

INLETKEEPER®

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



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Summer 2013



New Oil & Gas Permit, Same Old Toxic Dumping *Alaskans get fined for littering, but companies may dump toxic wastes into Cook Inlet fish habitat*

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Cook Inlet is unique in many ways—rich salmon runs, beluga whales, active volcanoes. But it stands out for another, less alluring reason: it's the only coastal water body in the nation where the oil and gas industry can legally dump its wastes under a Clean Water Act loophole. This spring, the EPA and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation held joint public meetings to take comments on new proposed permits for exploratory oil and gas drilling wastes. Although Congress designed the Clean Water Act to ratchet down pollution discharges as technologies improve over time, the new proposed permits simply extend business as usual and allow the oil and gas industry to continue toxic dumping in Cook Inlet.



Buccaneer's Endeavor rig off Stariski Creek, with Mt. Iliamna in the background.

When the EPA devised the current loophole in 1996, it rationalized its decision by saying the technology was not available to properly treat

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Abandoned and Derelict Vessels at our Doorstep *Inletkeeper works with harbormasters to pass legislation in Juneau*



Refloating and mitigating the impacts of this sunken boat in Cordova cost over \$5 million. Inletkeeper helped pass legislation this session to better deal with abandoned and derelict vessels before they sink.

In a busy and controversial legislative session, there's one bill that we are happy to report passed—HB 131. This legislation updates long-outdated state statutes dealing with Abandoned & Derelict Vessels (ADV), and empowers municipalities and state agencies under the same state law when dealing with ADV. This will help communities around Alaska's coasts, rivers and lakes, because localities and state agencies now have clear authority to act on ADVs.

When two derelict vessels sank on Christmas Eve in Kachemak Bay, Inletkeeper's office was flooded with phone calls from concerned Alaskans, many commercial oyster farmers, wanting to understand how the state deals with these environmental hazards in our public waters. This dramatic incident in our backyard is not isolated, and indeed is happening all over Alaska. That's why in October, the Alaska Association of Harbormasters and

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Letter from your Inletkeeper

Dear Friends of Cook Inlet—

Overreach. That's what happens when the people with their hands on the levers of power forget who they represent. Under the Parnell Administration, we're witnessing a sweeping effort to roll back some of the most basic safeguards that protect our salmon and our water resources. While these rollbacks are typically framed as "streamlining" efforts to make project permitting more efficient, they are in fact thinly veiled attempts to stifle citizen participation and undermine common-sense habitat and water quality protections.

Early this past legislative session, the Parnell Administration rammed through HB 80, which overturned a statewide vote by Alaskans to limit pollution dumping from large cruise ships. At the same time, the Administration introduced HB 77, which would make it harder for Alaskans to appeal state decisions, grant enormous powers to DNR to issue permits without public process and strip Alaskans of their rights to keep water in streams for fish. HB 77 sailed through the House with little scrutiny, and nearly made it to the floor of the Senate for a final vote in the waning days of the session. However, a broad-based uprising from Native Tribes, fishermen, conservationists and everyday Alaskans produced a barrage of public comments that stalled the bill.

The Legislature will take up HB 77 when it reconvenes in January 2014, and the Parnell Administration is working hard to



secure the votes needed for passage. That's why we need your help. If HB 77 becomes law, it will open the door for no-holds-barred development that will forever put Alaskans and our salmon resources at risk. Please contact me at 907.299.3277 if you want to help, or visit our web site.

Yours for Cook Inlet,

Bob Shavelson
Inletkeeper



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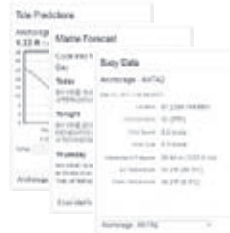
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CLEAN ENERGY

Massive Oil Tax Giveaway Hurts Alaskans “Owner State” thrown under the bus

In the wee hours of April 14, just before session adjournment, the Alaska legislature passed SB 21, Governor Parnell’s oil tax bill. Similar efforts last session failed when a bipartisan majority in the Alaska Senate held firm. But recent elections—fueled by heavy corporate spending after the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Citizen United* decision—re-aligned the political makeup in the Senate, leading to the bill’s narrow passage.

