

PETROLEUM NEWS

A L A S K A



"First of all, if New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani learned that there were between 3 billion and 16 billion barrels of oil underneath Central Park, he would be out there first thing Monday morning laying down orange traffic cones to save parking spaces for the roughnecks."

—JONAH GOLDBERG, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

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Week of September 29, 2002

Big night for the Alliance



Judy Patrick

The Alaska Support Industry Alliance held its annual meeting on Sept. 23 at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel. U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham was the key note speaker at for the event (see story below). Pictured from left to right are: Larry Houle, General Manager of The Alliance; Nancy Murkowski, wife of Sen. Frank Murkowski, Gov. Tony Knowles, Julie Stinson, Spencer Abraham and Conam President Bob Stinson, president of The Alliance.

Kyoto Protocol cited as Alberta oil sands project scaled back

The first casualty on Canada's Kyoto battlefield was widely expected to be the Alberta oil sands — identified by environmentalists as the Climate Change Culprit.

And the initial wounds seem to have been inflicted against a background warning by Alberta Energy Minister Murray Smith on Sept. 20 that the Kyoto Protocol could wipe out up to C\$10 billion in future oil sands investment.

TrueNorth Energy L.P., the Canadian unit of privately held U.S. energy giant Koch Industries Inc., has slashed its fourth-quarter spending plans by 75 percent, or C\$14 million, largely blaming the unanswered questions on the impact of Kyoto, if Canada goes ahead with full implementation.

"I think we're going to see more and more stuff like this," said Brian Prokop, an analyst with Peters & Co. in Calgary, reacting to the first specific budget cuts in the oil sands sector after other oil sands players such as Imperial Oil Ltd., Nexen Inc., Petro-Canada, Western Oil Sands Inc. and Canadian Oil Sands Trust have warned of Kyoto's possible consequences.

Regulatory delays stall C\$3.5 billion project

TrueNorth also cited delays in the Alberta regulatory process, which have stalled detailed engineering work on the C\$3.5 billion, 190,000-barrel-per-day Fort Hills project being developed by TrueNorth, as 78 percent operator, and UTS Energy Corp.

"We are very concerned that Kyoto, if ratified and implemented in a not very thoughtful manner, could kill the project," TrueNorth President David Park said Sept. 19.

He said TrueNorth has estimated the climate change pact could add between 15 cents and \$1.50 per barrel to oil sands operating costs. Some have put the price tag at \$3 a barrel.

But even at \$1.50, the impact would be "lethal" for Fort Hills, said Park.

Having made national headlines as the first major energy project to warn that it could fall under Kyoto, Park softened the message

see KYOTO page A5

GOVERNMENT

Road to NPR-A

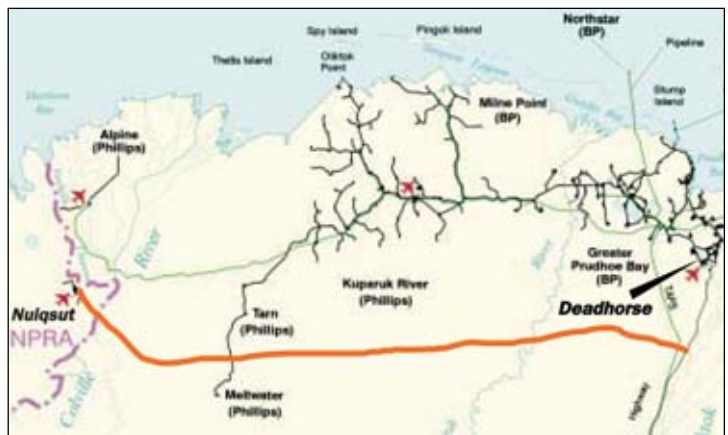
State, North Slope Borough looking at building industrial road from Dalton to National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska; would cross Colville, tie into BIA-funded road to Nuiqsut

By Patricia Jones
PNA Contributing Writer

Future access to the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska would likely be easier with a new industrial road that crosses the Colville River, part of an overall Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan that the state is developing.

