

ALASKA RESOURCE REVIEW



CELEBRATING THE RDC PIONEERS

Carl Portman reflects on years of service,
work with champions for State of Alaska



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Trump Delivers on Alaska Promises
- ANWR, NPR-A in the spotlight
- RDC Outreach Trip to Cordova!
- Legacy of Partnership in Fisheries



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"Our founding fathers had a vision and recognized that, regardless of the industry, we all face similar challenges when it comes to ensuring we have the ability to responsibly develop our resources."

— *Leila Kimbrell, Executive Director, RDC*

FAMILY, CONNECTIONS, DOING WHAT IS RIGHT DEFINES RDC

DEAR RDC MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS, This edition reflects on our past and really leans in to celebrating our 50 years of existence. It has been a lot of fun hearing stories and learning more of the history of RDC over the past year as we comb through our archives and reconnect with past members!

I especially want to thank all our guest contributors who have highlighted the impact their involvement with RDC has had. There is a secret sauce here and a special magic that makes RDC work.

I cannot wait to see what the next 50 years bring us! Our founding fathers had a vision and recognized that, regardless of the industry, we all face similar challenges when it comes to ensuring we have the ability to responsibly develop our resources.

Our advocacy for fair regulatory policy and stable tax regimes over the years has allowed our industries to ride the highs and lows that come with any economy. As RDC has enhanced its federal outreach over the past few years, we have earned accolades for the way we bring our different industries together to

**THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN FOR READING
AND FOR YOUR SUPPORT. AS ALWAYS,
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IDEAS. PLEASE SEND THEM IN TO
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advocate for the common good.

Yet, I think us Alaskans just look at this is what we do. I often feel like I sound like a broken record, but we truly could not do this without your continued support of our mission and vision for a strong Alaska.

And now, on to the next 50 years! Here at RDC, we are one big family and I am excited to preview and point you to an interview later in this edition with board member Jim Hill and his high school daughter, Anna, who recently joined us in our annual board member outreach trip in Cordova.

Not only was it incredible to have a member of the next generation with us to learn more about Alaska and our regional resources and capabilities, it put me down memory road of my own youth ... Growing up, I had to

"tag along" to numerous civic, chamber and assembly meetings. I did not have a choice then (no babysitter!) but in hindsight, it was a great experience that I would not trade in. You get to see firsthand just how much people care for their local communities and engage their time to ensure their success. It was awesome to have a "willing participant," if you will, wanting to hang out with a bunch of old folks for three days in Cordova! (Anna — you are a rock star and we cannot wait to see where your love for Alaska and your career takes you!)

Looking ahead, we are in full planning mode for our fall conference. Be sure to mark your calendars for Nov. 12-13, 2025, and check our website for updates. Can't wait to see you all there!

Yours resourcefully,
Leila Kimbrell,
Executive Director

PAGE 26**VISIT TO CORDOVA HIGHLIGHTS****IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY**

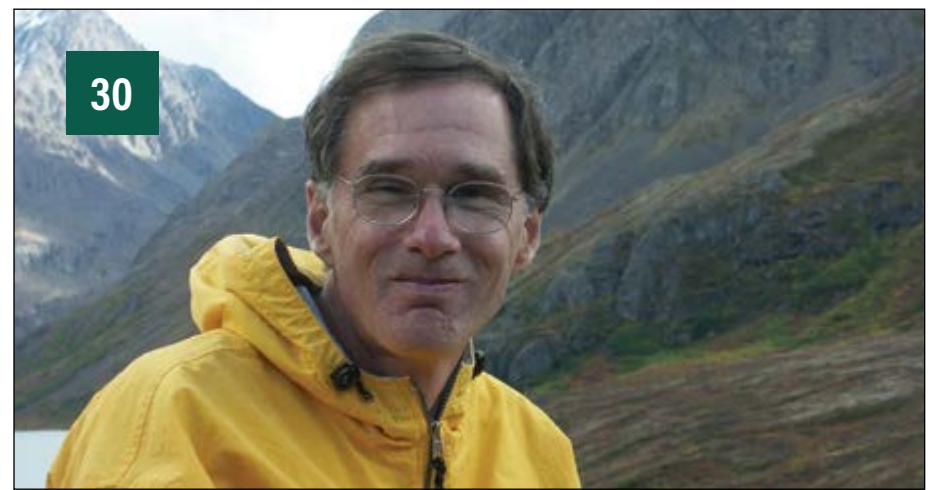
The RDC Board of Directors recently took its annual outreach trip to Cordova, giving our board members a real firsthand look at the glory and challenges of our important Alaskan cities. Thank you to the Cordova community for welcoming us and making us feel right at home!



26

PAGE 30**LOOKING BACK AT THE RDC****THROUGH UPS AND DOWNS**

Carl Portman, who was a mainstay at the RDC for decades, looks back and offers his own personal insight into the challenges — and resounding successes — that the RDC and champions for Alaska have made during all these years.



30

PAGE 38**BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE OF FISHERIES**

More than 50 years ago, the vision that built Trident Seafoods was shaped by the same driving forces that launched the Resource Development Council, writes Trident CEO Joe Bundrant.



38

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"To all who have worked for, served, or supported RDC over the past five decades — thank you. And to those just joining the effort — welcome. The future is bright, and together, we will continue to shape it."

— *Scott Habberstad, President, RDC*

A LEGACY OF ADVOCACY, A FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITY

A S THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (RDC) MARKS ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY, WE CELEBRATE NOT ONLY A HALF-CENTURY OF TIRELESS ADVOCACY FOR ALASKA'S RESOURCE INDUSTRIES, BUT ALSO A PIVOTAL MOMENT IN OUR STATE'S ECONOMIC FUTURE.

From its founding in 1975, RDC has been a unifying voice for responsible development across Alaska's vast landscapes championing oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism and fisheries. Today, as we reflect on this legacy, we also look ahead with renewed optimism, thanks in part to the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill.

Signed into law July 4, 2025, this sweeping legislation will certainly be a game-changer for Alaska. Major portions of the bill address Alaska's unique needs, including unlocking long-sought opportunities across the state's resource sectors. It restores and codifies access to ANWR, NPR-A and Cook Inlet, ensuring regular lease sales and shielding Alaska from future regulatory over-

reach.

While public sentiment is divided, the bill also aims to deliver historic tax relief for working families and small businesses, enhance infrastructure and aviation safety, and make the largest investment in the U.S. Coast Guard in history — much of which is focused on Alaska.

For RDC and our partners, this moment is a culmination of decades of work — building coalitions, informing policy, and advocating for balanced, science-based development. This organization and our partners have long understood that Alaska's prosperity depends on our ability to responsibly access and manage our natural resources. The resource development portion of the One Big Beautiful Bill opens the door to that vision and gives us the opportunity to realize it.

As we look toward the next 50 years, RDC's role will be more important than ever. The opportunities ahead require the same collaborative, forward-think-

ing approach that has defined RDC since its founding. That is why this year's RDC Annual Convention on Nov. 12–13 in Anchorage, promises to be one of the most important gatherings in our history. We will reflect on the milestones that brought us here — and chart the course for the next 50 years. From critical minerals to carbon markets, from energy independence to Arctic infrastructure, the conversations we have this fall will shape Alaska's future.

As we celebrate RDC's golden anniversary, we do so with gratitude for the past and excitement for what lies ahead.

To all who have worked for, served, or supported RDC over the past five decades — thank you. And to those just joining the effort — welcome. The future is bright, and together, we will continue to shape it.

Thank you,

**Scott Habberstad,
RDC President**



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PRESIDENT'S PRIORITIES

FOCUS ON ALASKA ENERGY

Trump delivering on promise to unleash energy development

BY TIM BRADNER

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP PROMISED TO UNLEASH A NEW ERA OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN ALASKA, AND SO FAR HE'S ON THE ROAD TO DELIVERING ON THAT.

The federal budget reconciliation bill passed by Congress and now signed by the President, called his "Big Beautiful Bill," puts into law many of Trump's priorities for Alaska.

HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

- New lease sales are mandated on federal lands in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, or ANWR; the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, or NPR-A, and in Outer Continental Shelf waters of Lower Cook Inlet.

- Former Interior Secretary Deb Haaland's restrictive rules and expanded no-drilling areas in the NPR-A are reversed, reinstating prior land management rules in effect for years and returning the 23-million-acre NPR-A to its original purpose as a petroleum reserve.

- A repeal of the national forest "roadless rule," which blocked road construction in the large Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and hindered timber harvesting and community development. The roadless repeal will help in efforts to breathe new life into the small state's forest industry but there are other problems in timber land management in the Tongass that now need attention.

A REVAMP OF NEPA

One of the most consequential sections of the new law is a major restructuring of the National Environmental Protection Act, or NEPA, that allows project sponsors to secure an expedited schedule for envi-



President Donald Trump is hoping to fast-track future energy development across the country with a focus on Alaska.

ronmental reviews with the payment of a fee.

The expedited schedule would include a one-year timeline for completion of an Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, for federal permits for projects. There is also a 180-day timeline for the more streamlined Environmental Assessment, or EA, done for some projects. This is an important change because previously some EIS documents were taking years to complete.

The new law sets the fee at 125 percent of the estimated cost of the EIS or EA if it is prepared by a federal agency or if the environmental reviews are done by the project developer, 125 percent of the agency's estimated cost to supervise preparation of the EIS or EA.

This section, criticized by conservation groups as "pay to play," was toned down in the U.S. Senate from the version of the budget bill that passed the U.S. House. The House-passed bill included limitations on court challenges to EIS or EA documents. One other provision modified in the Sen-

ate was a section requiring Congress to approve most major federal regulations before they went into effect.

REVOKING OLD PUBLIC LAND ORDERS

There were other important changes in the final law that favor Alaska's resource industries, however. An important one revokes an old federal Public Land Order, or PLO, that blocked the state of Alaska from selecting lands for its statehood land entitlement in a corridor from the North Slope to Interior Alaska.

This is parallel and near the right-of-way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System but is a much wider area that includes lands prospective for mineral discoveries.

Also, changes were made in other old Public Land Orders, mainly in Interior Alaska, that includes lifting of restrictions on mining exploration. This will open up several million acres for exploration.

The state and Alaska's congressional delegation have worked for years to get old Public Land Orders lifted, many which date from the 1970s. Those efforts were fiercely opposed by conservation groups. The new federal law revokes the orders.

DOWNSIDES IN NEW LAW

There are, of course, some downsides for Alaska in the new law. One is the changes in Medicaid rules that while aimed at lowering costs on a national level will result in losses of Medicaid eligibility for Alaskans with modest incomes. This will reduce business for health care providers in the state including many offering primary care as well as community hospital who are already operating with slim margins.

The loss of access to health care will put burdens on hospital emergency rooms who by law cannot deny care. Hospitals' uncompensated care costs are typically passed on to other patients mainly under private employer health plans. This will drive up the cost of health care for private employers.