According to industry analysts, the bill gives away billions of dollars to the oil industry, will push the state to long-term deficit spending and will rapidly deplete Alaska’s savings, costing our communities vital funding for roads, schools and public safety. Passage of SB 21 takes the state from a fiscal surplus to an immediate \$800 million deficit this year alone. Now, with our state’s revenue stream radically reduced, Alaskans should expect serious discussions in the near future on cuts to various state services, state income and sales taxes, and drawdowns on the Permanent Fund Dividend, among other things.

On April 4, Inletkeeper joined with the group Backbone and thousands of Alaskans across the state to protest Parnell’s oil tax giveaway. Despite strong evidence our current oil tax regime has provided a fair return to Alaskans on our oil wealth, and although there was little or no evidence the new tax policy will actually spur new development, the Alaska legislature bowed to corporate pressure and changed the law. 



Inletkeeper Board member Mike O'Meara stirs the pot at an April 4 rally on Bishop's Beach to protest Governor Parnell's oil tax giveaway.

In response, Alaskans across the state are mounting a signature-gathering effort to put a referendum on the next statewide ballot to repeal SB 21. For more info, contact Ray Metcalfe at 907.344.4514.


Abandoned Vessels at our Doorstep

Continued from page 1

Port Administrators passed a resolution supporting changes to the state ADV statutes, and proposing language ready for a sponsor in Juneau. The simple changes to statutes laid out a clear and straightforward way to start addressing this large issue immediately.

Inletkeeper staff called Representative Seaton’s office in early January to discuss possible legislation. Through a series of conversations with Inletkeeper and others, Rep. Seaton decided to bring forward a bill to Juneau. In addition to the AAHPA’s suggestions, Seaton added another provision requiring any vessel stored in state waters for over 14 days to have bulk fuels and other hazards removed.

With enthusiasm, a core group of supporters showed up for every committee hearing on HB 131. Supporting testimony came from harbor masters from Homer, Nome, Ketchikan and Juneau, the State Port & Harbors Engineer (ADOT), Deputy Director of the Division of Mining, Land and Water (ADNR), and Inletkeeper’s Rachel Lord. After passing unanimously in the House, Sen. Micciche picked up HB 131 in the Senate. With one committee hearing, and more positive testimony, it was brought onto the Senate floor where it passed—also unanimously.

Cook Inletkeeper is proud to have catalyzed the movement of HB 131, and we look forward to participating in ongoing conversations to continue improving Alaska’s capacity to deal pro-actively with abandoned and derelict vessels. 



Until August 31!

Alaskans know that when they register online for their Permanent Fund check every year, they can choose to participate in Pick.Click.Give and allocate a portion of their PFD check as a donation to Cook Inletkeeper. What many may not know is that you can do this through August 31st. That’s right, even though the PFD registration deadline has passed, you may still log in to your MyAlaska account and make a donation from your fall check. A donation through Pick.Click.Give is easy and secure and provides Inletkeeper with one more source of valuable unrestricted funding. Log in to myalaska.gov for more information!

Buccaneer Stumbles Up Cook Inlet

Risky business threatens fisheries

Buccaneer drug its jack-up drilling rig *Endeavor* into the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat on August 24, 2012, and told Homer officials and the general public the rig would be gone in eight days. On March 29, 218 days later, the *Endeavor* finally departed. As of mid-May, the rig stood off Stariski Creek, just north of Anchor Point, where Buccaneer awaited final approval from the Alaska Oil & Gas Conservation Commission to proceed with drilling.

The ordeal surrounding Buccaneer's entry into Cook Inlet has raised a number of issues. As a threshold matter, the management plan for the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area flatly prohibits the "storage" of drill rigs. This prohibition arose from the 1970s incident involving the mobile drill rig the *George Ferris*, which plowed through crab gear in the middle of the night, then later got stuck in Mud Bay and produced a sizable oil spill. Yet the Alaska Department of Fish & Game ignored its own rules, and allowed Buccaneer to store the rig in the critical habitat area for months on end.



ADFG ignored its own rules by allowing Buccaneer to store its jack-up drill rig in a critical habitat area all winter.

Additionally, when the *Endeavor* first arrived, longtime activist Larry Smith discovered what appeared to be an oyster shell on the rig. ADFG refused to do an inspection or to take independent samples to determine whether any invasive species entered Kachemak Bay, and instead deferred to Buccaneer to produce a short report proclaiming there was no problem. Finally, Inletkeeper documented over 800 violations of the Clean Water Act when Buccaneer blasted seismic shot holes in the Kenai River flats without a permit. Rather than fine Buccaneer for the violations, however, the Army Corps simply issued an after-the-fact permit with no penalties.