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities planners are working with the North Slope Borough to develop one of two possible routes for an all-season gravel road running east to west, which would cross the Colville River and end in the village of Nuiqsut.

Year-round access across that wide span of water would help lower costs for fuel and other sup-



Courtesy of Alaska DOT

One of two routes being considered by DOT&PF and the North Slope Borough for year-round access into NPR-A.

plies needed by villagers, as well as create a new staging area for westward exploration work into NPR-A by Alaska's oil industry.

"Ice road seasons are shrinking, yet the oil industry is trying to extend into NPR-A, and it's a

tough show for them," said Mike McKinnon, senior planner at DOT&PG. "We're wondering if this kind of road will both assist development and bring things on-line earlier."

see ROAD page A6

EXPLORATION & PRODUCTION

MOU streamlines Point Thomson permitting

Knowles says agreement with ExxonMobil establishes basis for reimbursement of state permitting costs, targets end of 2003 for permit approvals



Dick LeFebvre, state's manager for Point Thomson project.

By Kristen Nelson
PNA Editor-in-Chief

Alaska Gov. Tony Knowles told the Alaska Support Industry Alliance annual meeting in Anchorage Sept. 23 that the state signed a memorandum of understanding with ExxonMobil for streamlined permitting at Point Thomson earlier in the day. He also said he expects an MOU with ConocoPhillips for Alpine expansion to be signed within a few days.

Dick LeFebvre was selected as state manager for the Point Thomson project, Knowles said.

The MOU establishes a new process for handling the state permitting of large-scale oil and gas developments such as that proposed at Point Thomson, the state said Sept. 24, modeled after an existing state process used to permit the Fort Knox gold mine near Fairbanks and currently in use to help develop the Pogo gold mine near Delta.

see MOU page A20

GOVERNMENT

Bush administration wants ANWR, but not threatening energy bill veto, Abraham says

Secretary of Energy tells Alliance that while ANWR is a key point in the president's energy plan, it is but one of more than 100 items in plan

By Steve Sutherlin
PNA Managing Editor

President Bush has not made a threat to veto the energy bill if it does not contain a provision to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration, U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said at a press conference in Anchorage Sept 23 prior to the Alaska Support Industry Alliance annual meeting at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel. (See related story on page 3 in PNA's Sept. 22 issue titled, "No ANWR?")

see ABRAHAM page A4



Judy Patrick

U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham speaking to the Alaska Support Industry Alliance in Anchorage Sept. 23

I N S I D E

Heyworth, Houle debate **A7**

Evergreen gets 8 drilling permits **A9**

No drilling at Point Thomson this year **A2**

Alaska could see resurgence, like GOM **A11**

Thetis Island project gets OK from borough **A3**

ON DEADLINE

New Alliance board members



Jack Laasch, Natchiq, President and VP Government Relations



Lynn Johnson, Dowland-Bach, VP Public Relations



Mark Huber, Doyon Universal Services, J.V.



David Lawer, First National Bank Alaska



Dave Matthews, H.C. Price



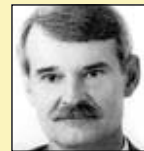
Mike O'Connor, Peak Oilfield Service Co.



Rick Smith, VECO

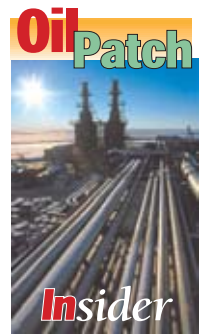


Tamara Blass, Sales Executive, Carlile



Eric Dompeling, Halliburton

Insider this week: Alliance elects board members; no drilling at Badami, Point Thomson this season; Edelen on the Kenai River



THE VOTES ARE IN The Alliance held its annual meeting on Sept. 23 during which nine board of director's were elected (see pictures at left).

