RESOURCE



A PERIODIC PUBLICATION OF THE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR ALASKA, INC.

www.akrdc.org

This Edition Sponsored By:





THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ALASKA
ON THE PUGET SOUND REGION

TIES THAT BIND

By Dave Gering Executive Director Manufacturing Industrial Council

Gold first wove together the economies of Alaska and Puget Sound in the late 1800s. Today, more than a century after the Klondike Gold Rush, the 49th state and its southern trade partner are even more tightly interwoven by energy production and exploration, seafood, tourism, services, federal spending, construction and manufacturing, and retail and wholesale trade.

The remarkable economic connection between the two states is documented in "Ties that Bind," a study commissioned by the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce with sponsors from Alaska and Puget Sound. It is the third edition in a series of studies that started in 1984 to track the economic impact of trade between the two states. Put together by Tacoma economist Robert A. Chase, the new

The bonds between Alaska and Washington state continue to grow along with the health of their respective economies. Photo shows Alaska's Mt. McKinley and Washington's Mt. Rainier, as a reflection.

edition clearly portrays that Alaska's economic impact on Puget Sound is profound.

Job Impacts

According to the study, Alaska trade directly and indirectly accounted for more than 103,000 jobs throughout Puget Sound in 2003, up from 90,000 in 1994. The growth was equivalent to adding a 1000-employee company each year to the Puget Sound region. During the same period, the value of goods and services exported to Alaska rose from \$2.4 billion to \$3.8 billion. If Alaska were a separate nation, it would be Puget Sound's fifth largest trading partner.

Nearly 30 percent of Alaskan employment in Puget Sound is now related to services, with service jobs up 22 percent between 1994 and 2003, while labor earnings from service exports increased 79 percent and the dollar value of services exported to Alaska grew by 120 percent.

The vast majority of Alaskarelated employment in Washington is in traditional industrial occupations and sectors, including oil refining, maritime and air transportation, wholesale distribution, seafood fishing and production, manufacturing and construction.

Petroleum Impacts

Petroleum remains a hub of the Alaska-Puget Sound economic relationship. In 2003, crude oil worth \$2.8 billion came to Puget Sound refineries. Direct impact of this trade included 1,990 jobs and \$144.5 million in labor earnings. Spinoff benefits of this employment are dramatic, with every refinery job accounting for 11 others throughout the economy. This multiplier effect means that there are about 20,000 oil-related jobs up and down the I-5 corridor in the Puget Sound region.

Thanks to today's high oil prices, the dollar value of manufactured oil products in the state of Washington now exceeds the value of all processed agriculture products,

(Continued to Page 4)

rent and the dollar value every refinery job account

INSIDE

A	Alaska-Washington 1, 4-5	
	Mixing Zone Regs	3
1	Young Alaskans Forum	3
	RDC Conference	6-8
	High Oil Prices	9
	Alaska Budget Surplus	10
	RDC Briefs	11



Resource Development Council

121 W. Fireweed, Suite 250 Anchorage, AK 99503 Phone: (907) 276-0700 Fax: (907) 276-3887 E-mail: resources@akrdc.org Website: www.akrdc.org

Material in this publication may be reprinted without permission provided appropriate credit is given.
Writer & Editor Carl Portman

Executive Committee Officers

President John Shively
Sr. Vice President Rick Rogers
Vice President Wendy Lindskoog
Secretary Tom Maloney
Treasurer Stephanie Madsen
Past President Chuck Johnson

Staff

Executive Director Tadd Owens
Deputy Director Carl Portman
Projects Coordinator/AMEREF E.D. Jason Brune
Finance/Membership Deantha Crockett

Resource Review is the official periodic publication of the Resource Development Council (RDC), Alaska's largest privately funded nonprofit economic development organization working to develop Alaska's natural resources in a responsible manner and to create a broad-based, diversified economy while protecting and enhancing the environment.



REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY WILL SERVE STATE

December 19, 2005 marked the end of the public comment period regarding the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's (ADEC) proposal to adopt regulatory changes dealing with mixing zones. ADEC's proposal was the product of more than a year's worth of work and the subject of significant public scrutiny. If adopted, the new regulations will serve Alaska well going forward.

While historically mixing zones have been allowed throughout Alaska (municipal discharge facilities and shorebased seafood processing facilities being the most common examples), state regulations have prohibited mixing zones in spawning areas. This absolute prohibition is unique in the Pacific Northwest. Neither Washington, Oregon nor Idaho prohibit mixing zones in spawning areas.

Alaska's prohibition is excessive and inconsistent with state laws directing ADEC, along with the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Game, to approve of construction in and use of anadromous waters, as long as proper protection of fish spawning, rearing and migration is ensured. In this regard, ADEC's current mixing zone proposal strikes a much more appropriate balance between regulatory flexibility and protection of the state's fisheries resources than an absolute prohibition.

It is important to note, under ADEC's current proposal, mixing zones in spawning areas will always be the exception rather than the rule in Alaska. In reality, the proposed regulations continue to generally prohibit mixing zones in spawning areas. Moreover, the proposed regulatory changes in no way undermine the ultimate responsibility Alaska's resource agencies have to protect rivers, lakes and streams important to anadromous fish throughout their life-cycle.

Additionally, ADEC has correctly placed the burden of proof on permit applicants when making a determination regarding the appropriateness of a proposed mixing zone. Applicants are required under the proposed regulations to

> "...provide to the department all available evidence reasonably necessary to demonstrate that a mixing zone will satisfy..." the department's require-

> As part of a 19-step test, applicants must demonstrate that any effluent or substance will be treated consistent with the highest statutory and regulatory requirements and the overall biological integrity of the receiving waterbody will not be impaired. Of course, in addition to a thorough analysis of all mixing zone applications, ADEC must actively enforce a permit's conditions and stipulations once it has been approved. In this manner, only the most environmentally sensitive of proposed mixing zones will be approved and the requirements of their approval will be enforced.

> As a matter of policy, RDC favors regulatory flexibility over absolute prohibitions whenever possible. This position is not rooted in a desire to weaken or diminish Alaska's rigorous environ-

mental protection standards, but rather to give operators opportunities to develop creative solutions to permitting challenges. Future technological advances, seasonal restrictions and other developing best practices will create opportunities for environmentally-sound development to occur in places it may not have in the past.

"It is important to note, under ADEC's current proposal, mixing zones in spawning areas will always be the exception rather than the rule in Alaska. In reality, the proposed regulations continue to generally prohibit mixing zones in spawning areas. The proposed regulatory changes in no way undermine the ultimate responsibility Alaska's resource agencies have to protect rivers, lakes and streams important to anadromous fish throughout their life-cycle."

RDC Staffer Appointed To Conference Of Young Alaskans

Deantha Crockett, RDC's Finance and Membership Coordinator, is one of 55 Alaskans appointed by University

of Alaska President Mark Hamilton to serve as a delegate to the Conference of Young Alaskans. In January, these emerging leaders will gather at the University of Alaska Fairbanks to discuss and make policy recommendations.

The Conference of Young Alaskans is one of a series of Creating Alaska events this winter commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Alaska's Constitutional Convention and honoring the work Deantha Crockett



of the convention's 55 delegates. Delegates will address five key issues: education, healthy communities and families, cre-

> ating leaders for the next generation, responsible development of natural resources and reviewing the Alaska dream and last frontier spirit.

"Undoubtedly, this will be a tremendous learning experience for you and for the public too," said Governor Frank Murkowski in a letter congratulating Crockett and other delegates. "I am proud of the hard work and dedication shown by so many of our young people, and you are no exception."

THE ENDURING IMPACT
OF ALASKA ON THE
PUGET SOUND REGION

(Continued from Page 1)

\$13 billion to \$12 billion, according to business revenues reported to the Washington State Depart-ment of Revenue.

From 1994 to 2003, Puget Sound refinery capacity increased from 555,000 to 607,950 barrels per day and plans are underway for additional expansions in refinery capacity.

