (gross) of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2024, with the project already at full injection rates.

According to their annual sustainability report, CCS is the centerpiece of Santos' decarbonization strategy, meeting the global demand for decarbonization services and facilities whilst laying the foundation for the low carbon fuels of the future.

Beyond the DOE Funding of \$50,342,750, another \$12.5 million in additional funding will bring the project's total pre-FID cost to almost \$63 million.

Twenty-three projects were selected for negotiation to support the development of new and expanded commercial large-scale carbon storage projects with the capability to store 50 or more million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> over a 30-year period.

All projects will support the Carbon Storage Assurance Facility Enterprise (CarbonSAFE) Initiative, managed by FECM, and focus on the detailed site characterization, planning, permitting, and construction stages of project development under CarbonSAFE.

AES and Santos thanks the Department of Energy for their commitment to partnering with local companies to find innovative solutions for the future. The partners also thanked Governor Mike Dunleavy and the Alaska Legislature for their commitment and support of CCS technology through passage of HB50, along with Alaska's Congressional Delegation for their support in bringing this critical funding to Alaska.



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**Patrick Bergt**  
Alaska Communications

**Ethan Berto**  
Cruise Lines Agency of Alaska

**Jack Blackwell**  
Chugach Alaska Corporation

**Eric Cannon**  
Geologist

**Patrick Carter**  
The Carter Company

**David Chaput**  
Alaska Frontier Constructors

**Ivan Clark**  
SRK Consulting (U.S.) Inc.

**Steve Cooper**  
ENSTAR Natural Gas Company

**Kelly Droop**  
Pape Kenworth

**Michelle Egan**  
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company

**Matt Emerson**  
RESPEC

**Dylan Faber**  
Matson

**Mike Ferris**  
Alaska Enterprise Solutions

**Patrick FitzGerald**  
Teamsters Local 959

**Paul Friese**  
Lynden

**Kaleb Froehlich**  
Ambler Metals

**Stephen Grabacki**  
GRAYSTAR Pacific, Inc.

**Karl Hanneman**  
Tower Hill Mines

**Shalon Harrington**  
Cook Inlet Regional Inc.

**Chuck Heath**  
Hawk Consultants

**Jim Hill**  
AllPro Alaska Toyota

**Jacob Howdeshell**  
Alaska Laborers/Local 942

**Mike Jungreis**  
Reeves Amodio LLC

**Anna Kohl**  
HDR, Inc.

**Jaeleen Kookesh**  
Van Ness Feldman LLP

**Jesse Kreger**  
Koniag

**Francis LaChapelle**  
MTA

**Tom Lovas**  
Energy & Resource Economics

**Wendie MacNaughton**  
Northern Star Resources Limited

**Stephanie Madsen**  
At-Sea Processors Association

**Tom Maloney**  
Unaffiliated

**Shannon Martin**  
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**Jamie Marunde**  
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**Karen Matthias**  
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**Joey Merrick**  
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**Hans Neidig**  
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**Joe Nelson**  
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**Krystal Nelson**  
Bering Straits Native Corporation

**Sarah Obed**  
Doyon, Ltd.

**Lisa Parker**  
Parker Horn Company

**Judy Patrick**  
Judy Patrick Photography

**Mike Schaffner**  
Graphite One (Alaska) Inc.

**Ben Schulman**  
Northrim Bank

**Jim Shine**  
Legal and Land Consultant

**Kyle Smith**  
Eklutna, Inc.

**Chad Steadman**  
First National Bank Alaska

**Brady Strahl**  
Arctic Slope Regional Corporation

**John Sturgeon**  
Koncor Forest Products

**Christy Terry**  
Alaska Railroad Corporation

**Kristina Woolston**  
Old Harbor Native Corporation

# RDC STAFF

**Leila Kimbrell**  
Executive Director

**Jennifer Kuhlmann**  
Membership & Events Manager

**Connor Hajdukovich**  
External Affairs & Policy Coordinator



1975 2024

revised 10/15/2024



“We’ve seen full houses at our breakfast forums since they resumed in September! We’ve been busy planning and organizing our events, including the upcoming Alaska Resources Conference.”