A bit of a vote counting delay produced a request for some jokes from the audience that brought Gov. Tony Knowles, Kevin Meyers, president ConocoPhillips Alaska and Jim Palmer, former vice president of external affairs at BP Exploration (Alaska), to the podium. Gov. Knowles won, by a landslide, for the best (or was it worst) joke during the delay period.

Awards for outstanding service were given to Susan Fischetti, special projects assistant/government relations for the Alliance and Mark Huber, Doyon Universal Services J.V.

Jack Laasch, vice president government relations at Natchiq, was installed as president by retiring president Bob Stinson of Conam Construction.

TALK ABOUT POINT THOMSON WAS — JUST TALK There has been talk about ExxonMobil doing some additional drilling in the Point Thomson unit this year and in the winter of 2003-2004 but unfortunately it was just talk. One of our people checked it out and, according to a state of Alaska official; it appears there was some discussion of doing additional drilling at the Badami unit to see if BP had missed something.

That same rig was going to be used for the Slugger unit well and/or possibly do some addition delineation drilling at Point Thomson. But it appears those plans have been put on the shelf — because — BP has said it is not going to drill Slugger as planned this coming winter. Neither BP nor ExxonMobil have filed permits for drilling at either Badami or Point Thomson for the upcoming drilling season.

A NEW AFFILIATION Bill Schoephoester, formerly with Petro Marine, has joined Jade North as an associate. Bill has expertise in project management, regulatory compliance and government affairs, has a BS in Physics and is certified by the Project Management Institute.

Jade North is a consulting partnership founded by John Shively, former commissioner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and Patty Bielawski.

TENANTS MOVING IN Natchiq, an oil service company, has relocated to the new Arctic Slope Regional Corp. building. Natchiq a wholly owned subsidiary of the corporation, provides arctic and sub-arctic engineering, design, construction services and is a major contractor for fabricating facilities on the North Slope. Natchiq's new address is 3900 C. Street, Suite 701, Anchorage, 99503-5969, phone number (907) 339-6200, fax number (907) 339-6219.

PIPELINE REPAIR FINISHED Offshore Divers has completed the sub-sea pipeline repairs on the 20-mile abandoned Amoco pipeline in Cook Inlet reported in PNA's June 26 edition on page A5. The divers made 89 dives in water up to 150 feet deep said Don Ingraham, owner.

The work included a number of "hot taps" and line cleaning using a vacuum see *INSIDER* page A4

Seeing things differently.

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EXPLORATION & PRODUCTION

DEC working with Armstrong Resources to keep permitting on track

The state Division of Governmental Coordination said in a Sept. 19 report that its permitting review for Armstrong Resources LLC's Kuparuk-Thetis Island exploration project was suspended as a result of a request for additional spill plan information from the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

In a Sept. 26 interview with DEC's Lydia Minor, PNA was told that the agency was continuing to work with Armstrong and hopes to have everything in place to officially re-start the permitting time clock in the near future.

DGC told PNA that the North Slope Borough has already approved development and ice road permits for the Kuparuk-Thetis project, as well as determined that Armstrong's plan of development is consistent with Title 19 and the borough's coastal management program.

The Denver-based independent, which bought its first Alaska oil and gas leases in October 2001, filed its permits July 19 to drill three wells between Kuparuk and Thetis Island.

The company picked up what is considered a prime group of leases in and near Exxon's former Thetis Island unit where Exxon drilled a 8,460 foot vertical exploration well in 1993 that was certified by the state of Alaska as capable of producing in paying quantities in February 1995.

Natchiq Technical Services was chosen to oversee planning, engineering and implementation of Armstrong's 2002-2003 exploration program, including well testing and selection of a company to build 10 miles of ice road.

Ice roads from the Oliktok Point dock will provide Armstrong access to the three grounded ice pad locations in Harrison Bay within the Barrier Islands. No tundra travel is planned.