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IS THERE OIL IN ANWR?

ALASKA WILL SOON KNOW

Future development will continue to be at the forefront of politics

BY TIM BRADNER

ALASKANS HAVE WONDERED FOR DECADES WHETHER THERE IS REALLY OIL IN THE COASTAL PLAIN OF THE ALASKA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, COMMONLY CALLED ANWR.

For decades, ANWR has been a political football. As the big North Slope oil discoveries were developed, geologists started looking for where the next big finds could be made.

East of Prudhoe Bay the geology looked prospective. Rock outcrops the ANWR hinted at reservoir-type rocks below. There were oil seeps, indicating an active petroleum-generating system. Surface rocks were so oil-saturated that one geologic field party set an oil-stained boulder alight to help cook dinner.

Companies were interested. The federally owned lands weren't open but adjacent Alaska Native lands were available. BP and Chevron made a deal with Arctic Slope Regional Corp. to drill a test well southeast of Kaktovik, the Inupiat community at ANWR's northern border.

Things looked promising, but politics intervened. Conservation groups had been interested for years in putting a large part of northern Alaska into protected status and in 1960 they persuaded President Dwight Eisenhower, as he was leaving office, to administratively create the Arctic National Wildlife Range as protected federal land unit.

Designation of ANWR as a formal wildlife refuge, which requires congressional approval, came in 1980 with passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands and Conservation Act, or ANILCA, which created a number of new national parks and refuges including ANWR. The new refuge totaled 19.2 million acres.

At the time, there was a big push by conservation groups to also designate the new refuge as wilderness, the most restrictive form of federal protection. Eight million acres of ANWR did get a wilderness designation but Alaska's congressional delegation, then led by Sen. Ted Stevens, succeeded in carving off an enclave in the refuge's northern coastal plain, keeping it out of wilderness because of its oil and gas potential.

development finance agency. With support from Gov. Mike Dunleavy, AIDEA bid on and won leases in the lease sale. This was an unusual, and gutsy strategy done mainly as a hedge against no leases being bid on and the federal government retaining control, not a good outcome with President Joe Biden, who strongly opposed ANWR exploration, coming into office.

As it turned out, AIDEA's gamble paid off. The two small companies bidding winning leases gave those back to the government. AIDEA hung in there and applied for permits to do seismic exploration, which Deb Haaland, Biden's Interior Secretary, rejected. Haaland then went on to cancel AIDEA's leases.

The state authority filed a lawsuit, citing dubious legal grounds for the cancellation. AIDEA won its suit in early 2025 when U.S. District Court Judge Sharon Gleason invalidated Haaland's cancellation of the leases. Meanwhile, the Interior Department held the second leases sale required under the jobs and tax act but Haaland offered only minimal acreage and loaded the offering with restrictions so that there were no bids.

President Trump has restored AIDEA's leases and the authority is now busy planning exploration. AIDEA has said it doesn't intend to hang on to the leases but will do preliminary exploration and bring in private companies to be partners in development. Basically, this is a "farm-out" arrangement typical in private sector, where companies holding leases bring in others as developers.

Will commercial oil deposits be found? Only drilling will tell. Geologists have more confidence in the western part of the coastal plain that is near state of Alaska lands where oil and gas discoveries have been made. Another advantage is the infrastructure built 60 miles east from Prudhoe Bay to the Point Thomson gas and condensate field, which is now producing. The Point Thomson pipeline has spare capacity, which will help in the development of any oil found in ANWR.

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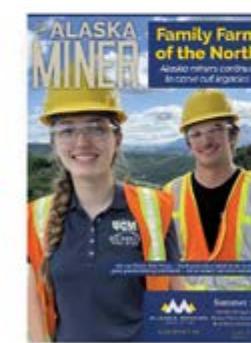
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AFTER OVER A CENTURY, VISION FOR NPR-A CLEAR

NPR-A comes into its own as an energy reserve for the nation

BY TIM BRADNER

FOR ALASKANS INTERESTED IN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, LITTLE HAS BEEN SO IRKSOME AS FORMER INTERIOR SECRETARY DEB HAALAND'S ACTION TO SHARPLY EXPAND PROTECTED AREAS IN THE NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE-ALASKA, OR NPR-A.

This included a provision for "pop-up" protected areas where the U.S. Bureau of Land Management could expand protected areas and create new ones every five years.

That's all gone now, or soon will be. President Trump's "Big Beautiful" budget reconciliation bill, now in law with the president's signature, restores the land management rules in place in 2020, before President Joe Biden took office and Haaland was appointed. As in ANWR, the President's bill also increased the royalty share to the state of Alaska from 50% to 70% but that happens in 2034.

The NPR-A is a large 23-million-acre federal enclave on the western North Slope set aside in 1923 for its oil potential by President Warren Harding. While no oil deposits were known at the time federal geologists surveying the area thought there was potential and recommended that Harding establish it as an oil reserve for the U.S. Navy.

This was just after World War I when it had become apparent to the world's navies that oil would become a major source of fuel for warships.

However, in recent years, conservation groups have pushed for the NPR-A to be managed more like a wildlife reserve, and in these ideas were receptive for Interior Secretaries under Democratic presidents including Haaland, under President Joe Biden, and Sally Jewell, under President Barack Obama.

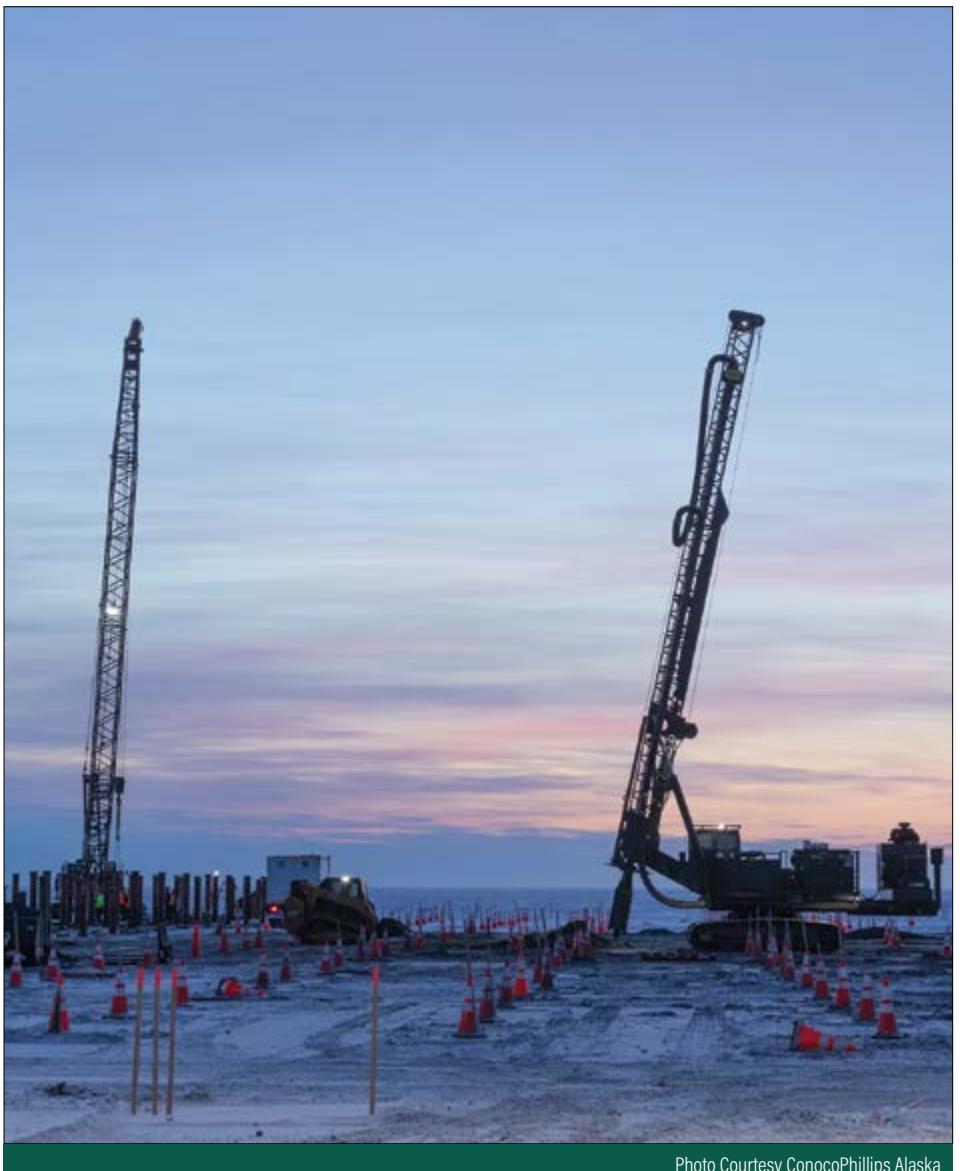


Photo Courtesy ConocoPhillips Alaska

When he was in Alaska this summer, new Interior Secretary Doug Burgum issued an order rescinding Haaland's restrictive regulations for the NPR-A including the moving protected areas. Burgum's order required a 60-day public comment period that expired Aug. 4. Following that, the new Secretary can make rescinding Haaland's rules official.

What was irritating to Alaskans with Haaland's actions, and those by former

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

There was, of course, language about land protection, which is what Haaland and Jewell cited when imposing new restrictions. The language on petroleum's part took a back seat.

It's unclear just what new Secretary Burgum will do with the new rules but it's likely the protected areas enlarged by Haaland will shrink back what they were in 2020. This is important because Haaland's protected areas covered an expanse of areas south and west of environmentally sensitive areas along the coast that had long been protected by Republican and Democratic presidents alike.

What is important is that Haaland put off-limits areas of prime prospectivity for oil and gas discoveries, geologists familiar with the region say. Discoveries have been made along the coast northwest of ConocoPhil-

lips's Willow project but restrictive rules by the federal government made it difficult for explorers to adequately test them or to build pipelines if the finds were developed.

Talisman Energy subsidiary FEX wanted to do tests of its onshore finds made in 2005 and 2006 and Caelus Energy desired further tests of a potentially important offshore discovery at nearby Smith Bay in 2015.

Caelus had found oil in shallow offshore waters on state-owned submerged land leases, but the federal government's restrictions in the NPR-A restricted access for the company for a pipeline corridor east to the Alpine field.

The work by Caelus and FEX, and more recently ConocoPhillips in areas where Willow is being developed, confirmed that substantial oil deposits can be found in the petroleum reserve. The views haven't always been positive about NPR-A, however.

For years, even decades, the region was a kind of graveyard for exploration. No oil searches were made from 1923 until after World War II, which demonstrated the U.S. Navy's need for secure oil supplies even more dramatically.

The Navy itself managed exploration drilling in the 1950s with a U.S. Seabee battalion with Arctic experience. However, drilling technology at the time had limited capabilities and the ability to map prospective underground targets was at an early stage. The result were many costly dry holes drilled over several years.