— *Jennifer Kuhlmann,*  
*Membership & Events Manager, RDC*

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

## GREETINGS FROM RDC!

I hope this finds you well as you prepare for the Alaska winter! It’s time to wax those skis and unpack your winter coat and boots!

As we head into the colder months, I want to express my appreciation for all our Corporate and Individual Members. Your ongoing support and engagement are vital in helping RDC continue its mission of Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development.

We’ve seen full houses at our breakfast forums since they resumed in September, and we hope to maintain that momentum! Since the summer, we’ve been busy planning and organizing our events, including the upcoming Alaska Resources Conference. Through this process, we’ve welcomed over a dozen new members to our growing family!

Please join me in welcoming our newest members, listed on the next page.

As always, you can see our full list of members on our website!

## NOT A MEMBER? CHECK OUT WHAT BECOMING AN RDC MEMBER CAN DO FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNITY:

### CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBER BENEFITS

You and your employees (or you, as an Individual Member) will receive:

- A commitment from RDC to advocate for the responsible development of Alaska’s natural resources
- Regular email notifications of critical issues facing our industries.

- Invitations to RDC’s public forums highlighting those issues. These forums include our Thursday breakfast series, Annual Membership Luncheon, and other special luncheons, as well as our Annual Alaska Resources Conference, which was attended by nearly 1,000 working professionals in 2023!

- Excellent opportunities to learn more about ongoing development projects in the state and valuable networking opportunities at all our events throughout the year.

- Members will receive RDC’s informative issue-based magazine, Alaska Resource Review, published four times per year.

- Member discounts on our Breakfast Forum series, luncheon registrations, and conference exhibitor booths and registration.

- As a Corporate Member, we will list your organization on the RDC website with a link directed to your organization’s website. As an Individual Member, we will list your name on our Individual Members page.

### MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

We are often asked about the differences between our levels of membership. You may decide which level you think is most appropriate for you as an individual or an organization. Many companies consider their size and budget, and their expected participation in RDC. We encourage companies to join as corporate members as there are additional benefits that apply to the corporate membership

levels. We know each organization is different, so please contact me directly to discuss your options!

Membership is a one-year term with an annual fee:

#### INDIVIDUAL

- Basic: \$75
- Silver: \$150
- Gold: \$300
- Platinum: \$500 and up

#### CORPORATE

- Basic: \$500
- Silver: \$750
- Gold: \$1,500
- Platinum: \$3,000 and up

#### CURRENT MEMBERS

Already a member, but need to update your profile? Please email me at [jennifer@akrdc.org](mailto:jennifer@akrdc.org) for any address and corporate contact updates. We want to make sure you continue to receive our correspondence and event updates throughout the year!

I’m looking forward to what the rest of the year holds for us and look forward to seeing you at our next RDC event! Please don’t hesitate to give me a call or send me an email with any questions or suggestions.

Welcome winter!

Jennifer Kuhlmann  
Membership & Events Manager  
907-276-0700 option 2



### INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

- ◆ Eric Cannon
- ◆ Steve Connelly
- ◆ Lee Cruise
- ◆ Colin Krieger
- ◆ Tobias Miller
- ◆ Maria Sanders
- ◆ Bernie Smith
- ◆ Kelly Stewart
- ◆ Kristina Storlie

### CORPORATE MEMBERS

- ◆ AIX Energy, LLC
- ◆ Alaska Air Cargo
- ◆ Alaska Chadux Network
- ◆ Alaska Remote Imaging
- ◆ Alyeska Resort
- ◆ Anvil Corporation
- ◆ Avanza, Alaska, Inc.
- ◆ Benthic Geoscience, Inc.
- ◆ Brilliant Media Strategies
- ◆ Delta Airlines
- ◆ Equipment Source, Inc.
- ◆ F/V Resilient, Resilient Fisheries
- ◆ Far North Supply, Inc.
- ◆ Old Harbor Native Corporation
- ◆ Petroleum Club of Anchorage
- ◆ Sheet Metal, Inc.



**RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**  
Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

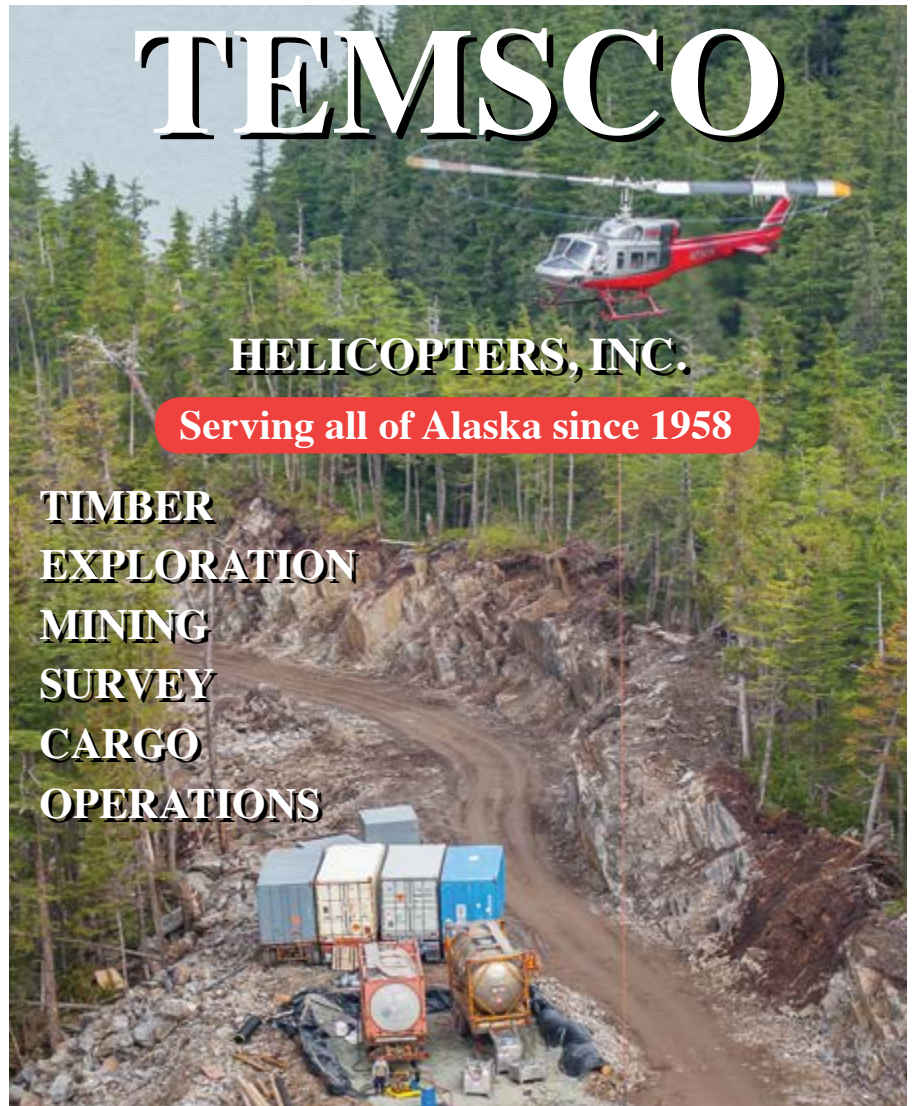
THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR ALASKA is a statewide trade association composed of individuals and companies from Alaska's fishing, forestry, mining, oil and gas, and tourism industries. RDC's membership includes Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

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## DON'T MISS OUT!

Join us every other Thursday morning this winter for our RDC Breakfast Forum, 7 a.m., Dena'ina Center, Anchorage.

Powerful updates, information from and conversation with Alaska's leaders and leading industries. See the schedule and upcoming speakers at [www.akrdc.org/breakfast-forum](http://www.akrdc.org/breakfast-forum).

And if you can't attend, we've got you covered! Every presentation is recorded and archived, so you can watch anywhere, anytime!



# SAVE THE DATE!

## 45TH ANNUAL ALASKA RESOURCES CONFERENCE

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- **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES** • **EXHIBIT HALL** •

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