Armstrong told the state in its plan of operations that drilling is expected to begin on or before Jan. 20 at the first location and be completed by March 15. All sea ice operations are expected to be complete by March 22.

—Kay Cashman, PNA Publisher

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INSIDER

truck secured on an anchored barge.

Don said the foundation of Offshore Divers new warehouse is almost completed and the steel supports are going up this week. A "move in" date is set for mid-October.

LUNCHEON SCHEDULED

The International Association of Drilling contractors will hold its next luncheon at 11:30 Oct. 17 at the Millennium Hotel. The guest speaker has not been selected. For more information e-mail Anne Green at annegreen@nordic-calista.com or call 561-7458.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Charles Edelen, Perman Stoler Customhouse Brokers.... Charlie Edelen bought Perman Stoler Customhouse Brokerage on a handshake in 1966. Trust and honor is all it took to seal the deal. Perman Stoler wanted to retire and Charlie wanted to buy so they shook hands and arranged to have money taken from Charlie's paycheck toward the purchase. Two years later Charlie made his final payment and began the story of a man who did it "his way" building a successful company.

Charlie had two characteristics that ensured success: knowledge of the custom brokerage business and a strong

sense of ethics. It also helped that he had a firm backbone and the ability to say no but "hell no" to people who weren't honest. To add icing to the cake Charlie was also a darn nice guy with a great brain and a good sense of humor.

Custom brokerage work requires a massive amount of paperwork to ensure compliance with custom laws, duties and tariffs. The paper could fill a forest and the knowledge is worth a mint. Charlie started with two people in 1966 and had more than 12 on staff during the pipeline days.

Perman Stoler was the only brokerage firm in Alaska during the pipeline days. As Charlie said, "We did it all. We cleared all the pipeline materials, like line pipe, casing and tubular goods from Japan, valves from Europe, pipe supports from Canada, the Alyeska docking facilities and tanks at Valdez" and all kinds of equipment or parts that originated in or were sent to a foreign country. It was one jumping office and continued to grow with Charlie at the helm assisted by five of his nine children who share their parent's ethics.

So — where is Charlie now? Of course he didn't fade away and still comes to the office a few mornings each week. After a bout of cancer, which he kicked royally, Charlie turned the operation of the company to his daughter Renae Thompson and son Ron Edelen who were awarded their brokers license at the same time, and were given sequential license numbers: That is most unusual.

Charlie spends time on the Kenai River where he and his wife Beverly are



Charlie Edelen and wife Beverly

building a 2,000 square foot home and where he gave himself the title of "building supervisor."

Read about the company and get Charlie's address at www.PermanStoler.com

QUOTE OF THE WEEK "Do you realize that when Crown Prince Abdula of Saudi Arabia arrived in Texas, this week, to meet with President Bush, he demanded that no female air traffic controller be allowed to land his flight. Hey Abdula, I don't think anybody from Saudi Arabia should be telling us how to land a jet anytime soon." —Dennis Miller Live, May 3, 2002



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ABRAHAM

Veto bill," says Gale Norton.)

"We don't want to talk about how to not have a bill," Abraham said. "We're going to look at what the conference committee comes up with as a whole."

Abraham said ANWR has been a key point of the administration's energy plan from day one, but it is one of more than 100 points contained in the plan. If an energy bill emerges from the House-Senate conference committee without an ANWR provision, the administration might elect to find another way to drill in the refuge. ANWR is very important to the administration, he said.

"The potential improvement in America's security (from developing ANWR) is unquestionable."

Anchorage was the last stop for Abraham on a globe-circling energy junket with meetings in Austria, Azerbaijan, and Japan. Due to illness, Abraham cancelled a planned visit to the North Slope, but he recovered in time to voice strong support for a North Slope natural gas line and for ANWR oil exploration in remarks


to the Alliance dinner meeting.