There was some limited success, however. A small oil deposit was found at Umiat, at the far southeast part of the reserve near the Colville River and at the boundary with state of Alaska lands. But the Umiat was not big enough for development, however.

A small gas field also was found at Barrow, an Inupiat community in the far

northern part of the reserve, now renamed Utqiagvik, but like Umiat's oil it was not a commercial-scale find. The gas was developed, however, to provide energy for the nearby Naval Arctic Research Laboratory and a U.S. Air Force DEWline radar site. Eventually gas was supplied to the local Inupiat community. The Barrow gas field still supplies gas to Utqiagvik.

But the government's bad luck with drilling continued into the 1970s when the U.S. Geological Survey took over management of exploration. It was only in the 1980s, when President Ronald Reagan decided to open the NPR-A to leasing by private companies, that modern technology and more efficient private management of exploration came to be used.

Bad luck continued, however. ARCO Alaska drilled a costly dry hole south of Barrow. BP drilled unsuccessfully in the region's east-central region. Other companies tried their luck, like Total, a major company based in France, all unsuccessful. It was BP's final exploration effort in Alaska, in fact. There was also an effort by Link Energy, a small independent, to further explore the Navy's early oil find at Umiat. Link was unsuccessful in finding enough oil at Umiat to merit development, but the company's innovations helped the overall effort.

One innovation was a long 99-mile snow road built by Link to Umiat from the Dalton Highway, a record distance, that demonstrated the use of snow compacting in areas where water was scarce for ice roads then commonly built for winter exploration.

These were expensive failures that discouraged industry. Success came finally when ConocoPhillips, with Anadarko Petroleum as a partner, developed the Alpine field in 1990 on state lands near the Colville River. After Alpine was built and producing, the two companies began looking west across the Colville River at adjacent federal lands in the NPR-A.

Exploration technology had advanced by then. A string of medium-sized discoveries were made in what came to be known as CD-5, GMT-1 and GMT-2, which would be uneconomic on their own but could be developed because they could be reached by roads and pipelines from the Alpine field. Most significant, on-site oil processing plants were not needed at the three smaller projects because the raw crude oil could be transported to Alpine's field plants

for processing.

When he was in Alaska this summer, new Interior Secretary Doug Burgum issued an order rescinding Haaland's restrictive regulations for the NPR-A including the moving protected areas. Burgum's order required a 60-day public comment period that expired Aug. 4. Following that, the new Secretary can make rescinding Haaland's rules official.

at Willow was needed. It is being built.

And just as the Alpine field facilities enabled smaller finds nearby to be developed, discoveries near Willow will become economic because of the proximity of the facilities at Willow. President Harding's vision of the NPR-A as adding strategic energy reserves for the nation, not just the Navy, is becoming true.

It has taken 100 years, however.

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Photo Courtesy HEX LLC

DISCOVERIES CONTINUE IN NATURAL GAS QUEST

HEX LLC adds finds in Inlet; more needed to stall LNG imports

BY TIM BRADNER

ALASKA INDEPENDENT HEX LLC IS FINDING MORE NATURAL GAS IN COOK INLET, WHERE SUPPLIES ARE FORECAST TO RUN LOW. THE NEW RESERVES ARE WELCOME, BUT A LOT MORE IS NEEDED.

HEX CEO John Hendrix said July 28 that two new wells recently drilled by the company

at the company's Kitchen Lights offshore gas field will be capable of producing at 3 million to 3.5 million cubic feet per day.

Another well, A-2A that was recently "worked over," or repaired, has been returned to production and is producing at about 3 billion cubic feet per day. That will bring total gas production from the field to 18 million cubic feet per day, a nice addition to Cook Inlet gas supply.

The state's development finance agency, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, or AIDEA, helped HEX finance its new drilling.

"AIDEA continues to support strategic

investments through our direct finance program that responsibly develop Alaska's natural resources for the benefit of all Alaskans," said AIDEA Chief Investment Officer Geoff Johns. "Furie's progress in Cook Inlet exemplifies the kind of local leadership and energy development that strengthens our economy, supports jobs, and enhances energy security across Southcentral Alaska."

Furie's success is a powerful reminder that Cook Inlet-produced energy is the best energy to supply Alaskans — clean, local and reliable, Johns said.

Natural gas is important to Southcentral Alaska communities because it supplies

most of the energy used for space heating in buildings and homes and also most of the energy for electric power generation. The approximate 9 million cubic feet per day from the two new wells and reworked A-2A well works out to about 1.2 billion cubic feet per year in additional gas.

In context, about 70 billion cubic feet per year of gas is used by consumers and industries in Southcentral Alaska, according to studies. Forty billion cubic feet per year of this is used for space heating in buildings. The remaining 30 billion is used in power generation and industrial uses, such as in powering Cook Inlet's offshore oil platforms and Marathon Petroleum's refinery at Nikiski, which supplies jet fuel and most of the state's gasoline supply.

While the drilling success by HEX shows there's more gas to be found in Cook Inlet some analysts say the 3 million to 3.5 million cubic feet per day rate on the two new wells is modest compared with past rates on new wells, which typically have been much higher.

Also, the gap projected between declining production and regional gas demand is worrisome. It grows substantially between

2028 and 2030, and beyond, according to studies by the state Division of Oil and Gas. In a presentation to the Resources Committee of the state House last November, the gap was shown to be 15 billion cubic feet in 2028, growing to 28 billion cubic feet by 2030, according to the division.

With demand estimated at 70 billion cubic feet yearly, that's a big supply deficit, and it will require either imported liquefied natural gas or a lot of new drilling to fill it, and likely both.

HEX isn't the only company drilling, though. Hilcorp Energy is working to add new supply also, mostly around gas fields Hilcorp now produces. Also, BlueCrest Energy, a small independent, also has a large gas resource at its Cosmopolitan field, which now produces oil. But developing that undeveloped gas will require at least one new gas production platform and new pipelines, requiring a big investment. AIDEA is now in discussions with BlueCrest on possible financing.

Hendrix sees considerable upside and likely more success for its steady pace of added wells from its existing platform, and if its exploration can continue the steady

additions to the Inlet's supply will at least help dent the coming shortfall.

In a symbolic gesture of legacy and local pride, Furie has officially renamed its production platform, formerly the Julius R. Platform to the Allegra Leigh Platform, honoring the first granddaughter of HEX CEO John and Candace Hendrix, a fourth-generation Alaskan.

About Furie Operating Alaska: Furie is the only 100% Alaskan-owned oil and gas production company in Alaska. Furie and its parent company, HEX Cook Inlet, LLC, are headquartered in Anchorage, Alaska, and are passionate about developing Alaska's resources for Alaskans. Furie operates only in Cook Inlet and only produces natural gas for Alaskans. Furie is committed to responsibly developing Alaska natural gas resources for Alaskans.

About AIDEA: Established by the Alaska State Legislature in 1967, AIDEA is an independently governed public corporation tasked with promoting the economic welfare of Alaskans. Through flexible financing solutions, AIDEA has invested over \$3 billion in projects that drive economic development and job creation across the state.

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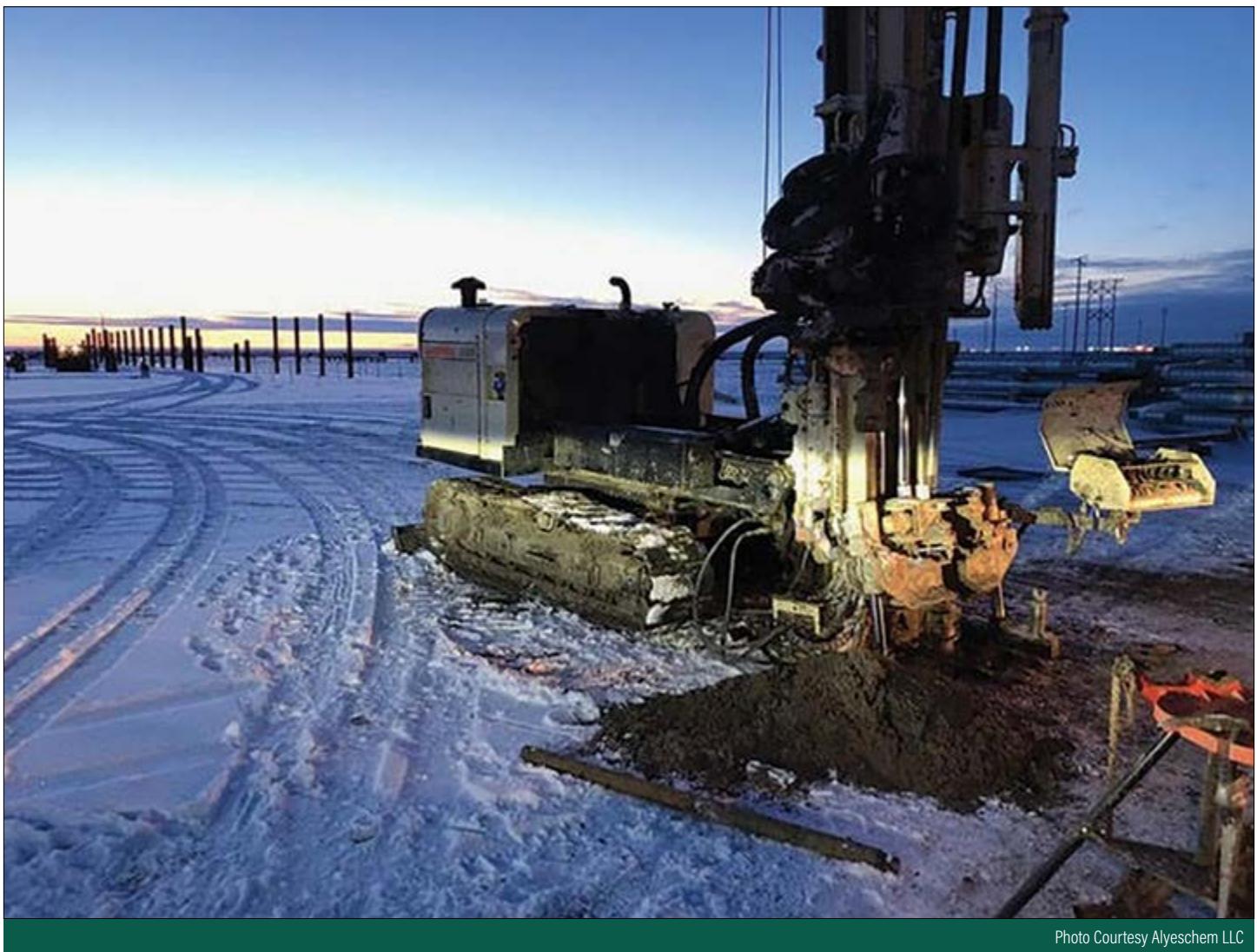


Photo Courtesy Alyeschem LLC

PETROCHEMICAL PLANT ON SLOPE UNDERWAY

AIDEA approves \$70M in construction funding for Alyeschem LLC

BY TIM BRADNER

ALASKA-BASED ALYESCHEM LLC HAS CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY FOR A \$130 MILLION PETROCHEMICAL PRODUCTION PLANT PLANNED AT PRUDHOE BAY, ON ALASKA'S NORTH SLOPE.