Buccaneer's repeated corner cutting, coupled with its sloppy community relations work, has not instilled confidence it can drill safely in the unforgiving waters of Cook Inlet. Inletkeeper will continue to watch this company and its operations to help ensure the best and safest possible practices in our magnificent but fragile fisheries. 🐟

Alaskans Press Governor to Protect Salmon

Parnell Administration once again rejects salmon habitat protections

To address the growing threat to the sustainability of Alaska's salmon, Cook Inletkeeper brought together a diverse group of Alaskans, including commercial and sport fisherman, hunters and property owners, to petition the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) to adopt new regulations that would prohibit surface coal mining operations in salmon streams and provide public notice for Title 16 permit applications.

On April 12th, ADFG Commissioner Campbell and the Parnell Administration rejected our common-sense request to strengthen rules to protect wild Alaskan salmon runs, and refused to allow Alaskans to participate in decisions that harm salmon habitat.

Currently, ADFG is not required to provide public notice upon receipt of a Title 16 permit application and, with the loss of the Coastal Management Program, Alaskans no longer have a meaningful role in coastal resource decisions. Wild Alaska salmon are a public resource and Alaskans have a right to know when salmon habitat may be impacted. Contrary to popular belief, the State of Alaska does not prohibit mining through salmon streams or even the wholesale removal of a salmon stream; instead, the decision is left to the discretion of state agency personnel. A Title 16 permit is required for any project that would mine through or change the natural flow of a salmon stream. A clear ban on

mining through our salmon streams would provide the predictability that industry, politicians and citizens all support.

There are many factors contributing to salmon run strength, but it's imperative that we take decisive action to protect our vibrant, healthy wild Alaska salmon habitat that we all recognize salmon need to spawn and breed. Allowing coal strip mining to completely remove or mine through vital sections of salmon streams, including headwater tributaries, will only diminish future runs, tarnish the marketability of Cook Inlet salmon and cause more economic hardships for Alaskans. 🐟



Photo: USFWS

Alaska, Coal & Climate Change

Addressing climate change can save money and protect our water and air

Despite a national trend of decreased coal use, Alaska is experiencing strong demand to develop the state's vast coal resources. Growing Asian economies are fueling the demand, and the illusory promise of jobs and profits facilitates the process. But, coal development expense is high, and a true cost accounting leaves little doubt that Alaska's coal is best left in the ground. Whether you blow up mountains or strip it from wetlands, coal mining impacts cause intensive habitat degradation. But most concerning is that coal combustion emits twice the carbon dioxide of natural gas, and carbon pollution—most significantly from coal combustion—is the driving force behind climate change.

In the past 50 years, Alaska has warmed at twice the rate of the rest of the US and is already experiencing costly impacts from climate change. Villages now unprotected by sea ice are pounded by winter storms, thawing permafrost is destroying road and utility infrastructure, salmon streams are warming and changing weather patterns are increasing risks of floods, drought, wildfire and insect infestation. Nationally, the extreme weather of 2012 caused billions of dollars' worth of damage. In response, President Obama is directing the Environmental Protection Agency to formally move forward to address increasingly rapid global warming. The EPA will now integrate considerations of climate change into its programs, policies, rules and operations. Additionally, the President is demanding reductions in CO2 emissions stating this year: "if Congress won't act soon to protect future generations, I will."



Coal strip mining threatens wild Alaska spawning and rearing habitat in the upper Chuitna Watershed.

During a public hearing on proposed coal leases a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) official communicated that Alaska does not have a position on climate change and would not evaluate the impacts of climate change during the coal project permitting process. More recently, the Parnell Administration killed the Climate Change Sub-Cabinet formed under Governor Palin. Inletkeeper will continue to press the State to address climate change and leave behind a legacy of sustainability. 🐾

CLEAN WATER

Clean Boating Activities in 2013

Helping boaters with the tools to safeguard water quality



Inletkeeper's Rachel Lord gives out clean boating kits in Big Lake in the Mat-Su Valley. Clean Boating outreach efforts are expanding in 2013 to include the Little Susitna River, Homer and Seward Harbors.

