

INLETKEEPER®

... PROTECTING THE COOK INLET WATERSHED & THE LIFE IT SUSTAINS

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15 Years Protecting Water Quality & Fish Habitat Great Successes; Now Looking Forward to Confront Pressing Challenges

In the devastating wake of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, Alaskans living around Cook Inlet decided to act. They were tired with the indiscriminate toxic dumping from the oil platforms in Cook Inlet, and frustrated with state and federal agencies who seemed to take their marching orders from the very corporations polluting our incredible fisheries. So instead of complaining, they did something about it; they formed Cook Inletkeeper in 1995, and charged it with a broad and ambitious mandate: to protect the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains.

Since then, Inletkeeper has notched some remarkable successes, and we'll spend ample time in the year ahead recounting our achievements. But a lot has changed in the past 15 years. For example, Inletkeeper's first cell phone was the size of a small pocket book, our first web page was a novelty, and the threats posed by climate change were just coming to light. As a result, Inletkeeper's 15th anniversary in 2010 will be forward-looking, focusing on how we can work smarter and more effectively with our members, volunteers and supporters to address the growing threats to our planet in challenging economic times. Toward this end, Inletkeeper will embark on the following in 2010:

Membership Poll: Inletkeeper's authority and influence derive from its diverse and active membership. As a result, we need to hear what's worked, what hasn't, and what we can do better. In Summer 2010, we will circulate a poll to flesh out new thoughts from our members and supporters, and this information will drive our strategic planning process.

Strategic Plan Revisions: Every 5 years Inletkeeper creates an overarching strategic

(Continued on page 3)



Board & Staff will be guiding Inletkeeper into its 15th year – tell us how to make Inletkeeper's work smarter and better!

Families & Teens Unite in "Shaping Our Future" Aerial Art Event Elevating the Ties Between Coal, Climate & Salmon

In September, over a hundred adults and teens came together to highlight how burning coal aggravates climate change and threatens wild Alaskan salmon, in an art-in-action event on the beach in Homer. Conceived and organized by local artist/activist Mavis Muller (www.mavismuller-art.com), the event created a human mosaic in the shape of a salmon, with coal and climate messages surrounding it. The event was part of an international effort by the group 350.org to highlight the need to bring atmospheric CO2 levels back down to the safe level of 350 parts per million (we are currently at 390 ppm and rising). Coal produces the most greenhouse



Photo courtesy of Scott Dickerson

gas emissions of any traditional fuel source, and as NASA's Chief Climatologist Jim Hansen tells the world, we must keep our coal in the ground if we hope to address the unfolding climate crisis. In addition to Muller, Inletkeeper worked with the Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, among others, to make the event and the after-party and rally a huge success! And thanks to all the volunteers who made the event possible!

For more information and pictures, see www.inletkeeper.org/energy/90926Event.htm and to take action, go to www.350.org



Letter From YOUR Cook Inletkeeper

As our second President John Adams once famously stated, "Facts are stubborn things." Since Galileo argued his sun-centered theory for the universe and the ensuing Age of Enlightenment, facts and reason have played a central role in our most important science, policy and government decisions. And from its inception, the conservation movement has relied on facts and science to press its case, often with impressive results. Yet today, we often stand flat footed in the face of cavernous disconnects between science and public opinion. For example, despite ever-growing mountains of scientific evidence, recent polls show that fewer than half of Americans believe humans are contributing to climate change. Why? For one thing, the corporations who stand to profit most from the status quo - coal, oil and gas corporations, to name a few - are spending billions of dollars on fancy public relations campaigns to confuse and scare the public. We saw the same exact tactic from the tobacco industry when faced with conclusive evidence cigarettes cause cancer. From Inletkeeper's perspective, climate change is the inevitable result of taking carbon - which has been trapped in the earth over a period of hundreds of millions of years - and liberating it through combustion into a closed system (i.e. our biosphere) in the 200+ years of our "industrial revolution." Even the greatest climate change skeptics wouldn't start a fire in their wood stoves without opening the flue. Yet the basic facts



surrounding climate change have been lost in a sea of confusion, rhetoric and fear. That's why anyone concerned about our climate and what it means for our future needs to bring the issue home with personal stories how climate change will affect our families, our communities and our economies. Inletkeeper was proud to participate in two events this past year which highlighted the real and personal threats climate change poses to Alaskans, and we'll continue to fight to ensure our kids and their kids can enjoy the same magnificent Alaskan resources we find around us today.

Yours for Cook Inlet -

Bob Shavelson
Executive Director



Inletkeeper Supports Geothermal Energy Exploration Mt. Spurr Project Heralds New "Clean Energy" Economy for Alaska

While Cook Inlet contains sizable coal, oil and gas reserves, it also boasts a world-class concentration of clean, renewable energy resources, including wind, tidal, hydropower and geothermal sources. In November 2009, Inletkeeper met with Ormat Technologies, Inc. to discuss its plans to explore leases on Mt. Spurr, an active volcano on the west side of Cook Inlet, for a potential geothermal energy project. Ormat secured roughly 35,000 acres for geothermal exploration at Mt. Spurr in a 2008 state lease sale. Inletkeeper was impressed with Ormat's proven technology and

their commitment to minimizing impacts to water quality and fish habitat, and as a result, Inletkeeper supports Ormat's efforts to explore its Mt. Spurr leases for geothermal energy production. Projects such as Ormat's not only avoid the greenhouse gas emissions associated with coal, oil and gas combustion, but they also save money because the cost of energy to consumers remains constant over the 25-50 year life of the project. For more information about Ormat and the Mt. Spurr Project, go to www.ormat.com.