Fabrication of production modules is being done in Texas and on-site construction on the slope is to begin in early 2026, according to company CEO JR Wilcox.

Alaska's state development finance corporation, Alaska Development and Export Authority, approved \$70 million in construction financing on July 9. Partners in the project besides Alyeschem are McKinley Private Investment, also Alaska-based, and BP Energy Partners.

The plant will produce methanol and ultra-low sulfur diesel, reducing the need

for oil producers and support contractors to truck these liquids north on the Dalton Highway, the state-owned gravel road connecting the North Slope oilfields to Interior Alaska's highway system.

Methanol is used by producing companies in freeze-protection of wells and in protection of pipelines from corrosion.

Wilcox said the plant is planned to go into operation in late 2027 and will have a capacity to produce 31,500 gallons per day of methanol. Methanol is now trucked to the North Slope from southern Alaska.

Local production will take three trucks a day off the road, Wilcox said.

The methanol production process will also produce hydrogen, which can be used in the plant to upgrade high-sulfur diesel now locally produced from crude oil in "topping plants" on the slope to Ultra-Low Sulfur Diesel, or USLD, which is now required to be used in vehicles.

Alyeschem's plant will be able to produce 1,500 barrels a day of the USLD, which will take six trucks that now haul the fuel off the Dalton Highway. The combined reduction in trucking amounts to about 4,000 truck trips annually, reducing maintenance needs on the road.

Maintenance costs on the highway, a vital road link for producers, have been rising with heavy truck traffic supporting new oil activity on the Slope as well as erosion from heavy summer rains.

Wilcox said the plant can also become a "launchpad" for future production of other clean fuels and chemicals that can be used to enhance oil production, such as dimethyl ether, or DME.

"This facility is a solution to long-standing logistical challenges for producers. This will allow us to replace fluids needed for production now imported to the slope with locally made methanol and 'clean' diesel," Wilcox said.

Much of the methanol now used is made outside the U.S., barged several thousand miles to Southcentral Alaska, and then trucked 800 miles to the oilfields in northern Alaska, he said.

"The North Slope is a world-class energy basin and can be for generations to come, but its future hinges on the ability to lower operating costs, increase the resource base, monetize gas and adapt to changing markets. Value-added chemistry is an invaluable tool for addressing all of these challenges," Wilcox said.

The state and North Slope Borough will receive an estimated \$5 million yearly in new revenue mainly through property taxes. AIDEA itself will be paid an estimated \$2.39 million yearly in loan repayments with some of the construction loan repayments converted to a cents-per-gallon royalty.



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PROGRESS BEING MADE ON ENERGY RELIABILITY

Southcentral, Interior regions continue to face fuel source uncertainty

BY TIM BRADNER

THE OUTLOOK FOR ENERGY, ITS AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY, IS DECIDEDLY MIXED FOR SOUTHCENTRAL AND INTERIOR ALASKA, THE STATE'S MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS.

In Southcentral, the pending declines in natural gas production in Cook Inlet have become worrisome for business and community leaders. Imports of liquefied natural gas, or LNG, is the likely solution at least as a "bridge" until a better alternative is found.

But importing gas will be expensive and the burden of that will fall heavily on home and building owners in the region who have few alternatives and must heat with gas. Electrical generation also depends on gas but the two large electric cooperatives in the area, Chugach Electric Association and Matanuska Electric Association, have access to alternatives like power from hydro and smaller amounts from wind and solar.

In Fairbanks, the Interior Gas Utility (IGU), the community's natural gas utility has diversified its gas supply sources away from Cook Inlet and is now receiving truckloads of LNG from the North Slope where a new Harvest Alaska LNG plant is now operating. Harvest is an affiliate of Hilcorp Energy, which produces the gas.

This, in itself, is a notable achievement as first commercial use of the huge "stranded" reserves of natural gas from the North Slope, if only on a small scale.

LNG to Fairbanks also won't be cheap given the cost of trucking on the Dalton Highway, but the gas will at least be available, and there's a lot more where it comes from. Another advantage: The IGU and Hilcorp, the gas producer, can keep prices stable given the large gas resource on the Slope. This is in contrast with LNG im-



Photos Courtesy Alaska Energy Authority

The Bradley Lake hydroelectric project near Homer is to soon be expanded.

ported into Southcentral Alaska, which will have its price linked to international markets.

Before it started receiving LNG from the Slope, IGU trucked liquefied gas up the Parks Highway from a small gas liquefaction plant in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. But with Cook Inlet gas production set to decline, the Fairbanks-area utility decided to switch its source of gas to the North Slope, a wise choice.

Although the division keeps close tabs on the Inlet's gas wells and regularly updates its forecasts, the overall prediction hasn't changed. In 2028, the shortfall will amount to about 15 billion cubic feet of the approximate 70 billion cubic feet needed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



A helicopter flies near the site of Dixon Diversion.



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Photo Courtesy Golden Valley Electric Association

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

In 2029, the deficit will be 20 billion cubic feet and in 2030 it will be 28 billion cubic feet, according to the state's estimates. If this is correct, there will be a supply deficit of over a third of the regional gas demand by 2030.

Some new gas from Cook Inlet is becoming available with added supply from new wells drilled by HEX, owner of the Kitchen Lights offshore fields as well as Hilcorp, which is drilling new gas wells on the Kenai Peninsula. These are unlikely to offset the deficits, however, so planning is underway now on LNG imports to fill the gaps. Cost estimates aren't yet available, but they are generally thought to be half again or twice as much as the current cost of Cook Inlet gas.

To do the imports, Chugach Electric is working with Harvest Alaska on a plan to convert the mothballed former Cono-

coPhillips LNG export plant at Nikiski to handle the liquefied gas. Enstar is separately working with Glenfarne, a New York-based energy company, on a plan for a new LNG import terminal to meet its needs, which are larger than the needs for Chugach Electric.

Enstar won't need LNG until 2032, when its contract for Cook Inlet gas with Hilcorp expires. Chugach Electric's Hilcorp supply contract ends in 2027, however, and it will need to import LNG sooner, and must have its plans in place in 2026.

Enstar, the regional gas utility, is most affected by any shortfall because it is required to supply natural gas to its customers. The electric utilities have alternatives such as inexpensive power from the Bradley Lake hydroelectric project near Homer, which is to soon be expanded.

Chugach also has access to power from the private Fire Island wind project. Solar power is supplied to Matanuska Electric

by a private power producer at a price that matches that of natural gas. Matanuska Electric has also equipped its Eklutna gas-fired power plant to switch to oil as a fuel, if needed.

In addition, Chugach is considering a plan to purchase power from a proposed private wind project near Mount Susitna, west of Anchorage. If this moves ahead, Matanuska Electric also could buy power from this project.

In Interior Alaska, Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA), the Fairbanks-based cooperative serving the region, has access to large coal resources at Usibelli Coal Mine near Healy, which allows it to generate power at stable, and affordable, prices. GVEA also has an oil-fired plant at North Pole that can be used when needed.

The challenge for GVEA, however, is that its two lower-cost coal power plants at Healy are aging. The small 25-megawatt

Healy 1 plant built in the 1960s is still performing despite its age, but there are operational problems with the larger 50-megawatt Healy 2 plant because when built in the 1980s it employed new, experimental technologies which have created operating problems. Replacing these plants when they are retired will be expensive.

GVEA also generates renewable power at wind turbines at Eva Creek, near Healy, and also purchases wind power from a private power producer near Delta, and gets a share of Bradley Lake's low-cost power that is transmitted up the electric intertie from Southcentral Alaska. The co-op is also considering diversifying its renewable energy portfolio from a planned private wind project at Shovel Creek near Fairbanks.

GVEA had a sobering experience with new technologies in the Healy 2 plant, but the cooperative has still embraced innovation and new technologies. A large battery powered storage unit, for example, was installed several years ago that gives the co-op the ability to a fast startup in supplying power in the event of a major outage, even in winter.

GVEA is now working with Westinghouse on a possible long-duration power storage facility at its North Pole generation plant that would store heat in ceramic materials. Heat converted to power would provide backup energy for an extended period. Chugach Electric and Homer Electric Association also are installing battery storage.

While progress is being made on new generation and power storage, improvements are needed in long-distance electrical transmission systems, which also are aging. These are necessary to efficiently move power to where it is needed along the Southcentral-Interior "railbelt" transmission system.

The upgrades are important if power from new projects including Dixon Diversion at the Bradley Lake or new wind projects in Southcentral and Interior Alaska are to be efficiently used.

Some of the transmission upgrades are now underway, led by the state's Alaska Energy Authority, or AEA, and the regional utilities. State and federal funds are being used although the utilities are also contributing.

Chugach Electric and the AEA are currently rebuilding parts of the Homer-to-Anchorage transmission line on the Kenai Peninsula so it can handle the increased power output from Bradley Lake's Dixon Diversion when completed in 2031.

The AEA is separately working on a new submarine power cable across Cook Inlet that will connect existing transmission systems on the Kenai Peninsula to Chugach Electric's Beluga power station on Cook Inlet's west side. This also will involve an upgrade to transmission lines north from the Beluga plant to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and around Knik Arm of Cook Inlet to Anchorage.

This new transmission loop will provide more energy security because it will be an alternative way to get Bradley Lake hydro power to Anchorage and Mat-Su communities in the event of a failure in the Kenai Peninsula transmission system. Unexpected events do happen. A few years ago, forest fires on the Kenai Peninsula temporarily disrupted delivery of Bradley Lake power north to Anchorage and the Mat-Su regions.



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WEST SUSITNA ACCESS PROJECT MOVES AHEAD

Effort on Ambler Road falters for now despite work by delegation

BY TIM BRADNER

THERE'S NEW PROGRESS ON AN INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROAD AIMED TO REACH AN AREA WITH GOLD AND ANTIMONY DISCOVERIES IN THE WESTERN MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH.

But hopes for another minerals access road to the Ambler Mining District in Northwest Alaska, are damped for now.

An effort by Alaska's congressional delegation to secure approval for the Ambler Road failed as Congress moved to approve President Donald Trump's "Big Beautiful" tax and budget bill.

But on a brighter note, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) is moving ahead with an application for a U.S. Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit for the West Susitna Access Project, a proposed industrial road connecting undeveloped western parts of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough with public roads in the borough.

The planned 78.5-mile industrial-use road, may also be the first Alaska project to qualify for accelerated federal permitting under the president's "Beautiful" bill, now signed into law.