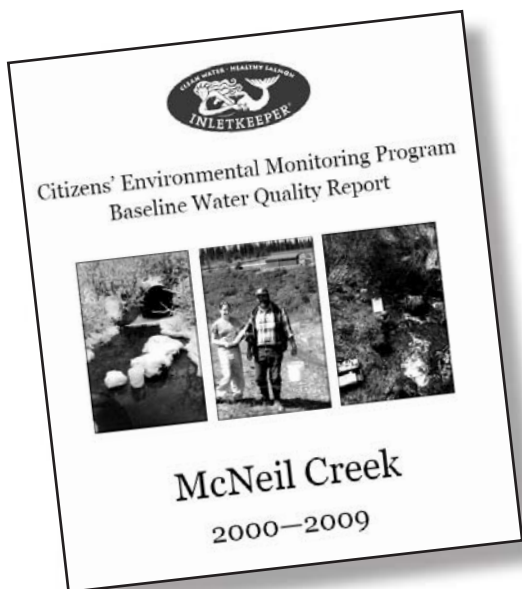
As we kick off the boating season in 2013, Cook Inletkeeper is excited to expand our clean boating outreach efforts to boaters throughout the watershed! We kicked off the year with a booth at the Anchors Aweigh Boat Show in Anchorage. We talked with hundreds of boaters and gave away more than 200 clean boating kits with resources on how they can help protect water quality and healthy fish while enjoying boating on Cook Inlet's rivers, lakes and coast.

Our Clean Boating on Big Lake project started up again in March, with our contractor from Mat-Su Conservation Services hosting a similar clean boating booth at the Mat-Su Outdoorsman Show. Volunteers will again be at the boat launches on Big Lake this summer, handing out clean boating kits and talking with boaters about pollution prevention. With funding from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, starting mid-summer we'll be expanding this effort to the Little Susitna River.

Inletkeeper's Rachel Lord will train additional volunteers at the harbors in Homer and Seward to give out clean boating kits and provide resources and tips on how to keep boat-based pollutants out of the water while enjoying boating. A tip to remember—when pulling your boat, wait until you're away from the water before pulling your drain plug! Putting vegetation between you and the water body you've just enjoyed boating in will help to filter out pollutants that can drain out with the water in your boat. For more information on this exciting project, contact Rachel at rachel@inletkeeper.org. 🐾

Citizen Monitoring Update

Closing in on baseline data collection



Cook Inletkeeper continues to publish baseline water quality reports for streams around the Kachemak Bay and Anchor River watersheds.

In 1996, Inletkeeper began the first citizen-based water quality monitoring program in Alaska. The Citizens' Environmental Monitoring Program (CEMP) is now in its 16th year! We have trained over 300 volunteers in and around the Lower Kenai Peninsula to collect water quality data on streams in the Kachemak Bay and Anchor River watersheds.

In addition to getting folks into the streams and aware of water quality issues, a primary goal of the CEMP is to collect baseline data. By taking time to learn about our streams now, we can track future changes and be informed as a community when we make decisions about development and conservation. Baseline datasets are collected over a period of at least five years. To be considered a "complete" baseline dataset, a series of criteria must be met for each CEMP site. These criteria ensure that we're capturing the natural variation at each of our sites, both within a year and between years. We then summarize the data in a reader-friendly way, including 'bug sampling' data, continuous temperature data and information taken with photographs and observations over the years of sampling.

By looking at all of this together, we develop an overall picture of water quality and habitat quality at our streams and provide suggestions for future monitoring. At the end of 2013, we will have completed 16 baseline water quality datasets, with one more that will conclude at the end of summer 2014. Writing up all of the data will take some time, so stay tuned as we continue to roll out baseline water quality reports! 🐟

Volunteer Spotlight

As we continue to complete baseline water quality datasets at our Citizens' Environmental Monitoring Program stream sites, we can't thank our volunteers enough for their hard work and year-round efforts to collect these data! In 2012 we had eleven volunteers monitoring eight water quality sites in the Kachemak Bay and Anchor Point watersheds. These volunteers spent a total of 225 hours in these streams, collecting water samples to test for bacteria levels, water clarity, dissolved oxygen and other water chemistry parameters.