INLETKEEPER is published biannually by Cook Inletkeeper, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains. Subscriptions are mailed free to members and are available to others upon request. To become a member, or for more information, contact:

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WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

Inletkeeper Enters 15th Year *(cont. from page 1)*

plan that captures the broad vision, mission, goals and objectives of the organization, and that guides the organization through its annual work plan and budget processes. In 2010, we will chart a revised direction that helps Inletkeeper work more efficiently and effectively to address the stark challenges ahead.

Web, Database & Related Upgrades: Technology is evolving at a blistering pace, and in response, Inletkeeper is moving ahead with upgrades to its web page, its email systems, and its member, volunteer and supporter databases. The goal of this effort is to streamline and centralize operations and maximize staff, Board and volunteer efficiency and effectiveness.

Re-Branding: Inletkeeper has one of the most distinctive names/logos in the state, and in 2010 we will embark on a re-

branding effort designed to elevate and amplify our brand in everything we do – and everywhere we do it.

15th Anniversary Activities: To celebrate its past and to chart its future, Inletkeeper will host a variety of activities over the coming year, including a 15th Anniversary Celebration in Homer in Summer 2010, a time capsule, new merchandise, new business and member appeals and, of course, our 2010 Muckrakers Ball in Anchorage - among many other things.

We truly value the support we've received from our members, volunteers and supporters over the past 15 years, and we're gearing up to make 2010 our best year yet. So, stay tuned, and if you have any feedback or input on our future direction, please drop us a line at keeper@inletkeeper.org or call 907.235.4068.

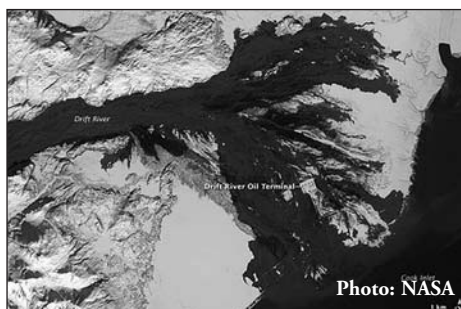


Drift River Oil Terminal: Twisting Facts, Re-Shaping Reality

Chevron Cuts Cook Inlet Jobs in Wake of Incident

When Mount Redoubt's eruption on March 22, 2009, threatened to release more than 6 million gallons of oil stored at the Drift River Oil Terminal, Inletkeeper played a leading role getting Government agencies and Chevron to draw down the oil and reduce the risk of a catastrophic spill to our valuable fisheries. But it wasn't easy, and Chevron took action only after numerous eruptions made the risks too high to ignore. Through the course of the episode, Inletkeeper posed numerous questions to various agencies and groups, yet to date, none has responded. Instead, there has been a steady stream of misinformation and half-truths designed to create the impression that our agencies and corporations acted swiftly, responsibly and effectively. But Inletkeeper has com-

plied information showing the real story behind the Drift River 2009 Incident (see www.inletkeeper.org/watershedwatch/redoubt2009/redoubt.htm) Furthermore, while Chevron workers and contractors



The Drift River Oil Terminal Incident of 2009 will go down as a textbook example of poor planning and inadequate spill response capacity.

braved harrowing conditions to make the best out of a bad situation, they should never have been put in harms way in the first place; the risks posed at Drift River have been known for decades – since at least 1989 when a previous eruption led to an eerily similar series of events. Yet instead of creating a facility bypass system at Drift River – to avoid storing large volumes of oil while still maintaining production, throughput and jobs – prior to the 2009 eruption, Chevron made the business decision to hunker down and hope for the best. In November, that failed strategy came into sharp focus when Chevron announced job cuts to 25 workers, in part due to decreased production caused by the DROT incident.



Underground Coal Combustion

CIRI Project Sets Bar High for Emissions

At an Alaska legislative hearing on October 9, the regional Native Corporation Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI) unveiled an ambitious new plan for burning coal underground on CIRI property on the west side of Cook Inlet. The novel technology – called Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) – would create a synthetic gas from underground coal combustion, and the gas would be used to drive a 100 MW turbine to produce electricity. While the technology appears to avoid many of the problems typically associated with mining coal, it still faces considerable hurdles controlling greenhouse gas emissions. CIRI has committed to capturing and containing greenhouse gases from the process, but technologies to do so are in their infancy. Inletkeeper appreciated CIRI's invitation to discuss the project prior to its public announcement, and believes the project requires serious consideration if it can adequately address water, habitat and climate change risks. To see CIRI's information on the project, go to: www.cirienergy.com



Inletkeeper Informs Grantmakers on

Alaska Coal, Oil & Gas Issues

In September 2009, Inletkeeper Bob Shavelson gave two presentations to attendees at the annual Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA) meeting in Anchorage. EGA is the largest association of environmental grantmakers in the world, representing over 225 foundations, and its members provide invaluable support to Alaska conservation efforts. Shavelson first discussed the threats posed by Alaska coal development, and in a later session, focused on lessons learned from 40 years of oil and gas development in Cook Inlet. The Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF) played a central role bringing the annual EGA meeting back to Alaska, and helped provide an important economic boost to the Anchorage economy in doing so. Inletkeeper thanks ACF for its ambitious efforts to elevate Alaska issues and groups in the eyes of grantmakers across the nation.