The accelerating permitting requires that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers develop an Environmental Impact Statement and a Record of Decision for the road within a year.

Under previous law, an Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, could take years. For example, Donlin Gold, the joint-venture developing a large gold project, took five years to complete its EIS and Record of Decision. Donlin Gold's project is in the mid-Kuskokwim



Photo Courtesy AIDEA

Terrain west of the Susitna River the planned road will traverse.

River region west of Anchorage.

Gov. Mike Dunleavy has asked President Trump to approve the West Susitna access road under the accelerated permitting procedure in the new federal

law.

The Alaska Development and Export Authority, which is leading development of the West Susitna Road, as well as the Ambler Road, said the West-Su Road will

begin 1.4 miles west of Alexander Creek, in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and extend to the Whiskey Bravo airstrip and mineral exploration camp west of Skwentna. That is where NovaMinerals, an Australia-based minerals company, is supporting its exploration of discoveries of gold and antimony.

At its east end, the road will connect with a planned state-built highway that will cross the Susitna River on a new bridge to connect with existing Mat-Su roads a few miles further east.

The bridge and highway to Alexander Creek will be built with federal funds. The route for AIDEA's road extending west will traverse the northern side of the Skwentna River before crossing to the southern side, ending at the Whiskey Bravo airstrip.

In a statement, AIDEA said the road will provide year-round public access to currently remote state public lands and private lands within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and areas planned for resource development, AIDEA said.

Additionally, the road will enhance commercial use of designated critical mineral development areas, promote job growth and sustainable economic benefits for the State and Mat-Su.

The need for this access road has been identified in various state area plans, highlighting the importance of improving transportation to the region.

State Rep. Kevin McCabe, R-Big Lake, a strong supporter of the road and other regional transportation improvements, said, "The West Susitna access is an exciting opportunity not only to unlock some of Alaska's extraordinary resource potential, but to provide all Alaskans new access to the recreation and outdoor opportunities found in the West Su."

AIDEA is meanwhile exploring its options on the Ambler Road, a 211-mile surface link from the Dalton Highway to the Ambler Mining District in Northwest Alaska where Ambler Metals, a joint-venture of Australia's South 32 and Trilogy Metals, based in Canada, are exploring copper discoveries.

Gov. Dunleavy said progress on the West Susitna Road, "holds significant value for Alaskans, however, especially local residents seeking better access to hunting, fishing, recreation and potential opportunities in mining, processing

Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy said progress on the West Susitna Road, "holds significant value for Alaskans, however, especially local residents seeking better access to hunting, fishing, recreation and potential opportunities in mining, processing and manufacturing."

and manufacturing."

"My administration and AIDEA are continually exploring ways to boost our economy and create well-paying jobs for

families. This project presents a fantastic opportunity for Alaska to expand and generate revenue."

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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 Cordova!

Attendees were able to get a firsthand look at the

thriving seafood industry in the area as well as enjoy the breathtaking scenery we've come to enjoy during our glorious Alaska summers.

Thank you to everyone who traveled with us and for the Cordova community for making all of us feel right at home!





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 Cordova!



A FAMILY TRIP TO CHERISH

BY ANNA HILL AND JIM HILL

EDITOR'S NOTE: ANNA HILL ATTENDED THE RDC'S OUTREACH TRIP TO CORDOVA WITH HER FATHER, JIM, AN RDC BOARD MEMBER. HERE IS INSIGHT INTO THEIR SHARED EXPERIENCE.

ANNA:

HOW WAS THE TRIP, AND WAS IT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

This trip was a lot of fun to be apart of, even though I was warned beforehand that it's a very action packed time the amount of things we did per day was more than I expected!

YOUR FIRST TIME TO CORDOVA?

I've never been to Cordova before this, after being there for a short amount of time I am already thinking about going back — either on vacation or for work.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU?

Something that surprised me is how much I liked the smaller places. Being from Anchorage — especially the portion we're in — you're very disconnected from the surrounding areas. In a city it's very normalized to only care about what affects you and those you care about rather than everyone as a whole, which is not something that can be seen in Cordova.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN? AND DID YOU HAVE FUN?

My biggest takeaway has to be how closely connected smaller communities are and how hard working each individual must be for the community to survive. I learned about the workings of each portion, looking into what jobs are there and what people have to be doing. Seeing people have multiple roles, or a small group being in charge of such important matters really inspired me. I had lots of fun, everyone was so welcoming and the groups we ran into were very funny people — my favorite part was the Prince William Sound Science Center.

WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHER KIDS YOUR AGE?

I think a lot of kids my age don't realize how great it is to be able to hang out with your family and see their role in their jobs as well as society. It's not lame to go on trips or to be close with your parents even when it's something that can be seen as mundane — learn to make things fun!

DO YOU TRAVEL OFTEN AROUND ALASKA AND WITH YOUR FAMILY?

Yes! We go around Alaska quite often, during the summers we try to go out camping with our RV as much as we can as well as trips out of state or out of the country. It's amazing being able to go to warmer places for spring break and to visit family members I wouldn't be able to see otherwise.

WOULD YOU DO IT AGAIN?

In a heartbeat!



HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR FUTURE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, AND IF SO, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?

I have. I'm not set on anything but I'm most interested in the sciences, specifically life science like biology or marine biology.

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS?

Go out! Do things! Be involved in your communities, be involved in your state!

JIM:

WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO TAKE YOUR DAUGHTER ALONG?

I thought it was a great opportunity for her to see more of the state and learn about the challenges faced in off the road system locations, and how people adapt to live and work in these areas. RDC really maximizes the agenda on the board outreach trips so that it's fun and engaging for all involved.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU?

She was genuinely excited about all of the activities and eager to engage with the other board members on her own. On this trip, learning the behind-the-scenes science of how, when and where seafood resources are obtained — and how they are packaged for distribution — was a real eye-opener for her. At her age, it was a unique opportunity to see beyond the rhetoric and recognize that the industry is deeply committed to protecting and sustaining this resource for future generations.

SUGGESTIONS TO OTHER PARENTS FOR THE FUTURE?

Our kids will remember these trips for many years. Not only are they visiting places they may not otherwise, they will see beyond the headlines and hear the challenges and victories within the resource sector for themselves. Getting to spend the alone time and explore new places with them is priceless.

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS?

I bring my kids to any event I can. My daughter came to appreciate the benefits of mining through accompanying me on a mining day trip to Usibelli in Healy last year. I joke that she is the only kid at her high school with pro-mining stickers on her rear car window.

RDC'S EARLY PIONEERS SET US UP FOR SUCCESS

'As I look back at my career at RDC spanning four decades, I am filled with gratitude'

BY CARL PORTMAN

REFLECTING ON MY NEARLY 40 YEARS WITH THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (RDC), THIS STORY IS PARTLY ABOUT THE ALASKANS WHO BUILT RDC INTO THE ORGANIZATION IT IS TODAY — PIONEERS DETERMINED TO BUILD A HEALTHY ECONOMY BASED ON THE RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES. AFTER ALL, STATEHOOD WAS LARGELY PREDICATED ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALASKA'S RESOURCES.

Yet it wasn't easy. We faced one battle after another as there were powerful interests committed to keeping Alaska's oil, gas and mineral resources in the ground and our vast timber lands off limits to sustainable harvest.

I was excited to join as community relations director in 1981, just months after the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) had been signed into law. While I have a deep appreciation for our wild lands, ANILCA greatly complicated and in numerous cases has blocked access to our resources. Case in point — the proposed road to the Ambler Mining District, which sits outside federal lands.

As a young man in his 20s, the issues I worked on during the early years of my career were not only ANILCA related, but big projects which included the proposed Susitna Dam, the Knik Arm Crossing and the Quartz Hill molybdenum prospect near Ketchikan.

The biggest issue that I served "lead" on was our efforts to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling. RDC has worked on this issue for decades. I was part of a team, in partnership with the Alaska Oil and Gas Association and Arctic Power, that traveled across the nation to inform decision makers



The Organization for the Management of Alaska's Resources (OMAR) was formed in 1975. OMAR soon became known as the Resource Development Council and quickly grew and evolved from a single-issue group into a well-respected organization known for its effectiveness and influence on a wide range of public policy and resource development issues across Alaska.

in key congressional districts on the benefits to their states on opening the coastal plain.

In the 1990s, we were so close only for President Bill Clinton to veto the bill. Then again during the first term of President George W. Bush, when we fell two votes short of cloture in the Senate. This was the low point of my career when staff sat in the RDC conference room watching the vote live on C-SPAN. Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens felt he had the required 60 votes, but two senators turned at the last moment, leading to a bitter defeat that I felt deeply.

Several large projects that RDC supported did not proceed, but there were big wins too such as the Red Dog Mine, which required a contentious federal land exchange for the project to move forward. RDC was also successful in its advocacy efforts for expanded North Slope oil production and the development of five new large mines in the

state.

A key to RDC's success over the years has been its ability to bring all of the state's resource industries and their support sectors under its umbrella to advocate as a collective for each other. This approach has been especially helpful in public hearings before the legislature and federal agencies on not only new projects, but policy and regulatory issues with the potential to impact multiple industries and local communities.

My first day at RDC was April Fool's Day 1981. Our office was in a little greenhouse in downtown Anchorage. There were no computers, just electric typewriters. No fax. No email. We sent out Action Alerts via mail.

Paula Easley was the executive director. She was my first mentor. Paula worked long

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



Carl Portman (back left) started his journey with the RDC in April 1981.



The late Don Young (above) and the late Gail Phillips (right) were strong allies of the RDC and responsible resource development in Alaska.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

hours to grow the organization and get us through the boom-and-bust years of the 1980s. She built the foundation of RDC and got us involved in a wide range of federal and state issues.

She created unique fundraisers, including the annual Roaring Twenties Jazz Express Train to Seward which featured musical groups, casino games, dancing and an outrageous baseball game followed by a community barbecue. The event attracted as many as 600 passengers. Paula also organized the first Alaska Coal Conference in 1982 which grew into an annual event and later evolved into the Alaska Resources Conference.

During Paula's tenure, the Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF) formed an alliance with RDC to work on private property rights and Endangered Species Act issues in Alaska. PLF's Jim Burling worked out of the RDC office in the 1980s and his firm has since won Supreme Court decisions on ESA and property rights issues. Jim is still part of the PLF team.

Becky Gay ascended to executive director in 1986. Like Paula, Becky brought a rural perspective to RDC. Paula had lived in the village of Stony River while Becky previously worked at the Naval Arctic Research Lab near Point Barrow. They both worked to bring rural communities and their elected officials into the RDC fold to help create local economies and jobs. Case in point: Red Dog Mine and its vast benefits to the Northwest Alaska region.