At the end of 2012, we're saying our final "Thank You" to the following volunteers (the year indicates when they started water quality monitoring with Inletkeeper): Marcus York (2010), Jenny Stroyeck (2010), Holly Aderhold (2010), Will Schlein (2007), Frank Vondersaar (2005) and Jim Brown (2009). Join us in July for Splash Bash, where we'll celebrate the efforts of not only these volunteers but also our members and supporters! 🐟

Volunteers donated 225 hours in 2012 to water quality monitoring! Join us to celebrate them and YOU, our members and supporters, at Splash Bash this July in Homer (date TBA)



Same Old Toxic Oil & Gas Dumping

Continued from page 1

industry wastes, and Cook Inlet exploration work was not expected to increase in the future. Today, there are two jack-up rigs actively drilling—and dumping—in Cook Inlet, and there are waste treatment facilities—both onshore and offshore—to handle drilling wastes. That's why it's time to stop the façade, and to bring Cook Inlet into the 21st Century.

Inletkeeper is working with its lawyers at Trustees for Alaska to submit detailed comments on the proposed permits, with an eye toward re-opening and revising EPA's 1996 toxic loophole decision to get to a common-sense zero discharge standard. If the oil and gas industry can't dump in the coastal waters of Louisiana or Mississippi, then they certainly shouldn't be allowed to use our rich Alaskan fisheries as their dumping grounds. 🐟


Handle Your Drinking Water Source with Care

Proper well maintenance is essential during Alaska's summer months

Summertime in Alaska is the time to get things done. After a long winter, and a seemingly longer spring, Alaskans are getting busy with the activities that we pack into the long days of the short season—gardening, fishing, entertaining visitors and enjoying the beautiful places we live in around Cook Inlet. Another important thing you should be adding to your to-do list is making sure that your drinking water remains safe for you and your family.

Just as a city utility worker inspects elements of the public water system, keeping inspection and maintenance records along the way, it is up to you to do this for your own private water system. Cook Inletkeeper can help you become more informed about potential contaminants and health risks in drinking water,

water testing options, resources for resolving water quality problems and technical assistance for getting your water tested by a state-certified lab. Preventing problems through land stewardship and water system maintenance are also key elements of keeping your water safe.

Cook Inletkeeper's *Clean Water, Healthy Families* section on the web site was recently expanded and updated to provide Alaskans a wealth of information about water testing, treatment, water source protection, water rights and information about public water systems. We invite you to take a look and use the information to take steps to ensure the long-term maintenance and safety of your private drinking water source. Visit www.inletkeeper.org/safedrinkingwater for more information. 

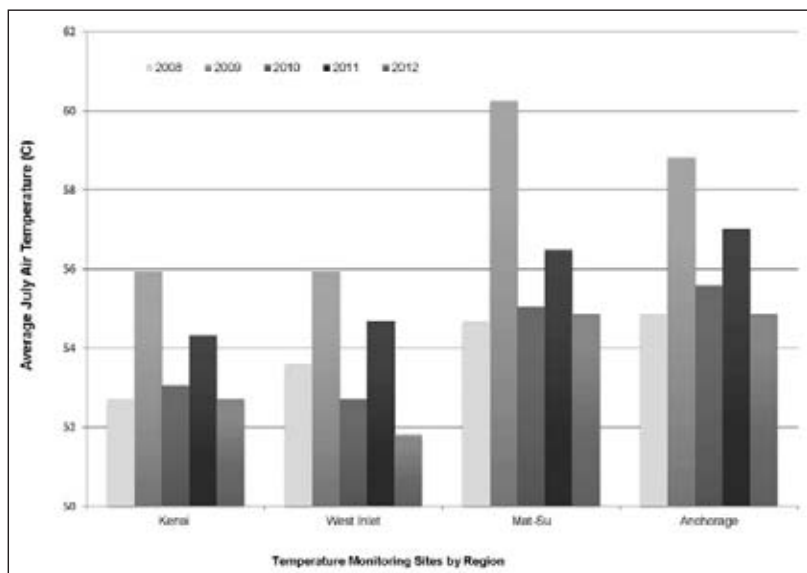
HEALTHY HABITAT

The Stream Temperature Monitoring Network

What we learned in the last five years


Cook Inletkeeper has been collecting water and air temperature data in 48 salmon streams in the Cook Inlet watershed for five years. Here's a brief summary of what we've learned since 2008: Average summer water temperature can vary by as much as 10°C across different non-glacial streams in Cook Inlet.