Scientific Reports: Coal Mine Will Destroy Salmon Habitat

"Pro-Snow" Groups Take Aim at Snowbird CEO's Chuitna Investment

For the past several years, Inletkeeper has been working with local groups, fishermen and property owners to stop the ill-conceived Chuitna coal strip mine on the west side of Cook Inlet. In August 2009, three scientific reports concluded that critical salmon fisheries along the Chuitna River will suffer severe long-term damage and never fully recover from the impacts of PacRim Coal's proposed Chuitna coal strip-mine.

The Chuitna coal strip mine would be the first project in Alaska history to mine directly through salmon habitat. The scientists concluded that PacRim's strip mining plans would significantly and permanently damage local wetlands and salmon habitat, and that post-mining restoration of the streams that feed the salmon-rich Chuitna River would be virtually impossible. The scientific reports are available online at: www.inletkeeper.org/energy/Chuitna90813.htm.

"There is no scientific evidence that wetlands or streams can be put back together to be living, healthy ecosystems after the kind of mining impacts described in the PacRim reports," said Dr. Margaret Palmer, who analyzed PacRim's restoration plans. "The science just isn't there. Experimentation should not be confused with sound, science-based knowledge."

In a related effort, snowboarders, skiers and groups staged a rally in Salt Lake City, Utah, in November 2009, to urge Snowbird Ski Resort CEO Dick Bass to divest from his interests in the Chuitna coal strip



"Pro-snow" groups are urging Snowbird CEO Dick Bass to divest from the proposed Chuitna Coal Strip Mine.

mine. Bass and partner Herbert Hunt from Texas are the principal investors in an effort to send Alaska coal to coal-fired power plants in China. The "pro-snow" groups pointed to the irony of a ski resort owner pushing a coal mine, when coal produces the most greenhouse gases of any traditional fuel source.

"It's sadly ironic the owner of a business that is solely dependent upon heavy snowfall and consistent winters is pushing a project that is a direct threat to the ski industry and completely contrary to the ideals of outdoor recreation," said Ryan Demmy Bidwell with the Ski Area Citizen's Coalition.

In related news, the Kenai Peninsula Borough recently leased Borough lands for a coal storage and export facility that would, if constructed, make the Chuitna project possible and directly impact commercial set net fishing leases nearby. The Borough had been under the constraints of a long standing lease option, and based on Inletkeeper's analysis of the lease, the Borough and its residents are getting far less than market value for the leased acreage.

For more information, contact Dennis Gann at 907.929.9371 or dennis@inletkeeper.org, and to let Dick Bass know how you feel about an Outside ski resort CEO destroying Alaska salmon habitat in order to ship coal to China, go to <http://nobasscoal.org/>



Inletkeeper Networks with National Coal Experts, Expands Alaska Capacity

The United States has been called the "Saudi Arabia of Coal," and despite the fact Alaska possesses roughly half the nation's coal reserves, we don't have large scale coal development yet: only one active coal mine (the Usibelli mine, near Denali National Park) exists in the state, and only 10% of our Railbelt power comes from coal (compared with 50-60% in the lower 48). But in the past several years, more than a dozen proposals to mine and burn Alaskan coal have materialized. That's why Inletkeeper and its partners have

joined forces with coal experts from Outside to better understand the legal, technical and human health implications of coal. This past October, the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP) invited Inletkeeper and 4 other Alaskan groups to attend the National Coal Summit in Austin, Texas, where over 200 experts shared their knowledge, strategies and connections. We truly appreciate this incredible opportunity. Thanks to EIP and its supporters for making this invaluable event possible.



Help Shape Alaska's Energy Future!

Alaska stands on the front lines of rapid climate change, and from receding glaciers and melting sea ice to eroding coastlines and warming salmon streams, Alaskans are feeling the impacts from global warming unlike any other state. Yet Alaska also produces the highest per capita emissions of greenhouse gases in the nation. While at times we seem locked into a descending energy spiral, with rising heating costs and more business as usual, we also sit among some of the greatest clean, flat cost, renewable energy resources in the world. As the Alaska Legislature convenes in January 2010, it's preparing to debate yet another energy policy for the state. This time, you can make a difference by speaking out for clean renewable power and the sustainable jobs it produces. Contact the Alaska Senate Energy Policy Group (<http://energy.aksenate.org/>) and tell them to look forward to renewable power and long term jobs, not backward to traditional coal mining and combustion.



Help Shape YOUR Clean Energy Future!

Get Informed, then Get Involved!

Want to know how you can help move your family and your community toward a clean energy future?



Check out the award-winning documentary "Kilowatt Ours: A Plan to Re-Energize America" by Jeff Barrie. Learn more about the film at www.kilowattours.org and obtain copies to borrow or purchase (sliding scale \$5-20) at Inletkeeper's Homer and Anchorage offices. For more information contact keeper@inletkeeper.org or call 907.235.4068 x21.



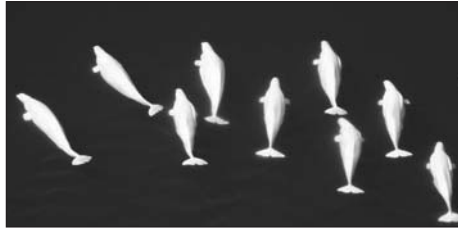
WATERSHED WATCH

Feds Dragging Feet Defining Critical Habitat Areas for Beluga Whale

Inletkeeper Focuses on Protecting Prime Beluga Habitat

In October 2008 - after more than ten years of inaction, and under the threat of litigation - the National Marine Fisheries Service designated the Cook Inlet Beluga whale as "endangered" under the federal Endangered Species Act. Yet at the time of the listing, NMFS did not define "critical habitat" for the beluga, which is a necessary step toward developing a recovery plan. Instead, NMFS took public comments until May 14, 2009, asking for input on how to define those areas important to beluga whale feeding, mating and migration. Inletkeeper, Trustees for Alaska and numerous other groups submitted comments to NMFS, calling for common-sense protections in prime beluga whale habitat. Now - more than a year after the listing - NMFS has yet to define critical habitat for the Cook Inlet beluga whale, and Inletkeeper and its partners may be forced to sue simply to get the government to obey the law.