Ken Freeman was appointed executive director in 1997 and has since advanced to high level positions at ExxonMobil. Other executive directors included Debbie Reinwand, Tadd Owens, Jason Brune, Rick Rogers, and Marleanna Hall, followed by Leila Kimbrell after Marleanna retired.

Jason put in a strong 12 years at RDC and was known for being "everywhere." He expanded RDC's outreach efforts across various fronts, including media relations. Marleanna put in 14 years at RDC, rising from projects coordinator to executive director. She also has strong rural roots, born and raised in Nome. During her tenure, she walked through the halls of Congress and navigated RDC through the most challenging COVID era.

The key to RDC's success has been an active and diversified board of directors. When I first joined RDC, Tom Fink was president



"It was truly an honor for me to work with such outstanding Alaskans. RDC is a unique and successful association that has made a difference for Alaska and our nation."

— Carl Portman

of the board. He was preceded by founding fathers Robert Penney and Robert Fleming, followed by Lee Fisher and Bud Dye.

Succeeding Fink were Chuck Herbert, Charles Webber, Boyd Brownfield, Joe Henri, Shelby Stastny, Ethel "Pete" Nelson, William Schneider, John Rense, Paul Glavinovich, Jim Cloud, David Parish, Elizabeth Rensch, Scott Thorson, Allen Bingham, Jim Branch, Robert Stiles, Charles Johnson, John Shively, Rick Rogers, Wendy Lindskoog, Tom Maloney, Phil Cochrane, Ralph Samuels, Eric Fjelstad, Jeanine St. John, Lori Nelson, followed by Lance Miller and Scott Habberstad.

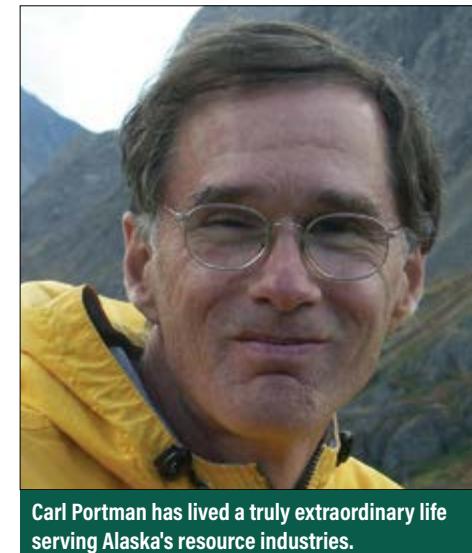
While the list of past presidents is long, they all deserve recognition. As a collective,

along with our dedicated teams, they propelled RDC to the strong statewide organization it is today.

Of particular note, John Shively served a record five consecutive terms as president. David Parish rose from RDC intern in the mid-'80s to president of the board during his tenure with ExxonMobil.

As I look back at my career at RDC spanning four decades, I am filled with gratitude. It was truly an honor for me to work with such outstanding Alaskans. It was time well spent.

RDC is a unique and successful association that has made a difference for Alaska and our nation. It will continue to do so.



Carl Portman has lived a truly extraordinary life serving Alaska's resource industries.

CARL PORTMAN SERVED IN VARIOUS POSITIONS AT RDC, INCLUDING DEPUTY DIRECTOR. HIS FAVORITE PROJECTS WERE SERVING AS LEAD ON AGENDA AND SPONSORSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ANNUAL ALASKA RESOURCES CONFERENCE, ITINERARY DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ANNUAL BOARD COMMUNITY OUTREACH TRIP, AND PUBLISHER AND LEAD WRITER FOR THE RESOURCE REVIEW NEWSLETTER FROM 1981-2000.

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“The Roadless Rule has hamstrung development on the Tongass National Forest since it was promulgated by the Clinton Administration in 2001.”

— Jim Clark, Juneau Attorney

ROADLESS RULE MUST BE SET ASIDE BY LEGISLATION

THE TONGASS OCCUPIES A PREMIERE COPPER-ZINC-SILVER-GOLD-BARITE MINERAL BELT WHICH INCLUDES GREENS CREEK MINE, KENSINGTON MINE AND THE DAWSON MINE.

The gigantic Canadian Windy Craggy Project is part of the same trend, just over the border in British Columbia. All are volcanogenic massive sulfide (VMS) mineral resources. Greens Creek is a producing, high grade, silver-zinc-gold-lead mine. Kensington is a producing gold mine. Windy Craggy is a 298 million metric ton copper-cobalt-gold deposit. The Bokan Mountain Project in southern Southeast is an established lithium rare earth prospect. The Dawson Mine near Hollis on Prince of Wales Island is a producing gold mine.

Patricia Roppel's book “Fortunes From the Earth” describes numerous historic operating mines on the Tongass and establishes beyond doubt the value of the Tongass as mining district.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the 2008 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan pointed out that the U.S. Bureau of Mines had identified 148 locatable mineral deposits in the Tongass. Of these 52 were ranked as having the highest mineral potential. Seven were ranked as having the next highest potential and at least one “critical” and “strategic” mineral. (2008 FEIS at 3-356).

A 1991 United States Geologic Survey (USGS) study estimated a value for Dis-

covered Minerals of \$37.1 billion (expressed as 1988 dollars) and a value for Undiscovered Minerals of \$28.3 billion (expressed as 1988 dollars). The escalation in metals prices that has taken place since 1991 and 2008 has dramatically increased these numbers.

The Tongass does not need the Roadless Rule to maintain its beauty, fish, and wildlife. It is already protected by 5.7 million acres of Wilderness and 775,524 acres of Legislative LUD II Areas (Similar to Roadless Areas). Mines and Hydropower facilities require a footprint of roughly 300-400 acres.

The Roadless Rule has hamstrung development on the Tongass National Forest since it was promulgated by the Clinton Administration in 2001.

It forbids roadbuilding for timber harvest on 9.7 million acres, forbids roadbuilding to geothermal sites, and makes road access for mineral and hydropower development dependent on subjective decision making and litigation. The expense of helicopter access and the uncertainty of when access of any type will be granted by the Forest Service and then successfully make it through the permitting and litigation processes has stunted investment on the Tongass.

President Trump exempted the Tongass from the Roadless Rule in his first Administration, only to have his exemption rescinded on the first day of the Biden Administration. In Paragraph (3)(c) of his January 20, 2025, Executive

Order (EO) “Unleashing Alaska’s Extraordinary Resource Potential,” President Trump announced his policy to again exempt the Tongass from the Roadless Rule.

In Paragraph 5(b) of his March 20, 2025, Executive Order: “Immediate Measure to Increase American Mineral Production” President Trump directed the Secretary of Agriculture to prioritize “mineral production projects [that] could be fully permitted and operational as soon as possible and have the greatest potential effect on robustness of the domestic mineral supply chain.”

Governor Dunleavy pointed to the Tongass as such a site and the barrier posed by the 2001 Roadless Rule in his April 11, 2025, response:

“The primary barrier is lack of road access due to the 2001 Roadless Rule restrictions. Limited infrastructure exists near population centers and ports. Expanded mapping and USDA willingness to encourage mining are needed to develop this VMS area that is the size of West Virginia for the benefit of the nation.”

Rather than reinstating the Tongass Exemption through administrative rulemaking, which has created investor uncertainty by ping-ponging back and forth as Administrations have changed, we urge the Alaska Delegation to find a legislative solution.

JIM CLARK IS AN RDC MEMBER AND REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ALASKA RESOURCE REVIEW

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BUILDING A NEW FUTURE IN ALASKA CONSTRUCTION

University of Alaska
program helps lumber
certification process

BY REBECCA LAWHORNE,
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

UP UNTIL NOW, LOCALLY MILLED LUMBER IN ALASKA COULDN'T BE USED IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PROJECTS. THAT WASN'T BECAUSE OF QUALITY, BUT BECAUSE BUILDING CODES TYPICALLY REQUIRE A GRADE STAMP FROM A NATIONAL AGENCY, SOMETHING TOO EXPENSIVE AND INACCESSIBLE FOR MANY SMALL OPERATORS IN ALASKA.

The issue came into painful focus during the pandemic, when supply disruptions and high prices highlighted how little of Alaska's own timber could legally be used in its own housing market.

In 2023, the Alaska Legislature passed Senate Bill 87, authorizing the state to establish a lumber grading certification process. Shortly after, the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service, in collaboration with the Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, launched the Alaska Lumber Grading (ALG) program. This program is still in its early stages, but is already seeing support and success throughout the state.

HOW IT WORKS

The ALG program is a one-day, hands-on training that prepares participants to grade dimension lumber for structural use. Attendees learn wood science, drying and storage methods, and how to assess common defects such as knots, splits and decay. To earn certification, participants must pass both a written test and a practical grading exam.

After being permitted under local code exemptions, ALG-certified lumber can then be used in residential construction as a substitute for nationally graded material.

The program was built for Alaska's specific conditions and species. There are five approved species with documented



Photos Courtesy University of Alaska

strength property data — white spruce, Sitka spruce, western hemlock, mountain hemlock and Alaska yellow cedar. The program's grading standards align closely with those used by national agencies. In some cases, the rules are more restrictive.

WHERE IT'S WORKING

Since the program launched in 2024, more than 130 Alaskans have been certified. Trainings have been held in Fairbanks, Palmer, Klawock, Soldotna, Sitka, Aniak, Haines, Juneau, Tok and Wrangell.

Several large initiatives already plan to use ALG lumber, including:

- The Kuskokwim Corporation's Harvest to Home housing project in remote villages
- U.S. Forest Service employee housing in Sitka
- Rebuilding efforts along Alaska's western coast following Typhoon Merbok

Kathryn Thoden, a Division of Forestry representative involved in a training in Palmer, shared, "It is breeding confidence in the industry where folks have been tentative about moving ahead with their ideas."

Sharing industry connections and information is as valuable as the class."

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The ALG program is built and running, but broader adoption depends on how municipalities respond. For the lumber to be used in residential construction, local governments need to write exemptions into their building codes.

In a news release issued at the time of the bill signing, Gov. Mike Dunleavy said, "The timber industry is an integral part of Alaska's history," Dunleavy said. "This lumber grading program will help shape the timber industry for Alaskan small businesses to allow them to thrive now and in the future."

At the local level, program leaders say policy support will be key to long-term viability.

"The industry has diminished substantially since the end of the pulp mill days," says Jeremy Douse, Alaska State Forester and director of the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection. "It's hard for a business to justify additional investment in an environment like this."



The Alaska Lumber Grading (ALG) program is in its early stages, but is already seeing support and success throughout the state.

Douse added that regulatory alignment is now the most important next step: "We now need municipalities to allow for this product to be used in residential construction. We need more industry to meet our forest management needs, but we also need a steady supply of timber for an industry to exist."

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation has already approved ALG-certified lumber for use under its construction loan standards. Local code changes could open the door to much wider use.

WHAT'S NEXT

UAF and the Division of Forestry will continue trainings in new communities through 2025. The university is also piloting advanced workshops on lumber drying and sawmill optimization and plans to launch a searchable public directory of certified ALG producers.