- Steep, forested mountain streams are cold and will likely remain good cold-water habitat in the future.
- Lowland streams on the west side of the Susitna drainage are warm and consistently above temperatures known to be stressful to salmon.
- Lakes act as thermal sinks and increase the rate of warming to connected streams.
- Predicted increases in future summer air temperature will result in warmer stream temperatures across the region.
- Predicted increases in future winter air temperature may have an even greater impact on summer water temperatures, especially on the lower Kenai Peninsula.
- 2009 was the warmest summer in the last 5 years—we're due for a good summer this year.
- 50-100 year flood events are hard on our in-stream equipment and we will need new deployment methods for long-term monitoring stations.
- Bears like chewing on white plastic solar shields.
- Bears can pull metal pipes, buried three feet into the stream bottom, out.



Average July air temperatures (2008-2012) reveal that 2009 was the warmest summer in the last five years.

- Working with 15 different partners has been the best part of the project.
- Managing 6.8 million data points has been the hardest part of the project.
- Interest in stream temperature monitoring has increased dramatically in Alaska.

We are now compiling all the temperature data collected from 2008-2012. We will have a report out this summer that will summarize all of our findings. Stay tuned! 

Beluga Whale Gets Short End of the Funding Stick

Federal cuts mean no money to count whales this year



Despite its listing under the Endangered Species Act, the beluga whale population endures seismic blasting, pollution dumping and other routine impacts. Photo: Ground Truth Trekking

The Cook Inlet beluga whale remains in a perilous balance, with its population continuing to drop despite its status as an endangered species. Now, the federal government recently announced it lacks the funds needed to conduct the annual survey work to understand the status and trends of the Cook Inlet beluga population.

While some anti-government forces like to point to the Endangered Species Act as an impediment to economic development, the fact remains nothing has changed in Cook Inlet since the beluga's listing. Toxic oil and gas dumping, massive sewage discharges and offshore seismic air gun blasting are but a few of the routine and ongoing threats to the whale. Equally disturbing, the State of Alaska has done and continues to do absolutely nothing to help the white whales' recovery.

Latest estimates suggest fewer than 290 whales remain in Cook Inlet. Inletkeeper is now working with fishermen, Tribes and others to press the state to invest time, money and research in the beluga, so it always remains a vibrant strand in the complex fabric of life that is Cook Inlet. 🐳

Thank You Nancy Lord!

If there's such a thing as reincarnation, Nancy Lord will certainly return some day as a beluga whale. Not that she resembles one, of course, but her heart is so enmeshed in the beluga, it's rare to hear her talk about Cook Inlet without some mention of the white whale. Ever since the whales mesmerized her as they passed in large pods by her fish camp on the west side of Cook Inlet in the 1980's, Nancy has been an unparalleled champion for the beluga.

Lord's 2007 book *Beluga Days: Tracking the Endangered White Whale* is hands-down the best account of the white whale's plight. In 2011, in an effort to craft a recovery plan for the beluga, Nancy volunteered to represent Cook Inletkeeper on a stakeholder panel, which entailed regular travel, countless pages of reading and analysis, and some mind-numbing meetings.

The jury is still out whether the recovery plan will have a chance to succeed. But our hats go off to Nancy Lord for putting herself out there time and again for the canary of the sea. 🐳

Nancy Lord has dedicated countless hours toward understanding and protecting Cook Inlet's unique beluga whale population. Photo: Linda Smogor



Inletkeeper Participates in First National Adaptation Forum

In April, Inletkeeper's Science Director headed to Denver for the Inaugural National Adaptation Forum: *Action today for a better tomorrow*. This meeting was the first concerted effort to bring people from across the country together to talk about adaptation: anticipating and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate.



We know our climate is changing and, regardless of vague global efforts to reduce carbon pollution, we are facing some inevitable warming as a result of past and expected future emissions. The National Adaptation Forum attracted more than 500 people, including city planners, natural resource managers, energy developers and citizens, who are addressing this challenge head on and incorporating climate information into their planning processes.

Inletkeeper's Sue Mauger presented our innovative adaptation work on the Kenai Peninsula using thermal infrared imagery to locate groundwater connections that provide critical cold water in the summer and warm water in the winter for salmon. By collaborating with new partners like Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, we can help them be more strategic about their priorities for conservation of important salmon habitat. We look forward to the second National Adaptation Forum to learn from others and share our evolving adaptation-based actions in preparation for the impacts of a changing climate. 🐳


Is the Bite On?

