

ADV in Alaska

New Task Force Products available on our website:

AK Case Studies

This document highlights cases from around the state compiled by Task Force members to highlight some of the challenges and costs associated with these vessels.

Vessel Impoundment - Municipal Templates

A resource manual developed by Birch Horton Bittner & Cherot, providing helpful templates for the vessel impoundment process.

Please see page 4 for information on how to contact the Task Force. Facilitated by Cook Inletkeeper and Alaska Clean Harbors.



this issue

Task Force Update **P.1**

Task Force Members & AK Joins National ADV Workshop **P.2**

Vessels of Concern Reporting & Federal Attention on ADV **P.3**

Steamboat Slough Update **P.4**

ADV Task Force Update

The ad-hoc Alaska Abandoned & Derelict Vessel Task Force met for the first time in February 2014. Facilitated by Cook Inletkeeper and the Alaska Clean Harbors program, this group was originally conceived by members of the Alaska Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators. In 2013, important legislation (HB131) passed in Juneau, updating the state's outdated ADV statutes, giving greater authority to all state agencies and municipalities when dealing with ADV (see AS 30.30).

While HB131 was a great first step, representatives from harbor facilities around the state, as well as state and federal agencies, recognized the need for improvement around Alaska to not only address current ADV but to prevent them in the future. The recent report 'Trends and Opportunities in the Alaska Maritime Industrial Support Sector' (McDowell Group, 2014) highlights the issue:

"By 2025, the Alaska fleet will include roughly 3,100 vessels between 28' and

59' that are more than 45 years old...

The Alaska fleet also includes 75 passenger vessels, tugs, and barges over 50 years old."

This aging fleet, while posing an opportunity for some in the maritime industrial support sector, should be a red flag to the state and municipalities. The problem of ADV exists throughout Alaska, and is not one that each municipality, state and federal agency should face on its own. Other coastal states, and indeed many members of the U.S. Congressional Delegation including all of those from Alaska (see the sidebar on page 3), recognize the breadth of this issue and the current and potential future deleterious financial and environmental impacts. The ADV Task Force is continuing to work together to learn from others, educate one another about the current ADV situation in Alaska, and set a course for pro-active management, removal and ultimate prevention of ADV throughout the state.

Alaska Joins in National ADV Workshop

Representatives from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation attended a two-day ADV workshop hosted by the NOAA Marine Debris Program and held in Alabama from April 21-22.

Wyn Menefee (ADNR) and Jade Gamble (ADEC) brought back valuable lessons from the workshop that will help the ADV Task Force and individual agencies better address and prevent ADV around Alaska.

You can read proceedings from NOAA's 2009 ADV Workshop here:

<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/proceedings-workshop-state-level-responses-abandoned-and-derelict-vessels>



ad-hoc ADV Task Force Members

State, federal, municipal and private partners are working together to develop tools and identify needs to more effectively deal with ADV in Alaska.

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The following agencies and stakeholders have representatives who have participated in the ad-hoc ADV Task Force to-date:

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Spill Prevention & Response

Alaska Department of Transportation, Port & Harbors

Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Habitat

Alaska Legislature, Rep. Paul Seaton, Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

Alaska Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators, Representatives from Homer, Bethel, Sitka

United States Coast Guard, Sector Anchorage, Division of Waterways Management

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, Marine Debris Program, Restoration Center

Environmental Protection Agency, Response, Alaska Region 10

Alaska Marine Response

Birch Horton Bittner and Cherot, pro-bono legal assistance for Cook Inletkeeper

Cook Inletkeeper/Alaska Clean Harbors, Facilitator

The United States Army Corps of Engineers has been made aware of this effort, and a representative is included in all email correspondence.



NEW! Vessel of Concern Reporting in Alaska

One of the initial goals of the ADV Task Force was to increase coordination and understanding for dealing with ADV between agencies/stakeholders. One example of the need for improved communication regarding vessels of concern comes from recommendation 4.4 in the 2014 Cook Inlet Risk Assessment Report. As a risk reduction strategy, the Advisory Panel included improving communications between harbormasters and the Coast Guard of unsafe vessels, especially those that are turned away from a harbor facility. From the report, “The Advisory Panel recommends that Harbormasters and Port Directors in Cook Inlet establish procedures to help them identify unsafe and unseaworthy vessels, and to contact the U.S. Coast Guard when they turn such vessels away.”

The ADV Task Force recognized early on that improved communication between agencies and stakeholders around the state would help to prevent and respond to ADV incidents. Therefore, one of our first efforts in 2014 was developing a joint agency reporting form for vessels of concern. By using this form, agencies and stakeholders are taking an important step forward in standardizing the basic information gathered on ADV around Alaska. It also allows for increased participation from harbors and municipalities in the tracking and inventorying of ADV and Vessels of Concern. ADNOR has set up a listserv through which agency and stakeholder representatives can submit and distribute these reports. Although Alaska still lacks a cohesive ADV database, the VOC reporting form and listserv creates an effective

mechanism to get pertinent information out about current and potential ADV in a timely manner.

Find the VOC form on our website: <http://alaskacleanharbors.org/resources/harbor-management/derelict-vessels/>

Contact the Task Force (see page 4) to subscribe to the listserv.



Federal Attention on ADV

On June 2, 2015 the three members of Alaska’s Congressional Delegation signed on to a letter with 19 other Congressional leaders to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), asking for an assessment of and action on abandoned and derelict vessels around the country.

We applaud Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan and Representative Don Young for recognizing this important issue at a federal level. We look forward to continued attention and we are hopeful for progress towards a more proactive approach to ADV prevention and response not only in Alaska but around the country.

Read the letter on our website: <http://alaskacleanharbors.org/resources/harbor-management/derelict-vessels/>

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

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<http://alaskacleanharbors.org/resources/harbor-management/derelict-vessels/>



Cook Inletkeeper and Alaska Clean Harbors are supporting the facilitation of this effort. To learn more about Cook Inletkeeper—a community-based organization dedicated to protecting clean water and healthy salmon in Alaska's Cook Inlet, please visit www.inletkeeper.org.



Alaska Clean Harbors is a voluntary, non-regulatory program that works with harbor masters and boaters around the state to reduce pollution in the marine environment through common-sense waste management solutions and education—including implementation of best practices for dealing with Abandoned and Derelict Vessels.

The next ADV Task Force Meeting is scheduled for August 19, 2015.

Steamboat Slough Update

During our in-person meeting on June 17 in Anchorage, Curtis Mann from the Orusararmiut Native Council (ONC) gave a presentation to the ADV Task Force on the current situation in Steamboat Slough. There are over thirty barges in and around Steamboat Slough—a narrow channel heavily used for not only navigation but also for fishing and private property access. From the ONC presentation, the biggest con-



cerns for the community regarding the barges in Steamboat Slough and the surrounding areas are fisheries and navigation, and concerns for life, health and safety of people transiting the slough year-round. During open water, and especially around the sunken barge Shank's Ark, there are no navigational aids and so people boating are in a dangerous situation - especially when there are other vessels traveling at the same time in the area. Impacts on habitat and fish passage are also big concerns, with anecdotal declines in reds and other fish in the Slough. The Task Force discussed the situation at length, with DNR representatives indicating that there is some movement at prosecution under either civil or criminal rules, however that process is slow and complicated. Curtis brought videos from Steamboat Slough, and a compiled short video overview of the area can be seen via our website: <http://alaskacleanharbors.org/resources/harbor-management/derelict-vessels/>