If the proposed Alaska natural gas pipeline project is built, the impact on Puget Sound would be dramatic, not only for construction companies and suppliers, but all the businesses engaged in producing, distribution and transporting equipment and supplies.

While energy production and exploration dominate the Alaska-Puget Sound trade relationship, the "Ties that Bind" study documented all the other ways in which the two regions depend on each other.

Transportation

The Puget Sound has always been the primary gateway to Alaska and it remains so today.

By dollar value, about 60 percent of goods reach Alaska by water and 40 percent by air or truck via the Alcan Highway. By weight, 97 percent of the goods go by water. Two steamship lines carry cargo between the Port of Tacoma and Anchorage. The remainder of the state is served by tug and barge businesses based in Seattle and Tacoma.

This business sector is a good barometer of the overall trade relationship. Waterborne container shipments experienced steady growth during the study period.

A Horizon Lines ship at the Port of Tacoma prepares to embark on a voyage to

A Horizon Lines ship at the Port of Tacoma prepares to embark on a voyage to the Port of Anchorage. By dollar value, about 60 percent of goods reach Alaska by water, 40 percent by air or truck. By weight, 97 percent of the goods go by

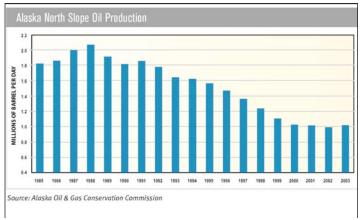
After four straight years of record tonnage, the figure topped 2.5 million tons in 2003.

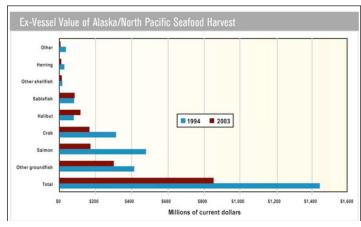
Air transport represents 38 percent of northbound transportation revenues. This figure continues to show strength, and air cargo coming from Alaska to Puget

Sound is also clearly on the increase. Air passenger traffic numbers are stable and represent 86 percent of total air transport revenues.

Fisheries

The Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska account for







The TOTE ship Midnight Sun embarks on its maiden voyage from Puget Sound to Alaska. Waterborne container shipments to Alaska have experienced steady growth with the figure topping 2.5 million tons in 2003.

more than half the total U.S. fisheries harvest. Washingtonbased boats only account for about 10 percent of the vessels registered to fish in Alaska, but they account for about 60 percent of the Alaska "catch." Several Puget Sound cities, including Anacortes and Bellingham, and Seattle's Ballard neighborhood, have benefited greatly from the dramatic growth in fresh and frozen seafood processing.

Following 15 years of tough times, fishing began to rebound about two years ago and fishing remains a vital link in Alaska-Puget Sound trade and a major employer in both regions.

Cruise Industry

The Alaska-bound cruise industry has enjoyed phenomenal growth in recent years. While most of the ships still depart from Vancouver, B.C., a growing number now sail from Seattle. This is particularly significant because Puget Sound benefits from provi-

sioning ships and spending by cruise ship guests when they visit Seattle. The number of cruise line passengers departing from Puget Sound for Alaska has risen from 9,000 in 1998 to 550,000 in 2004.

Furthermore, Holland America and Princess Cruises, plus four U.S.-flag lines with smaller ships, are headquartered in Seattle, generating even greater economic activity. There is no question that the cruise line industry is now a vital part of Puget Sound's Alaska trade.

Services

Alaska's need for business services has increased as its economy has diversified and matured. While computer software represents the most rapidly growing Puget Sound-based service sector, the range of services Puget Sound offers Alaska include such areas as advertising, engineering, architecture, accounting, and financial and managerial consulting.

Washington remains a magnet for Alaskans seeking

higher education. Because of economies of scale, Alaska has neither a law nor a medical school, so aspiring lawyers and doctors must seek their education out of state. Washington is often their first option. Alaskans also use the Puget Sound region's vast health care resources.