Despite rhetoric from whale protection opponents, ESA listings do not hamper responsible development. In fact, statistics compiled since the enactment of the ESA all establish that the federal agency consultation process does very little to block responsible projects. In 1992,



Population studies for 2009 show a decline down to an estimated of 321 Beluga whales remaining in Cook Inlet

the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that only twenty-three of 18,211 projects would jeopardize a listed species and had no reasonable alternative. Other reports have posted similar findings. Between 1987 and 1995, only an estimated 600 jeopardy or adverse modification findings were made in consultations on 186,000 projects. This is less than one-half a percent. Though only anecdotal data, the Fish & Wildlife Service stated that in fiscal year 1999, 12,000 informal consultations took place. Of the eighty-three formal consultations conducted in that year, only one resulted in an opinion that a species would be in jeopardy. More recently, the Fish & Wildlife Service reported that from 1998 to 2000, only 420 projects resulted in a "jeopardy" opinion out of more than 300,000 consultations.

Thus, the vast majority of projects entering the consultation process are resolved informally with a determination that no listed species will be impacted, and responsible development can occur in conjunction with a listing decision. Furthermore, even in the extremely rare instances when a project as proposed is terminated, nothing in the ESA prevents project proponents from re-configuring their projects so as to ameliorate ESA problems and then reapplying for relevant permits.

The beluga whale has long been ignored in management and permitting decisions on oil and gas, sewage, port expansion and related projects. The Kenai Peninsula Borough recently received \$700,000 from Congress to conduct Beluga research, and Inletkeeper has urged the Borough to focus on critical habitat considerations. Cook Inletkeeper recognizes the Cook Inlet beluga whale as a vital strand in the ecological fabric that makes up the Cook Inlet ecosystem, and this ecosystem supports the economic and natural vitality of Southcentral Alaska. For more information, contact Bob at 907.235.4068 x22 or bob@inletkeeper.org.



Sandblasting Incident in Critical Habitat Nets Clean Harbors Signage

In 2008, a concerned citizen called Inletkeeper's pollution response hotline (1-888-MY INLET) to report suspicious vessel sandblasting activity in Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat, near sensitive and important shellfish beds. Inletkeeper elevated the issue with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), which referred the matter to the Department of Law for prosecution. As part of an agreement to settle the case, Inletkeeper received funding to purchase signs to educate mariners about the need to protect fish, shellfish and water quality from boat-based pollution. Inletkeeper thanks the vigilance of its "eyes and ears" network of citizen responders, and appreciates the excellent follow through by the ADEC and the Department of Law in protecting Kachemak Bay. These signs are being distributed to harbors and other areas around the state free of charge. For more information, contact Rachel Lord at 907.235.4068 x29 or Rachel@inletkeeper.org.



Inletkeeper is making these "Clean Harbors" signs available for free to harbors and docking areas around Alaska.



Inletkeeper & Partners Promoting Clean Harbors Alaska

Reducing environmental impacts and promoting stewardship in Alaska's ports and harbors

In July 2009, through grant funding from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Inletkeeper began Phase II of the Clean Harbors Alaska Certification Program. The primary aim of Clean Harbors Alaska is to provide best management practices (BMPs), technical assistance, and incentives for Alaskan harbors to reduce their environmental impacts and save spill response costs by minimizing non-point source pollution.

The initial phase of this project, which began in 2007, resulted in a Clean Harbors Guidebook for Alaska. This guidebook provides an outline of best management practices for harbor siting and design, operations, and maintenance. The Clean Harbors Guidebook is currently undergoing peer review through Alaska SeaGrant; a draft of the Guidebook can be found at the project website: [http://www.nukaresearch.com/projects/cleanhar](http://www.nukaresearch.com/projects/cleanharbor/index.shtml)



Oil collection facilities (Homer Harbor) and pumpout stations with appropriate signage (Fisherman's Terminal, Seattle) will be included in the upcoming Clean Harbor Certification process.



bor/index.shtml.

In October 2009, Inletkeeper's Outreach and Monitoring Coordinator Rachel Lord traveled to Seattle and visited with the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance - one of the partner groups that run the Clean Marina Washington program. Also in October, Rachel traveled to Kodiak for the 30th Annual Alaska Association of

Harbormasters and Port Administrators meeting - the theme this year was 'Clean Harbors'. In addition to seeing Kodiak's new massive Travelift in action, Rachel and Tim Robertson (from Nuka Research) presented on Clean Harbors Alaska; overall, harbormasters and harbor staff are supportive of the program. By the end of the conference the

AAHPA board passed a resolution in support of Clean Harbors Alaska. The development of Clean Harbors Alaska will continue through the winter, and in the spring Homer and Seldovia harbors will be the pilot sites for initial certifications. Visit our website for more information and to receive periodic updates on this exciting project.