Future goals include:

- Supporting municipal code changes
- Developing an Alaska Forest Product brand label
- Contributing design-value data to inform forest management and wood utilization opportunities of young-growth timber in the Tongass National Forest

Still in its first year, the program is already empowering sawmill operators to participate in Alaska's housing economy. With continued support from municipalities and agencies, it has the potential to shift how local timber is used across the state.

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“Trident remains anchored in Alaska because we believe in its promise. And we stand with RDC as it continues to bring people together to strengthen Alaska’s future.”

— *Joe Bundrant, CEO, Trident Seafoods*

A LEGACY OF PARTNERSHIP IN ALASKA'S FISHERIES

MORE THAN 50 YEARS AGO, THE VISION THAT BUILT TRIDENT SEAFOODS WAS SHAPED BY THE SAME DRIVING FORCES THAT LAUNCHED THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

Alaska's natural resources offered enormous promise — but realizing that promise required people with grit and determination, and organizations willing to invest in long-term stewardship and responsible development.

Our company started with a dream and a single crab boat. My father, Chuck Bundrant, and a few hardworking partners were looking for adventure and believed in the future of the Bering Sea. In 1973, they delivered their first load of crab. Today, Trident Seafoods is an Alaska-born company with a global reach. We are the largest vertically integrated seafood company in North America, managing every aspect from fleet to fork.

Even as we've grown into national and international markets, at our core we are still anchored in Alaska. Trident has remained committed to harvesting, processing, and delivering wild Alaska seafood to the world without losing sight of the people and communities at the heart of it all.

We didn't get here alone.

From the very beginning, organizations like RDC have played a critical role in shaping a future where responsi-



ble development and conservation can coexist. RDC brings together diverse voices including industry, government, local leaders, and Native corporations to focus on one shared goal: keeping Alaska's resource industries strong, sustainable, and community driven. My father said, “We have a bond with the ocean. When it prospers, we prosper.”

That mindset still shapes everything we do at Trident and is at the heart of all responsible resource development.

In the 1980s, as Trident continued to grow, the fishing industry navigated

complex regulatory and environmental changes. RDC provided a steady platform for collaboration and advocacy.

Whether it was access to fishing grounds, infrastructure investment, or workforce development, RDC helped industry leaders move forward without compromising the core Alaska values.

Over the years, Trident expanded from one boat to a fleet of vessels, and from a single processing plant to major shore plants and support operations in nine communities across the State. Our extended Trident family also includes



Photos Courtesy Trident Seafoods

over 2,700 independent fishermen and crew members in Alaska. Each step forward was anchored in our belief that sustainable fisheries are about more than biology—they're about people. Jobs, housing, schools, and the fabric of everyday life in coastal communities are what keep this industry strong. RDC understands this and has consistently supported the policies and investments that help these communities thrive.

What's made RDC so effective over the last 50 years is its big-picture thinking. This isn't just an organization that shows up when there's a problem. RDC proactively works to promote responsible policy, push for modern infrastructure, and educate the public about the importance of natural resource industries. In doing so, they've helped ensure that Alaska's development isn't just about extraction — but about resilience and opportunity for future generations.

Today, our challenges look different. Climate change, global competition, and changing consumer expectations are all real and growing. But the principle remains: Alaska's resources, especially its fisheries, must be managed with the future in mind.

That means science-based decisions, strong local partnerships, and constant innovation — from ocean stewardship to value-added processing.

Trident remains anchored in Alaska because we believe in its promise. And we stand with RDC as it continues to bring people together to strengthen Alaska's future. The work is far from over, but the foundation we've built together is strong.



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IMPROVEMENTS ONGOING AT PORT MACKENZIE

Port continues to grow business amid increase in new capabilities

BY TIM BRADNER

BIT BY BIT, MAT-SU'S PORT MACKENZIE, IN THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH, IS ADDING FACILITIES, UPGRADING ITS CAPABILITIES AND ATTRACTING NEW CUSTOMERS.

The most recent development is the award of \$7.9 million in federal funds for a barge haul-out ramp that will generate new business from barge operators needing to pull barges out of the water for winter storage and maintenance, according to Port Director Dave Griffin.

The federal grant is now being finalized and he hopes to see construction start next year on the barge ramp, Griffin said. Engineering and permitting for the ramp have been completed. A 35% local match is required for the federal grant, but these funds have been secured, he said.

Port MacKenzie is on Knik Arm and is owned and operated by the borough. The facility has a 1,200-foot dock connected to shore by a 475-foot trestle. There is also a 100-foot by 100-foot cargo dock for use by barge operators. The port is designed mainly to handle shipment of bulk commodities and industrial equipment.

This is different than Anchorage's Port of Alaska, across the Knik Arm from Port MacKenzie, which mainly unloads freight containers holding consumer goods along with fuel.

The port's business is still small but it is growing as customers discover its capabilities, Griffin said. The big advantage is space and land. Last year, Cook Inlet Region Inc. used Port MacKenzie to do maintenance on the large turbines at Cook Inlet's Fire Island wind project near Anchorage. A lot of space is needed for this

work.

Contractors like Cruz Construction and Western Construction now use the port to store equipment to support their projects, many of those in rural Alaska. The port does steady business with barge operators and typically has visits by one to two larger ships carrying bulk materials, Griffin told the assembly.

Northern Gravel & Trucking of Anchorage, for example, brought in ships in 2023 and 2024 to unload and store road salt used for winter road maintenance in Southcentral Alaska and coastal communities. Another ship with salt is planned this year.

The military also makes use of Port MacKenzie and this summer the port will play a role in Arctic Edge, an important exercise that will demonstrate response to a major regional emergency, Griffin told the assembly. The exercise took place from July 27 to Aug. 15, and brought a lot of activity.

Port MacKenzie is also important for its growth potential with extensive land available, a strategic location with access to highway transportation and potentially a link with the Alaska Railroad, access to power and a 20-inch Enstar Natural Gas Co. pipeline not far away.

Central Alaska Energy, which is affiliated with Vitus Marine, a regional fuel distributor, is working on plans for a regional fuel storage and distribution center and has leased land at the port. Central Alaska hopes to serve customers in Mat-Su and north to Interior Alaska. Other fuel companies are also interested.

In a new development, Griffin told the assembly that NovaMinerals, an Australia-based minerals company exploring gold and antimony deposits near the end of the proposed West Susitna access road, has applied for a lease of a 42-acre tract at the port for a possible ore processing

plant.

Griffin said Port MacKenzie's key advantages are its control, through the borough, of 9,000 acres of tidelands and 5,000 acres of adjacent onshore land. A few miles north are 13,000 acres of agricultural lands. What's important, Griffin said, is that land in the area is controlled by the borough, the state of Alaska and University of Alaska, with a fair amount owned privately. Private lands are important because the owners are motivated to develop their land. Overall, this will stimulate economic activity from Southcentral to Interior Alaska.

Meanwhile, a steady pace of improvements are being made at the port. A cathodic protection system to protect steel in the port's structures from corrosion has been completed and last year about half of the piling supporting the dock was "sleeved," with metal jackets to provide protection. The remaining piling will be sleeved in a future project. The first-phase sleeving project cost \$7.8 million and was completed on time and on budget, Griffin said.

In other improvements, a new Rough Terrain Cargo Crane has been purchased and is awaiting delivery, which will enhance the port's ability to unload and load heavy cargo, Griffin said.

The new barge ramp is a significant project that will bring in new business with barge operators, many who now use the port to support projects. The new ramp will be 300 feet by 200 feet with degree slope to barges, and potentially other vessels, to be moved out of the water for winter storage and maintenance.

Currently, barge operators use Homer or Seward for storage or near western Alaska communities served by the barge companies. The U.S. Coast Guard must do annual inspections, which require barges to be out of the water, Griffin said.



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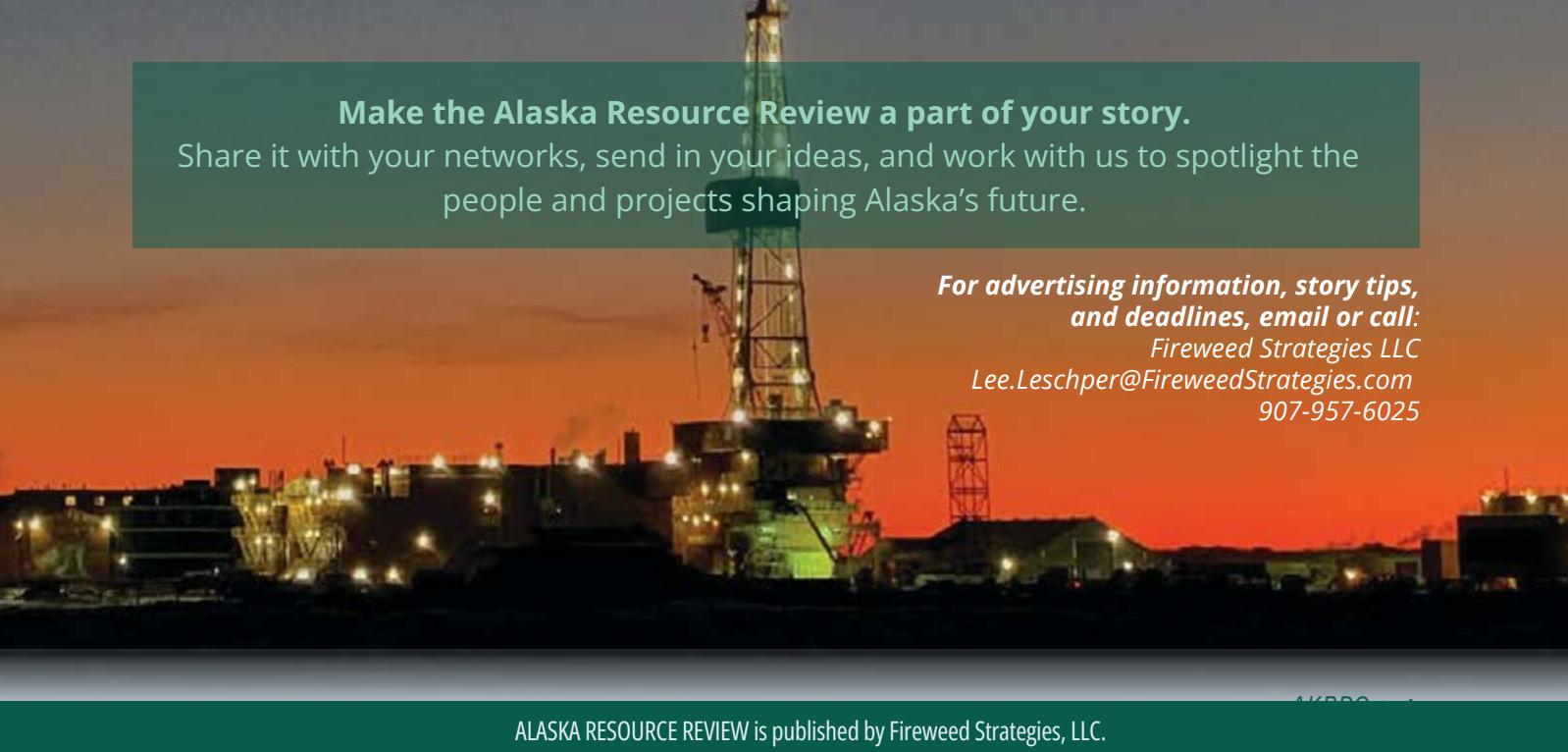
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“ANILCA provides a prime example of why continual engagement and education is necessary to make sure laws are implemented as intended.”