Some facilities, such as Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle, offer a telemedicine program, as well as specialized capabilities for treatment of burns and cancer. In the last decade, the value of Puget Sound health care services for Alaskans more than doubled, but a portion of the increase is the result of spiraling health care costs.

Federal Spending

Traditionally, Alaskans have benefited from federal spending, an economic sector that is on the rise again after a decline between 1993 and 1995. The federal government spends more per capita on Alaska than on any other

state, and accounts for 38 percent of Alaskans' personal income.

The money provides grants to state and local governments, tribes, non-profit organizations, and industries for roads, airports, hospitals, and basic infrastructural needs in rural Alaska. Military spending, about \$2.5 billion in 2003, also accounts for much of the federal money spent in Alaska.

Puget Sound benefits substantially from this spending. In 2003, Puget Sound's exports to Alaska related to federal spending amounted to \$86 million and created 1,295 jobs.

Manufacturing

The value of manufactured goods traded between Alaska and Puget Sound has been stable over the last decade and food products are likely to remain the largest component. While Alaska is steadily increasing its own manufacturing capability for certain products, it continues to rely on the Puget Sound region for supplying most of the manufactured goods it needs.

Conclusions

Puget Sound and Alaska are more than just healthy trading partners. Together they help one another excel in the good times and weather the bad times. Each fills significant economic needs of the other and Puget Sound holds a major stake in Alaska's continued economic health and growth.

Editor's Note: The Manufacturing Industrial Council (MIC) is a Seattlearea trade group that promotes the interests of industrial firms while working to preserve industrial lands for industrial purposes and to retain the city's "family-wage" job base. The MIC covers Alaska issues in its quarterly magazine, Seattle Industry.

RDC's 26TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ALASKA RESOURCES 2006: RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME!







More than 30 high-level industry and government leaders addressed more than 500 registrants attending RDC's 26th annual conference in Anchorage November 16-17. At left, Governor Frank Murkowski focused his remarks on his administration's efforts to get North Slope gas to market. The governor said the project being negotiated with the Producers "is the one that moves the most gas to market at the lowest tariff for the highest value, generating the most tax and royalty revenues for the state." At center, Northwest Territories Premier Joseph Handley is hopeful that a MacKenzie Valley gas pipeline could be operating by 2010, but noted because the Alaska project is much larger, the MacKenzie line would "fall behind" if development were delayed. At right, ConocoPhillips Alaska President Jim Bowles pointed out, "if we have a gas pipeline in place, you've got exploration that can occur that's indifferent as to whether or not it discovers oil or large gas resources."



Conference Speaker Presentations Available At: www.akrdc.org/membership/events/conference/2005/presentations/





At left, BP's Bernard Looney said his company is looking for fiscal certainty in its gasline negotiations with the state. "Clarity and stability for oil is every bit as important as it is for gas as the two are inextricably linked," said Looney. At upper left, Shell's Chandler Wilhelm called the Arctic "the last remaining frontier" for oil and gas development. He said Arctic basins contain about 25% of the world's remaining undiscovered resources. At upper right, Tim England of Talisman Energy noted his Calgary-based company has started a two-year drilling program in the NPR-A region to the west of Prudhoe Bay through its FEX subsidiary.



Anadarko's Greg Hebertson said that for his company "an aggressive incentive program is one way to help Alaska projects compete with opportunities worldwide."



Bill Boycott, left, announced Agrium's plans to possibly use coal from the Usibelli Coal Mine as a feedstock for its Nikiski ammonia and urea plant. Agrium is joining with industry partners to conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the potential of coal gasification to produce the natural gas it needs to operate its plant. The plan includes building a gasification plant next door to its existing plant. At right, Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich joined industry speakers in a panel focusing on Cook Inlet oil and gas operations. In addition to Boycott, John Barnes, Marathon Oil Company, Scott Pfoff, Aurora Power, and Tony Izzo, ENSTAR Natural Gas Company, participated in the Cook Inlet discussion.