Kachemak Bay Clean Harbors Day

On August 2nd, over 40 volunteers came out to help clean up marine debris in the harbors around Kachemak Bay for the first annual Kachemak Bay Clean Harbor Day. Community members from Homer, Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek participated in the event, collecting almost 50 bags of trash! The most common types of trash collected were food containers, plastic bags, Styrofoam pieces, building materials, nylon rope, and cigarette butts. Jay Greene of Nanwalek was the winner of a free roundtrip ticket on Homer Air for participating in his community's efforts on Clean Harbors Day. Funding for the event came from a grant

from the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies and their Alaska Coast Walk Marine Debris Removal and Prevention Program. Thanks to all of the volunteers, harbors

and communities for their support, and to Homer Air for their generous donation of the grand prize!



Port Graham and Nanwalek volunteers take pride in their communities on Kachemak Bay Clean Harbors Day

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

Cook Inlet Salmon Stream Temperature Monitoring Network

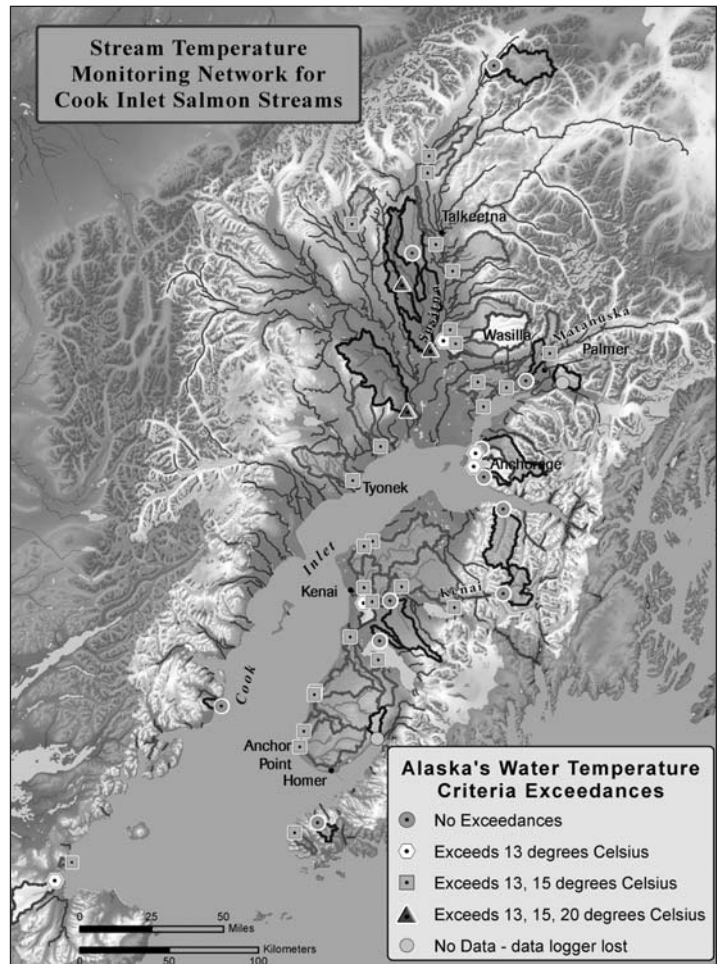
Cook Inletkeeper and its partners in the Stream Temperature Monitoring Network have collected over 2 million temperature readings in non-glacial salmon streams within the Cook Inlet watershed since 2008! That's a lot of data to manage and understand. We are fortunate to have local partners like the Kenai Watershed Forum (KWF) and The Nature Conservancy of Alaska (TNC of Alaska) to help us create the analytical and visual tools we need to accomplish our goal of identifying salmon habitat that is at risk due to the effects of climate and land-use change.

Our first step after collecting water and air temperature data from 48 salmon streams is to condense these readings, which are taken every 15 minutes, into summary statistics that help us understand how stream temperatures vary over the summer across all the sites. With the help of KWF intern, Samantha Fox, a bright young undergraduate from MIT with great programming skills, we can now spit out summary statistics like overall maximum temperature; daily, weekly and seasonal average temperature, maximum 7-day rolling average temperature; and maximum daily fluctuation.

The next step is to organize and present these statistics in ways that help us understand patterns across the watershed. Marcus Geist with TNC of Alaska is a whiz at creating maps that distill what those 2 million data points are telling us. Based on 2008 data (see map), the highest stream temperatures in Cook Inlet were recorded in streams that drain lakes or lowland areas west of the Susitna River. Regional maps like this are a valuable tool to elucidate temperature patterns from multiple datasets that are not obvious when the data are not spatially organized.

Cook Inletkeeper is in the process of summarizing 2009 temperature data. Since the air temperatures in the summer of 2009 were warmer than in 2008, this second year of data provides a valuable contrast to capture a realistic range of variability in current climate conditions. Stay tuned for more maps!

See www.inletkeeper.org for more information about Cook Inletkeeper's salmon stream monitoring program.



Cook Inlet's salmon stream temperatures exceeded Alaska's Water Temperature Criteria of 13°C at 35 sites, 15°C at 30 sites, and 20°C at three sites in the summer of 2008.

Working with Partners to Protect Bristol Bay Salmon



Juvenile coho salmon in Bristol Bay headwaters.

How can we protect salmon if we don't know where they are? This is the underlying question motivating work being conducted in Bristol Bay by Dr. Carol Ann Woody with the Center for Science in Public Policy and sponsored by The Nature Conservancy of Alaska. For a second year, Cook Inletkeeper's Science Director, Sue Mauger, joined other Alaskan researchers in headwater streams of the Nushagak and Kvichak Rivers to document the presence

of salmon in this prime juvenile rearing habitat. Through this effort, these small salmon-bearing streams will be added to the State's Anadromous Waters Catalog. Up to this point in our State's history, Alaska has never permitted mining directly through salmon streams. And now that we know where the salmon are, State regulators will have better information to make decisions informed by science.



