

**CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA**

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RESOLUTION 26-009

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA,
SUPPORTING THE RECERTIFICATION OF THE PRINCE WILLIAM
SOUND REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL BY THE UNITED
STATES COAST GUARD THROUGH PWSRCAC RECERTIFICATION
DOCKET USCG-2026-0070 AS THE REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND AND ENTITIES AFFECTED
BY THE EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL

WHEREAS, The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) was created in 1989, and has since maintained its certification through the United States Coast Guard (USCG) as mandated by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90); and

WHEREAS, USCG requires the recertification of a Regional Citizens' Advisory Council for Prince William Sound annually with the third-year recertification requiring comments from the public; and

WHEREAS, Comments on PWSRCAC's recertification are due to LT Case Kuikhoven by February 15, 2026, through PWSRCAC Recertification Docket USCG-2026-0070; and

WHEREAS, PWSRCAC has worked diligently for the past 35 years to fulfill its mission: Citizens promoting the environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska terminal and associated tankers; and

WHEREAS, PWSRCAC works with industry and regulators to ensure response readiness, evaluate risks, and propose solutions; and

WHEREAS, The City of Homer, Alaska, has been a member entity of the PWSRCAC since its creation; and

WHEREAS, The City of Homer and its residents experienced the effects of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, PWSRCAC has voiced support for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Data Buoy Center to receive additional funding for timely repairs to Seal Rocks (Station 46061) and the other important weather buoys in the Gulf of Alaska because wind and wave data from the Seal Rocks buoy is the primary source of

42 information that the USCG uses to make critical navigation safety decisions for outbound
43 laden oil tankers; and

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45 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC staff provided support and were invited to give testimony at
46 Alaska Legislature committee hearings for a joint resolution to urge the U.S. Congress and
47 NOAA to address outages of their weather stations, the joint resolution passed in spring 2025,
48 and as of June 2025, the Seal Rocks buoy and others in the region were repaired or replaced,
49 and are working properly; and

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51 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC participated in a workgroup that helped develop a legislative
52 solution to allow the current fleet of vessels contracted by Alyeska's Ship Escort Response
53 Vessel System (SERVS) to remain in their spill prevention and response system, a legislative
54 solution that was included in the new National Defense Authorization Act passed by Congress
55 in 2025; and

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57 WHEREAS, One of the most important lessons from the Exxon Valdez oil spill was that
58 local fishing crews not only help with a quick response, but also provide important local
59 knowledge and skills; The SERVS contracted fishing vessel program forms the backbone of the
60 oil spill response system in Prince William Sound; and if another real event were to occur,
61 Alaska's fishing crews are ready to respond; and

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63 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC continues its Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program,
64 initiated in 1993, to monitor hydrocarbons pollution and impacts in the Exxon Valdez oil spill
65 region; in 2024, a pilot study identified 23 metals found in sediments near two monitoring sites
66 in Port Valdez, and noted that sediments near the terminal held higher amounts of metals than
67 the reference site at Gold Creek, results indicate that further investigation is needed;

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69 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC also supports citizen-based monitoring efforts for marine invasive
70 species that may be introduced in ballast water or on the hulls of tankers arriving at the Valdez
71 Marine Terminal; in September 2024, they released a report describing a survey for marine
72 invasive species conducted in 2023, throughout Prince William Sound that detected three
73 species of concern, bringing the total number of invasive benthic marine invertebrate species
74 in the Sound to seven;

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76 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC has continued its work monitoring sensitive species in Prince
77 William Sound that may be impacted and could use additional protection during an oil spill
78 response; in 2024, they released a report that combined 14 years of data showing areas where
79 marine birds tend to gather in the spring, and in 2025, they released a report on marine bird
80 and mammal surveys conducted in September and November 2024, in and around the tanker
81 escort zone and the terminal that was the first of four proposed years of surveys during the fall
82 and early winter; data from spring and fall surveys have been incorporated into NOAA's online

83 spill response planning tool, the Environmental Response Management Application that will
84 assist oil spill response decision makers during incidents; and

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86 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC devotes considerable effort to monitoring drills, exercises, and
87 training events, as well as the responses to actual incidents, which fortunately are relatively
88 rare in Prince William Sound; staff often participate as members of drill planning teams along
89 with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, USCG, and industry and drill
90 monitoring reports are prepared by staff and contractors; and when significant spills occur,
91 PWSRCAC staff, Board members, and volunteers work with Alyeska staff to understand why
92 they occurred and how Alyeska would prevent similar incidents in the future; and

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94 WHEREAS, As part of their OPA 90 mandate, PWSRCAC reviews and comments on
95 changes to oil spill prevention and response plans that cover the Valdez Marine Terminal and
96 tankers that transit Prince William Sound; participates in a workgroup consisting of industry,
97 regulators, and stakeholders, which meets on a quarterly basis to discuss conditions of
98 approval and advocate for improvements to the terminal plan; and participates in drill and
99 exercise design teams with industry and regulators that test response readiness; and

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101 WHEREAS, In 2023, PWSRCAC released a report titled “Assessment of Risks and Safety
102 Culture at Alyeska’s Valdez Marine Terminal,” which was initiated in response to safety
103 concerns brought to them by current and former Alyeska employees; the report found
104 unacceptable safety risks at the terminal, and since that time, the Council has been monitoring
105 the actions taken by Alyeska to improve the work culture and more effectively promote a
106 culture of safety; though many of the safety issues have been addressed by Alyeska since the
107 report was released, PWSRCAC continues monitoring recent loss of key staff with extensive
108 institutional knowledge, unaddressed gaps in regulatory oversight and monitoring, and
109 continued reports from employees concerned about safety issues; and

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111 WHEREAS, This resolution outlines only a few of the many valuable services provided
112 by PWSRCAC to the residents of Prince William Sound and Gulf of Alaska communities
113 downstream from the terminal and tanker route; and

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115 WHEREAS, PWSRCAC has proven to be critically important in the continued
116 environmentally safe operation of the Valdez Marine Terminal and its associated tankers and
117 is becoming ever more important as facilities and equipment age.

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119 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, supports
120 the recertification of PWSRCAC by the USCG through PWSRCAC Recertification Docket USCG-
121 2026-0700 as the Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council for Prince William Sound and entities
122 affected by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

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124 PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, THIS 26th day of
125 January, 2026.

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CITY OF HOMER

RACHEL LORD, MAYOR

132 ATTEST:

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AMY WOODRUFF, CITY CLERK