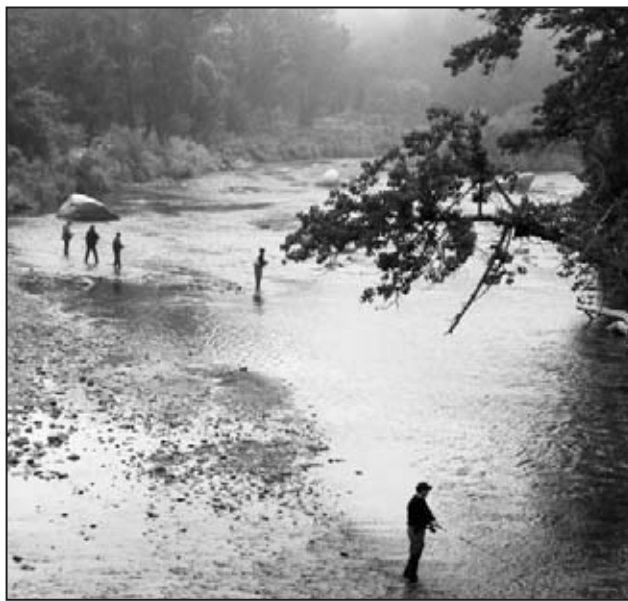
Collecting real-time salmon stream temperature data

When we run into Alaskans who are out on the river fishing and we tell them we are collecting water temperature data, they like to offer up their best guess at what they think the temperature is. And they are often very close. These Alaskans know that temperature can alter fish movement and behavior and, more importantly, whether the “bite is on.”

But access to real-time temperature data is very limited in Alaska, so Cook Inletkeeper is embarking on a new project to provide this type of information to Alaskans and fisheries managers. We’ll be collaborating with BeadedStream LLC in Anchorage to refine a prototype using paired air and water sensors with a real-time, online interface. The station will be powered with battery and micro-solar recharging capabilities, using Iridium satellite technology!

This pilot project will build on previous Cook Inletkeeper work to understand water temperature patterns in non-glacial salmon streams. This is an important next step in technology, data accessibility and long-term planning needed to engage decision-makers and local Alaskans in the implication of climate change on our freshwater salmon habitat.

Our first step will be to decide which two salmon streams in the Cook Inlet watershed we should start with. We’re interested in hearing from you! Where do you fish and would this real-time data be helpful in your decision to head to work or to head to your favorite stream? Contact Sue with your thoughts at sue@inletkeeper.org or 907.235.4068 x24. 



Knowing more about temperatures in streams like this one helps us to understand changes in salmon habitat.
Photo: Bill Scott/Odyssey Images

Anti-Salmon Agenda Dominates Legislature

HB 77 undermines Alaskan rights, democracy

This legislative session Gov. Parnell proposed House Bill 77 (HB77), one of his signature pieces of legislation. The Governor says his bill will reform and streamline the permitting process. But the Governor’s bill would rollback citizens’ rights and steamroll the public process. Alaska’s permitting process needs more protection for fish, public participation and transparency, not less.

The most concerning rollbacks would: (1) eliminate Alaskans’ rights to keep water in streams for fish, (2) give the Department of Natural Resource (DNR) commissioner sweeping authority to authorize activities on state land through issuance of a general permit and (3) limit who can participate in the administrative process. The proposed legislation would do away with the public’s ability to apply for water reservations for public uses including the protection of fish and wildlife, and would reject pending reservation applications from individuals and organizations.


During legislative hearings, DNR Commissioner Dan Sullivan suggested people seeking to protect fish habitat are blocking access to water. DNR was very clear: if you

...if you want to take water out of a stream this bill doesn’t impact you.

However, if you want to keep water in streams for fish you are an obstructionist who should not have the right to directly petition the agency.

want to take water out of a stream this bill doesn’t impact you. However, if you want to keep water in streams for fish you are an obstructionist who should not have the right to directly petition the agency.

No one likes the black hole of bureaucratic red tape. A predictable permitting process with bright line rules protecting our sustainable natural resources from intensive extractive development and significant resource degradation is desired and possible. But the Governor’s bill doesn’t move us closer to responsible development, nor does it realize the Alaska Constitution mandate to maintain the sustainability of our wild salmon runs.

Cook Inletkeeper worked diligently through a diversified statewide effort to stop passage of this destructive bill during the 2013 legislative session. Together we can stop this bill again when the legislature reconvenes in January 2014. 