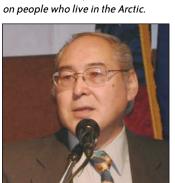




Hiroaki Ishii, Minister, Economic Development, Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C., spoke of future Japanese and Pacific Rim energy needs. At right, Charles Ball, President of Princess Tours, was one of four panelist addressing "Alaska's Fiscal Regime: Does It Work For Industry And Communities?"



Susan Fleek, Alaska Conservation Foundation, warned of the impacts of global warming on Alaska. Below, Ronald Brower said warming temperatures have widespread ramifications on people who live in the Arctic.





Stephanie Madsen, Chair of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, engages Jim Ayers, right, Director of the North Pacific Office of Oceana, in a spirited discussion on emerging oceans policy and the implications for Alaska.







Sasha Mackler, National Commission on Energy Policy, was one of four panelists to speak on global climate change and potential national policy implications. In center photo, Bruce Jenkins, Northern Dynasty Mines, Inc., provided an update on the Pebble copper-gold project. At far right, Karl Hanneman, Council of Alaska Producers, outlined the role Alaska's mining industry plays in Alaska's economy, as well as the revenues it pays into local and state coffers.





Above, RDC board member Bob Cox and Vice President Rick Rogers visit the exhibit area. At center, Luke Russell, Coeur d'Alene Mines, updates RDC on the Kensington project. At right, long-time RDC members Heinrich and Yasmin Schnoeke of Platinum Jewelers enjoy the conference.



Thank You to our Sponsors

Resource Development Council's 26th Annual Conference Right Place, Right Time! • Alaska Resources 2006

Platinum Sponsors

BP Exploration (Alaska), Inc ExxonMobil TechCominco/NANA Development Corporation

VIP Reception Sponsor

Government of Canada

Cosponsors

Alaska Interstate Construction LLC
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company
Arctic Slope Regional Corporation
CH2M Hill
ConcooPhillips Alaska, Inc
Northern Dynasty Mines Inc.
Petrotechnical Resources
of Alaska
Pioneer Natural Resources
Alaska, Inc
Shell E&P, Inc.
TransCanada
Veco Corporation
Wells Fargo Alaska
XTO Energy

General Sponsors

Marathon Oil Company

Agrium Kenai Nitrogen Operations Alaska Airlines Alaska Business Monthly Alaska Journal of Commerce Alaska North to the Future – Vol. 3 Anchorage Sand & Gravel Bradley-Reid + Associates COEUR Alaska – Kensington Mine District Council of Laborers Dowland Bach Cornoration Fairweather First National Bank Alaska Hawk Construction Consultants, Inc. Heller, Ehrmann, White & McAuliffe Holland America Line Westours Inc. Koning, Inc. Lynden Family of Companies

NovaGold Resources Peak Oilfield Service Co./ Nabors Drilling Petroleum News Placer Dome – Donlin Creek JV Salt + Light Creative

Centerpiece Sponsor

Shaw Alaska

Carlile Transportation Systems

Tesoro Alaska Petroleum Company

Gourmet Break Sponsors

Agrium Kenai Nitrogen Operations Cobrille Inc./Brooks Range Supply ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.

Under writers

Air Logistics of Alaska Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Alaska Industrial Development & Export Authority Alaska Raikoad Corporation Alaska USA Federal Credit Union Aleut Corporation Anadarko Petroleum Corporation Aspen Hotels of Alaska Aurora Power Resources, Inc. Calista Corporation Chevron Chugaeh Alaska Corporation Chugach Electric Association City of Unalaska Consni Construction Company Crowley Cruz Construction Doyon Family of Companies Enbridge, Inc. ENSR Corporation ENSTAR Natural Gas Company ENTRIX Inc. Era Helicopters

Evergreen Helicopters of Alaska Fairbanks Gold Mining, Inc. Flint Hills Resources Flowline Alaska Golder Associates Inc. Great Northwest Inc. Harbor Enterprise/Petro Marine Services Hartig Rhodes Hoge & Lekisch H.C. Price Company Kennecott Greens Creek Mining Company Key Bank Kodiak Island Borough Koncor Forest Products MACTEC Engineering Milturda Cottrell & Company Minerals Management Service Northern Air Cargo Northrim Bank Northwest Arctic Borough Perkins Coie Petro Star; Inc. Port of Tacoma ProComm Alaska, LLC Samson Tug & Barge Schlumberger Oilfield Services Sealaska Corporation Security Aviation Soundough Express Southeast Stevedoring Talisman Energy Inc. Teamsters Local 959 Totem Ocean Trailer Express Trans-Pae Building Products Udelhoven Oilfield System Services Ultrastar Exploration LLC UNOCAL Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc.