— Connor Hajdukovich,
RDC External Affairs and Policy Coordinator

REFLECTIONS ON ANILCA: ALASKANS' INPUT MATTERS

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, ALASKA IS HUGE. OUR STATE CONTAINS OVER 365 MILLION ACRES OF LAND, ABOUT ONE FIFTH THE SIZE OF THE LOWER 48.

In fact, I recently learned the distance from Attu to Hyder, Alaska, (2,261 miles) is almost twice the distance of the diameter of Pluto (1,471 miles). Today, 88% of land in Alaska is considered public land, with over 60% of land being federally managed. A common thread among our membership at the Resource Development Council (RDC) is navigating complicated land ownership structures in Alaska and finding ways to access and responsibly develop our state's resources.

When Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Land Claims Act (ANILCA) in 1980, they sought to balance conservation of Alaska's lands and wildlife with paths to responsible development and economic prosperity for Alaskans. A lofty goal to be sure, and one that Alaska's late-Senator Ted Stevens fought hard to achieve. This legislation was years in the making, only getting across the finish line with significant compromises from all stakeholders. ANILCA saw to the creation of 106 million acres of conservation system units (CSUs) in Alaska and effectively tripled the size of the entire National Wilderness Preservation System. Having recently taken a course on ANILCA, I would like to provide some of my takeaways on how this bill has shaped Alaska and at times failed to live up to its Congressional intent.

A key tenant in the making of ANILCA was to ensure Alaskans had reasonable access to the most resource-rich parts of the state while protecting the fish and wildlife that inhabit its vast lands and waters. Many exceptions to federal land management were

included in ANILCA to account for this purpose, and to accommodate for the unique characteristics of Alaska. A few examples I've identified to demonstrate Congress' intent to provide these exceptions are as follows:

1. The No More Clause (Section 101(d) and other sections) expressed Congress's intent that the conservation designations under ANILCA should represent a final balance — not a starting point for future land withdrawals and lockups.

2. Consultation with the State of Alaska and Alaska Native Stakeholders is required many times throughout ANILCA and other federal laws, particularly for changes in subsistence uses, land management, and environmental studies.

3. A collaborative decision-making process between state and federal authorities was laid out to provide access for developing transportation and utility systems with the intent of ensuring Alaska can efficiently expand its underdeveloped infrastructure (Section 1101).

4. A transportation corridor was granted from the Alaska Pipeline Haul Road across the Gates of the Arctic National Preserve (Section 2014(b)), to allow access to the mineral-rich Ambler Mining District.

These are only a few of many provisions that demonstrate Congress' intent to provide a path to economic prosperity for Alaskans through development of resource-rich areas while maintaining strong environmental standards. Unfortunately, these provisions have not always been implemented in the way they were intended resulting in land lock-ups, lack of proper consultation, and federal overreach that is contradictory to the language and intent of the compromises made and promised in ANILCA. Though

access was granted, we've seen the federal government weaponize the procedural systems within regulatory processes to delay decisions indefinitely. This is particularly apparent with the Ambler Mining District example, which clearly granted specific access under ANILCA and yet access has been continually delayed for decades.

ANILCA was written with a careful balance in mind, however, federal agencies and political forces have not always implemented the law in the same spirit. The federal employees based in Alaska typically do their best to maintain this balance, but D.C. is a long way away and educating our federal partners on the needs of Alaskans is a never-ending job. ANILCA provides a prime example of why continual engagement and education is necessary to make sure laws are implemented as intended.

Alaska's state and federal leaders rely on input from the resource development industries to craft sound legislation and provide timely and impactful input on regulatory actions. As part of this effort, RDC regularly sends out Action Alerts to make our membership aware of comment periods and opportunities to engage on issues that impact our member industries.

HOW THE NEXT GENERATION CAN GET INVOLVED

Getting involved in organizations like RDC – becoming a member, attending public policy forums, and providing input on advocacy efforts – gives young professionals the opportunity to make sure Alaska's voice is heard. On that note, I encourage all of our members to bring a young professional in your field to RDC's Emerging Leaders and Established Professionals event on Nov. 11 to learn more about RDC's advocacy efforts.

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"The challenges and opportunities facing Alaska's natural resource sectors have never been greater, and your voice is more important than ever."

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

HELP BUILD ALASKA'S FUTURE

AS THE LEAVES CHANGE AND FALL SETTLES OVER ALASKA, THERE'S NO BETTER TIME TO JOIN THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (RDC) AND GET INVOLVED IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR GREAT STATE.

2025 marks a milestone — 50 years of advocacy, partnership, and progress for Alaska's resource industries. For five decades, RDC has been the place where fishermen, miners, oil and gas leaders, tourism professional, foresters, Alaska Native corporations, and more come together to protect and promote responsible resource development.

This anniversary isn't just about looking back — it's about charging forward. The challenges and opportunities facing Alaska's natural resource sectors have never been greater, and your voice is more important than ever.

Whether you're a long-time supporter or just getting to know us, now's the perfect time to join. Why?

- Because smart conversations need your voice. Our members don't always agree on everything — but we all agree Alaska's future is worth fighting for.
- Because there's power in numbers. From breakfast forums to policy wins, what we do together matters.

- Because the stakes are high. Alaska's resource industries are facing major decisions — and you can help shape what comes next.

- Because 50 years is just the beginning. We're building the future — and it's a whole lot more fun with people like you involved.

So join us — for the conversations, the connections, the coffee, and yes ... the bacon! Help us make this golden year one to remember—and set the stage for the next 50. Visit www.akrdc.org to learn more.

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 important 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 2024!

- 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 premier magazine, the Resource Review, published several 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!

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!

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CURRENT MEMBERS

Already a member but need to update your profile? Please email me at 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 can't wait to see what the rest of this milestone year brings — and I hope to see you at our Alaska Resources Conference, Nov. 12-13, or another RDC event soon! If you have questions, ideas, or just want to chat about membership — please don't hesitate to give me a call or send an email.

Here's to 50 years of responsible resource development — and the next 50 ahead!

Enjoy the rest of your summer!
Enjoy your summer!

JENNIFER KUHLMANN
MEMBERSHIP & EVENTS MANAGER
907-276-0700 OPTION 2

Jennifer Kuhlmann



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.

NEW INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

- Dan Graham
- Tracy Heiner
- Ruby Jones
- Eric Melch
- Charlene Miles

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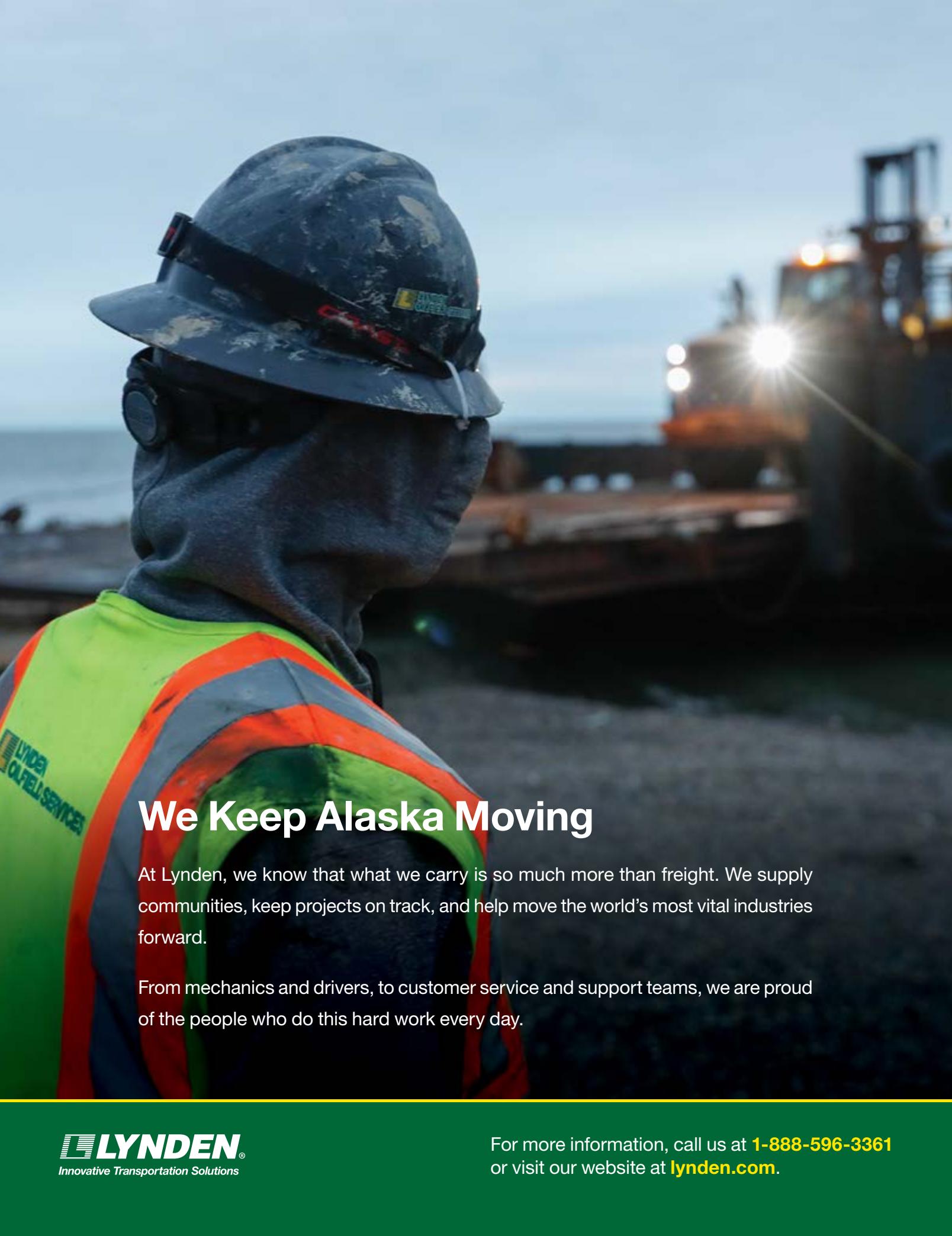
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