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ORGANIZATION

A special thanks to Cook Inletkeeper's institutional funders:

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 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Linking Science to Action: Science Symposium

After two days of science talks, networking breaks, small group discussions, great food and video critiques, the take-home message from the first Science Symposium hosted by the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership was distilled down to: AND, AND, BUT, THEREFORE. These four words are the key to good storytelling, Randy Olson told the audience at the Islands & Ocean Visitor Center in Homer on April 17th. A scientist-turned-filmmaker, Olson was the keynote speaker. His message to the diverse audience of scientists, fisheries and habitat managers, landowners and fishers, focused on the power of personal stories and the need to use a story structure that people recognize. Symposium attendees took the message to heart and incorporated this story telling tip into their scientific presentation on topics ranging from pike eradication, over-wintering salmon habitat, and stream channel restoration.



Small group discussions focused on the most critical threats to fish habitat, such as invasive aquatic species and warmer climate.

The other highlight from the Symposium was an update on a year-long Conservation Action Plan process to identify the highest-priority strategic actions for the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership. To learn more about the presentations at the Symposium and about the Partnership, go to www.kenafishpartnership.org. 🐟

Staff Changes at Inletkeeper



Cook Inletkeeper welcomes Margo Réveil as its new Development & Office Coordinator. Margo and her family arrived in Homer by sailboat last fall and jumped right in to their next adventure as Kachemak Bay oyster farmers. Before her three years of sailing the Pacific, Margo spent 17 years at UCLA in IT management and leadership positions, honing communications, project management, architecture and design skills. She brings a great range of talents to her new position.

Margo represents just one of many changes to Inletkeeper staff in 2013. We'd like to take this opportunity to send our very best wishes to Wayne Jenkins, Dorothy Melambianakis, Michael Sharp and Susanna Sharp. Thank you for your service—we value your contribution to our work at Cook Inletkeeper! 🐟

2013 Electronics Recycling Success

Under sunny skies and a chilly breeze, Cook Inletkeeper staff, volunteers and dozens of participants took part of a familiar spring ritual in Homer—the annual electronics recycling event. Enthusiastic volunteers made for a smooth operation as friends and neighbors dropped off their e-waste for recycling.

Local eateries ensured that everyone was well fed, and our partners at SBS, TOTE, Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Kar-A-Van and Total Reclaim provided critical assistance with the event logistics and operations.

Since 2006, this event has kept more than 100,000 pounds of electronic waste out of local landfills. While the Homer e-cycle event was a success, there is still much work to be done to lessen the e-waste problem on a larger scale. Cook Inletkeeper is leading the local effort of the third R in the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle mantra, but it is up to all of us to practice all three on a regular basis. This year alone we gathered 19,299 pounds of electronics waste, 1,000 pounds more than last year's event! 🐟



Mermaid Tees Available Online



Cook Inletkeeper's popular logo tees feature Sedna the Inuit goddess of the sea and marine animals. The shirts are made of a hardy organic cotton and available in styles for both men and women, in long- and short-sleeve options. Order a size up in our four sunwashed colors—royal blue, burnt orange, sage and red, or your standard size in black and natural. Visit the Inletkeeper store at inletkeeper.org/store to check out these and other

great gift items, like the 5-pack variety notecards with images from around the watershed (just \$10 and easy to ship anywhere you like). If you live near Homer, stop in and have a look. Otherwise, order online—or give us an old-fashioned phone call at 907.235.4068 x27. 🐟

Anchorage Sports Show Nets Strong Support



Thank you to the Chuitna Citizens Coalition and the 900 Alaskans who signed the petition protecting salmon habitat at the Great Alaska Sportsman's Show in Anchorage. We all understand the economic and cultural importance of salmon to our local communities, but Alaskans are becoming increasingly concerned that the Parnell Administration will not adequately protect our wetlands and salmon habitat from large-scale coal strip mining. 🐟

Clean Boating—Outreach Winner

In December, Big Lake's Cassie Alexander earned a Girl Scouts Gold Award for her work with Cook Inletkeeper to encourage Clean Boating on Big Lake. Cassie is the first young woman in the Mat-Su Valley since 2007 to receive a Girl Scout Gold Award. We enjoyed working with her this winter on this exciting project. 🐟



Cassie is pictured here (right) with Catherine Inman from Mat-Su Conservation Services at a Cook Inletkeeper 'Clean Boating on Big Lake' outreach table.

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

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