Beach Monitoring Update

Inletkeeper staff, interns, and volunteers monitored beaches on the Homer Spit weekly from April through August for bacteria (see below). Through funding from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and an agreement with the City of Homer, Inletkeeper is monitoring levels of bacteria on recreational beaches

to protect public health. There were no exceedences of federal or state standards for fecal coliform or enterococci bacteria during the 2009 season. For more information, or to volunteer as a BEACH monitor, please contact Rachel Lord at rachel@inletkeeper.org or 907.235.4069 x 29.



Volunteer Spotlight – Karen West



CEMP Volunteer Karen West.

A year after moving to Homer from Baltimore 5 years ago, Karen West joined CEMP and has been monitoring Palmer Creek ever since. When asked why she started monitoring, Karen replied, “My educational background is in geography. Even though I did not continue in that field, my interest in the environmental sciences remains. Monitoring gives me the opportunity to be a scientist. I feel like I am doing a little something to protect our waters. The data the volunteers collect provide evidence to back up decisions being made in order to protect our waters.”

Karen offers this advice to new CEMP monitors: “Remember you are doing something important and making a difference. Enjoy the time you spend at your stream and outdoors.” Other activities that Karen enjoys include biking, house and yard projects, photography, reading National Geographic, and hanging out with her cats. Inletkeeper couldn't do what we do without dedicated volunteers like Karen. Thanks, Karen!



Cook Inletkeeper Intern Liza Mitchell sampling the water at Land's End.

Well Water Testing 2009

In 2008 Inletkeeper worked with nearly 40 families on the Lower Kenai Peninsula to help test private drinking water wells for common contaminants as part of our Safe Drinking Water Program. In 2009 we continued this effort with a booth at the Homer Rotary Health Fair on November 14th. We have 31 households currently signed up for drinking water tests. Arsenic, bacteria, nitrates, lead, and copper are some of the leading health concerns for private drinking water. This year, Inletkeeper is providing guidance and free shipping of samples to Anchorage. In the future, Inletkeeper hopes to refine the template its developed for well water testing on the Lower Kenai Peninsula, and expand testing capacity to other areas around the Cook Inlet watershed. We have posted well water testing guidelines, frequently asked questions, and links to various sources for specific contaminants and treatment options at our website: <http://www.inletkeeper.org/sdw/overview.htm>. For more information, contact Rachel Lord at rachel@inletkeeper.org or 907.235.4069 x 29



CEMP Volunteer Monitoring Update

2009 has been a great year for Inletkeeper's Citizens' Environmental Monitoring Project (CEMP)! We're currently monitoring 18 sites, from Two Moose Creek near Anchor Point to McNeil Creek, just below McNeil Elementary School 14 miles out East End Road. Over half of the sites this year will have complete data sets (at least 12 visits); five years of complete data sets at each site is our goal for documenting baseline conditions in our watersheds. In October we gained 3 new monitors, Kristen Kuehl (monitoring a new site on Mariner Creek at Homer High), Marcus York (Two Moose Creek), and Michael Haines (starting at Miller Landing in the spring). We will have our December volunteer gathering on December 1st. If you want to get involved with Inletkeeper's CEMP efforts, or want to work with one of Inletkeeper's partners around the Cook Inlet watershed, contact Rachel Lord at rachel@inletkeeper.org or 907.235.4069 x 29



Summer Interns Will Be Missed!

What a great summer! We had beautiful weather, lots of field work, and two outstanding interns to work with every day. Liza Mitchell, our Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF) Intern, took full advantage of all Alaska had to offer when



Elli Matkin and Liza Mitchell.

she wasn't in the field collecting water samples or aquatic insects. Elli Matkin, who grew up in Homer, received a Whitman College Internship Grant to work with us on community outreach efforts. From the dipnetting scene on the Kenai River to the Alaska Renewable Energy Fair in Anchorage, Elli helped us spread the word about renewable energy and climate change issues. Thank you Liza and Elli - We miss having you around and wish you all the best in your next conservation endeavor!



EVENTS

President Bill Clinton, NASA Scientist James Hansen, Address Waterkeepers

In June, Inletkeeper Executive Director Bob Shavelson attended the annual Waterkeeper Alliance conference in New York City. Shavelson recently stepped off the Waterkeeper Alliance Board after serving for ten years, and he attends the Waterkeeper conference each year to learn new strategies and connect with long-time colleagues. This year, Waterkeeper Alliance President Bobby Kennedy managed to persuade President Bill Clinton to speak to the more than 180 Waterkeepers attending the annual meeting. "The thing I love about what you do is that you do," Clinton said. "You don't just talk about it....If you have a law and you don't enforce it, you don't have a law." In addition to Clinton, Shavelson also had a chance to meet with one of his personal heroes - Dr.

James Hansen - the chief climatologist at NASA who in the late 1980's began sounding the alarm about climate change. Hansen argues we must keep our coal in the ground if we hope to have any chance combating climate change, and he walks the talk: he had just returned from West Virginia where he was arrested for a peaceful demonstration opposing a large mountain top removal coal mine.



President Bill Clinton with Hurricane Creekkeeper John Wathen and others at the Waterkeeper Alliance conference in New York City.



