



VIA ONLINE PORTAL ONLY

August 5, 2021

Laura Noland, Planner  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
555 Cordova Street  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Ms. Noland:

Cook Inletkeeper is a community-based nonprofit organization formed in the wake of *the Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill to protect the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains. Please accept these comments on behalf of Cook Inletkeeper and its more than 8500 Alaskan members and supporters for the proposed updates to the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan.

The proposed changes contain language allowing either a Regional Stakeholder Committee (RSC) or a Multiagency Coordination Group (MAC) to be used in Alaska. In our experience over the past 27 years, RSC's reflect the unique conditions of Alaska, and they afford local affected people and groups the opportunity to share suggestions and knowledge, solve problems, contribute resources and raise concerns with those running the response. MAC's, on the other hand, are typically more agency- and industry-driven, and would exclude many of the affected stakeholder voices included in an RSC. While the MAC can be useful in certain response scenarios, Inletkeeper strongly urges the agencies to retain RSC's in contingency plans and to clearly recognize them as the standalone approach in Alaska for engaging affected people and groups during a spill response.

Importantly, Alaskans need the assurance that fair opportunities for public comment will be provided on significant changes to plans for their geographic zone, and not merely have plans from a different area applied to theirs. Similarly, Inletkeeper urges agency decision makers to provide the transparency and clarity for Alaskans to know about and understand how decisions to modify plans will be made.

If the proposed changes move forward as drafted, Inletkeeper believes they will create confusion and inconsistency, and reduce or eliminate vital input from affected Alaskans.

Thank you for considering these comments and please feel free to contact me if you have questions at 907.299.3277 or [bob@inletkeeper.org](mailto:bob@inletkeeper.org).

Yours for Cook Inlet,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Shavelson", written in a cursive style.

Bob Shavelson  
Inletkeeper