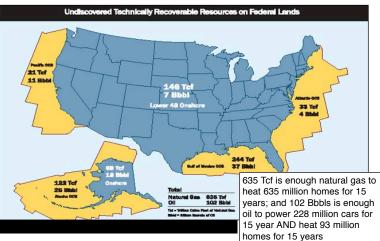
Escopeta Oil Company



HIGH OIL PRICES: THE REST OF THE STORY

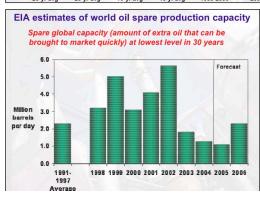


- The price of oil is determined by the forces of supply and demand worldwide.
- Demand is surging and supply is struggling to keep pace.
- Under these conditions, small changes have a big impact.
- Oil is a global commodity; events anywhere impact prices



Some have criticized industry for not doing enough to increase domestic supplies of oil and gas. Federal policies significantly constrain development of abundant volumes of oil and gas resources beneath federal lands and coastal waters, constricting supply and raising costs to consumers. Some 85% of coastal areas are currently off-limits to energy production, as well as ANWR, America's most promising onshore oil/gas prospect.

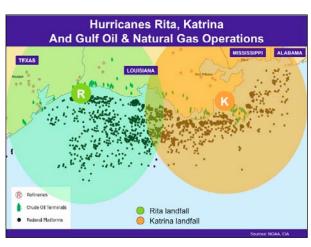




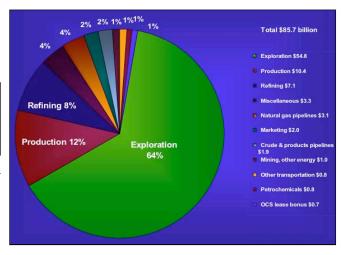
World spare oil production, the amount of extra oil that can be brought to the market quickly, was at the lowest level in 30 years during 2005, driving oil prices higher. The U.S. Energy Department is now forecasting oil prices will stay near or above \$50 a barrel for years, forcing a shift to more fuel-efficient cars and alternative fuels. The department said it added about \$21 to the projected price of a barrel of crude because analysts no longer believe today's tight global oil market would ease much over the next several years. The department noted coal would remain the primary fuel for producing electricity.

ings are very much in line with other

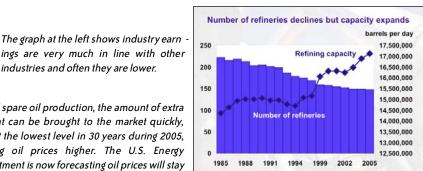
industries and often they are lower.



The U.S. Congressional Budget Office estimates the energy sector sustained capital losses from hurricanes Katrina and Rita between \$18 billion to \$31 Billion.



The chart above shows where industry investments were to be made in 2005. The energy Americans consume today is made possible through investments made years or even decades ago. Today's oil and natural gas earnings are invested in new technology, new production and environmental and product quality improvements to meet tomorrow's energy needs. While in dustry revenues are large, so are its costs of providing consumers with the energy they need.



Although the number of refineries have declined, capacity at remaining refineries has increased.

Charts provided by the American Petroleum Institute



PROSPERITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

"Surplus wealth is a sacred trust which its possessor is bound to administer in his life - time for the good of the community."

Andrew Carnegie

As most of you know, RDC sponsored another very successful conference in November. "Alaska Resources 2006: Right Place, Right Time!", got me thinking about the future.