Historic "Voices of the Ocean" Event Highlights Ocean Acidification

Hundreds of Alaskan Mariners Speak Out to Protect Our Oceans

On Labor Day Weekend, hundreds of mariners and fishermen in boats, skiffs and kayaks took to the seas around Homer to send an urgent message about climate change and ocean acidification to Congress and international decisionmakers. Ocean acidification is one of the lesser-known but most troubling side effects of CO2 build up in the atmosphere; as atmospheric CO2 concentrations increase, the ocean absorbs more CO2, making it more acidic and threatening marine life throughout the food chain. The Alaska Marine Conservation Council, along with Inletkeeper Boardmember Mako Haggerty, played a central role organizing the event, and Inletkeeper Bob Shavelson helped with communications and outreach. Despite overcoming the incredible complexity of getting all the boats, skiffs and kayaks aligned correctly in Kachemak Bay's finicky tides and the wind, the organizers could not plan for one eventuality: a massive fog bank rolled in just in time for the



Mariners send a message to Congress and international decisionmakers.



photo shoot! Nonetheless, the photos captured a historic moment, and the after-party and rally included speeches on coal and climate by Shavelson, ocean acidification science by UAF Professor Jeremy Mathis, and organizing around climate issues by Inletkeeper's newest Boardmember, Shannyn Moore. Despite the overwhelming success of the event, some critics pointed to the fact the event relied on burning fossil fuels to...protest the burning of fossil fuels. Point well taken. And the response is this: if vessel operators had real options, they'd deploy them. But research into renewable and alternative engine design has been squashed and de-emphasized as we've slogged through decades of pollution-based prosperity. Now the chickens have come home to roost, so we need to speak up any way we can! Our hats go off to Alan Parks and AMCC for pulling off the most complicated and important event in Alaska history!



Board Member Spotlight: Mike O'Meara: Conservation Hero

An ardent conservationist, Mike O'Meara has been a Board Member for Cook Inletkeeper since its founding in 1994, providing guidance, counsel, strategic planning, artistic renderings and even helping out with occasional day-to-day activities. This year Mike received the Alaska Conservation Foundation's Celia Hunter Award, named for a pioneer conservationist and advocate for Alaska's wild places. This award recognizes significant, long-term efforts as a leader in the grassroots, volunteer environmental movement in Alaska. Recipients are active on a state or nationwide level, are active conservation supporters, and

have made a difference for Alaska's conservation movement over many years. In addition to being a homesteader near Homer, Alaska, Mike is an avid back country hiker and skier and has long been an active member of numerous local, statewide, and national conservation organizations. Over the past 4 years Mike helped organize the Homer Electric Association Members Forum, a grass roots movement successfully advocating for clean energy alternatives. The next time you see Mike, be sure to offer your congratulations for a job well done, and a job that we hope he will continue doing for years to come!



Mike leading HEA protest (Homer, Jan. 2009)
Photo courtesy Scott Dickerson.



Alaska Renewable Energy Fair

Speakers, music and electric powered vehicles spark renewable energy fair

On August 1, over 2,500 people came out to the Anchorage downtown park strip on a spectacular day for the 5th annual Alaska Renewable Energy Fair. Mayor Dan Sullivan and Iowa Gov. Chet Culver both spoke about the future potential of renewable energy in Alaska. Culver's state now produces 15 percent of its electricity from wind power. Executive Director Chris Rose gave an update on proposed legislative measures, including bills aimed at giving the state an overall energy policy. According to Rose, renewable energy is now a \$150 billion a year industry that is projected to quadruple in size in six years. With billions in federal and state funding aimed at renewable energy projects, opportunities abound for Alaska to tap renewable energy sources, and to potentially become a center for renewable energy manufacturing.

In addition to Cook Inletkeeper's booth, the fair featured many vendor and agency booths and workshops ranging from wind and solar powered demonstrations, an electric powered car from the Kenai Fjords National Park, energy efficiency information, and tidal power in Cook Inlet. A lineup of musicians kept folks moving and shaking out on the park strip until 9 p.m.

Cook Inletkeeper recently joined the Renewable Energy Alaska Project, which has sponsored the Alaska Renewable Energy Fair for the last five years. Through its membership, Cook Inletkeeper is once again saying YES! to renewable energy alternatives.



Intern Elli Matkin spreading the word about clean water at the Cook Inletkeeper Booth.

Splash Bash 2009

On Wednesday July 29th, under blue skies on the shores of Kachemak Bay, Cook Inletkeeper held its 12th Annual Splash Bash. Every summer we look forward to the opportunity to invite the community for food, music and fun so that we can recognize and thank our incredible volunteers. This year we celebrated Frank Vondersaar as our CEMP Volunteer of the Year. Donations from The Grog Shop, Kachemak Bay Seafoods, Two Sisters, Craig Matkin & Eva Saulitis, and the other folks who brought food truly made the party a community celebration. And special thanks to "Work in Progress" for the wonderful tunes! The Board and Staff at Inletkeeper sincerely thank all of those businesses and individuals, our volunteers, and our members for making our collective mission of "Clean Water, Healthy Salmon" possible.



Volunteers and community members enjoy the 12th Annual Splash Bash.

Cook Inletkeeper Wins River Warrior Award!

On July 7, 2009 the San Francisco-based nonprofit Resource Renewal Institute announced Cook Inletkeeper as one of thirty recipients nationwide to receive the \$1,000 River Warrior Awards in recognition for its efforts to protect and conserve water quantity, water quality, and riparian and aquatic habitat in free-flowing rivers. The awards are made with the hope of encouraging the "valiant, resolute efforts in defending free flowing rivers and the wildlife that depends on them; and in acknowledgement of the commitment, hard work, and dedication of all who work for free flowing water."