Indeed, we may be on the brink of prosperity that can carry this state forward for decades to come. High oil prices have given us a budget surplus at a time when only a few years ago most observers (including me) predicted we would have run through all of our savings accounts. Rather than facing a fiscal crisis, the governor and the legislature will have to sift through a mountain of good and bad ideas about how to spend this unexpected windfall.

But it is more than high oil prices that point to a bright tomorrow. High natural gas prices have followed the oil price trend. These rising prices have contributed to the belief by many that getting our North Slope natural gas to market is finally economic. Alaskans are eagerly awaiting the public unveiling of the Stranded Gas Act agreement the governor has been negotiating with the Producers.

Our construction economy is booming, and some maintain it is close to, or at, the point of being overheated. This situation is fueled by the success that Senator Ted Stevens and Congressman Don Young have had in securing federal funding for a variety of programs and projects. In addition, the legislature funded a more aggressive capital budget than we

"My message for this holiday season is that, despite all of our good fortune, current and prospective, we need to proceed with some caution, and we still need a fiscal plan. Or as Confucius said, 'When prosperity comes, do not spend all of it.'"

have seen since the spending heydays of the early '80s. The private sector is doing its share with a variety of large projects proposed for Anchorage alone.

And there is more good news in other industries. Tourism, near and dear to my heart these days, continues to grow at a healthy rate. The min-

ing sector is looking at numerous possibilities for new mines, while Kensington continues work on what will be our state's newest mine.

Fishing remains a vital part of the economy, and efforts to market wild salmon as a superior product seem to be paying off with higher prices.

Even the opening or ANWR seems to be closer than ever, although as I write this column, Congress seems inclined to back away from the issue.

So maybe it's time to sit back and just enjoy the ride.

Well, maybe not.

It has been my experience that budget surpluses can disappear faster than roadkill at a raven convention, if politicians are left to their own devices. There are some budget increases outside the control of our political leadership, and the pressure to spend is enormous. For instance, if the legislature funds the governor's proposed increase for education, we will have added more than \$200,000,000 to that budget over a three-year period, an amount that will continue in future budgets. As the economy grows, generally so does the population, so government's expenses increase. There is much good that government needs to do, thus Andrew Carnegie's quote at the beginning of this piece.

However, our current fiscal system primarily taxes one industry, so as other segments of the economy grow, the state does not have a method for capturing revenues to pay for the services an expanding population requires. In addition, the current fiscal boon will most likely allow our political leaders to avoid the difficult discussion on how we use the earnings of the Permanent Fund to address the needs of an expanding government.

Something else to keep in mind is that some of our economic future is quite speculative, with ANWR leading that list. Also, even if the governor can negotiate a gasline agreement that is acceptable to the legislature, the fiscal benefits to the state will not flow until about 2014. Meanwhile, the state will need to come up with \$1 billion dollars more or less to fund our share of owning the gasline and incur another \$3 billion or so worth of debt for that project.

In addition, if oil slips below about \$45 per barrel, we will once more not have the direct income we need to balance the budget.

Therefore my message for this holiday season is that, despite all of our good fortune, current and prospective, we need to proceed with some caution, and we still need a fiscal plan. Or as Confucius said, "When prosperity comes, do not spend all of it."

RDC News DIGEST

KENSINGTON CONSTRUCTION HALTED

With its major permits suspended, construction at the Kensington Gold Mine near Juneau has stopped.

Coeur Alaska began building the mine in early July after working more than 17 years to obtain federal and state permits. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers notified the company in November that it had suspended the mine's water discharge permits for internal review. As a result, the only activity now occurring at the mine is related to fixing an erosion control problem that developed following recent heavy rains.

After revisiting the permits, the Corps said it will either reinstate, modify or revoke them.

Coeur has performed more than 900 environmental studies, invested \$25 million in environmental reviews and worked with local, state and federal agencies to secure the necessary permits to develop the mine. The mine is an economic engine for Southeast Alaska with \$42 million issued in contracts so far. It will provide hundreds of jobs and tax revenues to state and local government.

The Corps filed a motion in District Court for a voluntary remand of its Section 404 wetlands fill permit issued to Coeur. The court granted the motion, which was filed in a lawsuit brought against the mine by several environmental groups.

Coeur believes the Corps performed a thorough and comprehensive review of the Section 404 permit before it was issued. However, the company says if further review of the permit curbs litigation, such action would be welcomed.

FEDERAL JUDGE CLEARS HELI-SKIING

A federal judge has rejected a lawsuit opposing expansion of helicopter skiing in the Chugach National Forest.

U.S. District Court Judge Ralph Beistline ruled the U.S. Forest Service did an adequate job assessing the likely impacts of more helicopter flights on wildlife. He emphasized that the Chugach is a vast national forest that allows a variety of activities, including heli-skiing.

After a lengthy environmental process, the Forest Service granted Chugach Powder Guides nine areas under a five-year permit to operate. The company was also given access to four exploratory areas between Girdwood and Seward, on a one-year basis.

The new territory gives the company more options for its customers who seek virgin powder in remote areas. Often several areas within the mountainous forest may be unavailable due to bad weather, so having expanded territory increases the likelihood that at least one area may be accessible.

Chris Owens, the owner of Chugach Powder Guides, noted the lawsuit was a scary ordeal since it was backed by some of the biggest environmental groups in the nation.

RDC SUPPORTS RAIL EXTENSION

In comments to the federal Surface Transportation Board, RDC has expressed its support for an 80-mile extension of the Alaska Railroad Corporation's main-track to Fort Greely. The extension would provide support for movement of military equipment and supplies and enhance economic expansion in an area with little transportation infrastructure.

"Although a highway links Fairbanks with Fort Greely, the route can be hazardous, particularly during the icy winter months," RDC said. "Train service would facilitate better choices and meet the transit needs of military personnel and their families, as well as those working in other sectors."

RDC also noted the extension would provide infrastructure that would support existing and new mineral and agricultural development in the area.

TIMBER SALE GETS RDC'S SUPPORT

RDC is urging the State of Alaska's Division of Forestry to move forward with a timber sale eleven miles off of the Petersville Road in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

RDC believes the sale will not only benefit the timber industry and the Mat-Su economy, but will also contribute to healthy forest regeneration and enhance wildlife habitat.

According to state foresters, the sale will require selective logging to improve forest growth and vigor by harvesting and replacing mature birch and spruce stands with new healthy stands of re-growth, while protecting other forest values. The sale is expected to have no adverse impacts on recreation. There will be no visual impacts from the Petersville Road.

New Board At Amerer

AMEREF reconstituted its Board at its Annual Meeting in November. New board members include Michele Brunner of Northern Dynasty Mines, Karl Hanneman of TeckPogo, Kip Knudson of Tesoro, Mary Martinez of Calista, Kara Moriarty of the Alaska Oil & Gas Association and Mike Satre of Kennecott Greens Creek Mining.

Steve Lovs of Anchorage Sand & Gravel was re-elected president, Lorna Shaw of Fairbanks Gold Vice President and Larry Cooper of Wells Fargo Treasurer.

UAA ENGINEERING SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

University of Alaska Anchorage ranked in the Top 50 of America's Best Colleges, according to U.S. News and World Report.

UAA's School of Engineering took 24th place among public schools nationwide this year for its undergraduate engineering programs. UAA offers Bachelors of Science in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering. U.S. News annually publishes college rankings which are based on faculty resources, SAT scores, peer assessment, retention and other factors.



Operations & Maintenance Engineering & Technology Pipeline, Power & Communications

Aleska's Most Complete Energy Service Company

Proud of our Heritage. Confident in the future.

Committed to Excellence.



3900 °C' Street, Suite 701, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 • Phone: 907.339.6200 • www.asrcenergy.com



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development 121 W. Fireweed, Suite 250, Anchorage, AK 99503 PRSRT STD U.S. Postage PAID Anchorage, AK Permit No. 377