River Warrior Award founder and former California Secretary of Resources, Huey Johnson, describes the winners: "motivated by half-crazy passion, River Warrior Awardees struggle in the best of years—never mind the added challenge of an economic downturn in a time of climate change." Two-thirds of the 2009 awardees are based in California, with the remainder working to save rivers and fish in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Colorado, West Virginia, Michigan, New Mexico, and Alaska. Inletkeeper thanks Mr. Johnson and RRI for their thoughtful and timely support.



Show us YOUR Sedna!

Sedna legends vary greatly in cultures across the globe but all agree she dwells at the bottom of the sea and keeps strict guard over the ocean's living creatures. In 1995, Inletkeeper proudly adopted an image of Sedna as its logo to represent Cook Inletkeeper's mission to "Protect Alaska's Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains". For 2010, in celebration of our 15 year anniversary, Inletkeeper invites you to "Show us your Sedna!" Send us a picture of you in your Sedna T-shirt from anywhere in the world or a great picture of you out enjoying the bounty of the Cook Inlet and we'll post them on our website, and the best pictures will be selected for our newsletter. Email photos with

a brief description to joan@inletkeeper.org; a winning photo will be selected monthly and the sender will receive a Sedna mug beautifully handcrafted by Homer artist, Marie Herdegen. Join the fun and show us your spirit of the Sea!

And don't forget: Cook Inletkeeper offers complimentary organic cotton Sedna T-shirts - made in the USA - to all new members joining at the \$50 or above level. As Inletkeeper enters its 15th year, the Sedna logo will be slightly enhanced and made available on additional quality, eco/ethics conscious merchandise for your gift giving needs. So stay tuned for our new look!



Thanks to Cook Inletkeeper's Members & Supporters:

Cook Inletkeeper knows we cannot pursue our ambitious mission without the generous assistance of our members, major donors, business supporters, private foundations and public agencies. With over a thousand regular members, we list everyone individually in our summer newsletter. But for now, you know who you are, and in the meantime, we'd also like to thank our larger private funders:

Alaska Conservation Foundation
Bannerman Foundation
Bullitt Foundation
Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies
Endurance Fund
Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation
Fund for Wild Nature
Harder Foundation
Homer Foundation and
City of Homer
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Wolfensohn Family Foundation

Pick.Click.Give. Campaign and 15th Anniversary Fundraising *1st Year Resounding Success; Next Year Even Better!*

In 2008, the Alaska legislature passed a law making it easier for Alaskans to donate a portion of their Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) checks to nonprofits. During the first 10 months of 2009, Cook Inletkeeper - along with over 300 other Alaskan non-profits - anxiously awaited the results of the first year of giving through the highly publicized Pick.Click.Give. campaign. This campaign gives Alaskans the option to donate to non-profit organizations when they go on-line to sign up for their PFD. This year, approximately 5,500 Alaskans pledged more than \$545,000 to support their favorite nonprofits. Forty individuals from around the state collectively contributed \$3,250 directly to Cook Inletkeeper using Pick.Click.Give, an amount that pleasantly surprised the staff and board. Of the 40 contributors, 15 were new supporters of Cook Inletkeeper's mission to "protect Alaska's Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains". Cook Inletkeeper says THANK YOU to each and every donor who contributed in 2009 through Pick.Click.Give.

In January, when you apply for your Permanent Fund Dividend, you will again have the opportunity to give to Cook Inletkeeper. Now with Pick.Click.Give, donating is safe, secure, fun, easy, and it's available to all Alaskans

who file on-line. When you go on-line to sign up for your dividend, you will see the option called PFD Charitable Contributions Program (Pick.Click.Give). Click and follow the instructions to make a donation. You can also provide your name and address, and if you do, we will thank you personally. More information is available at <http://www.pickclickgive.org>.

As noted in our lead story, in 2010 Cook Inletkeeper celebrates its 15th Anniversary. In light of the difficult economic times facing all nonprofits, Inletkeeper is pleased to announce a fundraising match challenge from the Endurance Fund, which will provide a dollar-for-dollar match for all memberships of \$150 or more. Cook Inletkeeper is requesting those members who support our mission and can afford it, to give \$150 or more as part of the 15th Anniversary Membership Fundraising Drive. This drive officially began on November 1, 2009 and will continue through December 31, 2010. Together we can meet this challenge if just 150 new or existing members each give \$150 between now and the end of our 15th Anniversary Year in December 2010. Contact Inletkeeper's Development Director Mike Allen at michael@inletkeeper.org or 907.235.4068 x27 if you have any questions.



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**WE NEED YOUR EYES & EARS ON COOK INLET!
JOIN COOK INLETKEEPER & HELP PROTECT WATER QUALITY!**

YES! I want Cook Inletkeeper to continue its important work to protect the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains! Please accept my tax deductible contribution in the amount of:

- ☐ \$ 25 Student/Senior ☐ \$ 50 Individual ☐ \$ 75 Family ☐ \$ 100 Patron ☐ \$ 250 Founder
☐ \$500 Benefactor ☐ Other \$ _____ ☐ Charge my credit card in the amount of \$ _____ per month

I would like to volunteer for:

- ☐ Events/Booths ☐ Graphics/Photography ☐ Mailings/Flyers
☐ Fund Raisers ☐ Water Quality Monitoring ☐ Advocacy/Issue

Please contact us about:

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