Abraham said one of the goals of the Azerbaijan meetings was to help increase the diversity of supply of energy from around the world, but he added that will not be enough to meet the country's needs.

"We could aggressively pursue conservation measures over the next 20 years," he said. "We could expand our diversity of supplies and expand the types of sources of energy we use, but we could not completely match the demand for energy projected in 2020 without increasing domestic production too."

Abraham said that to other countries, America seems complacent about replacing its declining domestic production capacity.

"Other countries will base their energy policy decisions on what is in their own best interests, and the United States must start doing the same," he said. "Our administration will not beg for oil. That is not the kind of country we are, nor does it make sense when there are billions of barrels of oil waiting to be extracted right here in Alaska. The time has come for Congress to finish the job and let ANWR begin."♦




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■ EXPLORATION & PRODUCTION

Progress on Alpine debottlenecking project slower than expected

Contractors say they believed significant work on project would be done this summer, so ice roads could be used

By Patricia Jones
PNA Contributing Writer

Some Alaska contractors expecting substantial work this summer building modules for a planned debottlenecking project at the Alpine field are finding themselves with plenty of spare time.

That's because the expansion project as not started when contractors expected.

VECO Alaska, the prime contractor for that project, is currently waiting for the word to start work on modules and other related fabrication jobs, said Rick Smith, spokesman for the company.

"(Conoco)Phillips has detained it. We expected to be doing it this summer," Smith said. "We'd probably be in full swing now."

Flowline Alaska, a pipe insulating firm in Fairbanks which has also produced some truckable modules, also planned to be working on Alpine-related tasks this summer, said engineering manager Chris Johansen.

"Most of the design work was done," he said, adding that preliminary plans called for construction of 26 to 52 truckable modules. "We were moving along in that direction."

Officials with then-Alpine field operator Phillips Alaska Inc. (now ConocoPhillips Alaska) and its partner Anadarko Petroleum Corp., told Petroleum News Alaska as early as last September that the companies were looking at a possible facilities expansion which could go for board approval in

the third quarter this year.

Company says only preliminary engineering funded, construction will be considered in next budget cycle

ConocoPhillips Alaska spokeswoman Dawn Patience said the Alpine debottlenecking project, which has been described as a plant expansion to allow increased oil flow through the new facilities, has not been stopped.

Regarding related fabrication work expected by contractors this summer, she said that the company "was not planning on that scope of that project until winter season. We don't see it as a delay, and certainly it isn't dead."

As part of this year's capital spending budget, Phillips did fund \$47 million for preliminary engineering work on the Alpine debottlenecking project, Patience said.

"That scope of work is being wrapped up now."

Alpine producing beyond existing capacity, expansion needed

She declined to say how production would increase at Alpine, after completion of the planned expansion.

"We're evaluating what the scope will be," Patience said. "We have not said that we're going to produce this much more."

That information would likely be announced after budgets are approved for construction during this winter season, she added.

Since production began in November 2000, partners ConocoPhillips Alaska (formerly Phillips Alaska) and Anadarko have done some facilities work to increase production at Alpine. Alpine, in the Colville River unit at the eastern edge of National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, is the farthest west producing field on the North Slope.

"It was built for 70,000 barrels a day, and we upped that to 100,000 barrels with simple ... mechanical kinds of tweaks in the plant itself," Patience said.

During a corporate presentation to securities analysts in November 2001, Kevin Meyers, then president of Phillips Alaska, now president of ConocoPhillips Alaska, said Alpine is a "wonderful good news story for us. The field is performing beyond our expectations."

He said the company believes production from Alpine alone could reach 120,000 barrels per day, and with "the satellites that we currently know and other possible opportunities with additional drill sites potentially at Alpine ... you're knocking on the door of 150,000 barrels a day of deliverability."

Anticipated cost for debottlenecking project: \$100 million

Engineering is under way for a facility expansion, Meyers told the analysts in November, with a decision on that expansion to be made in 2002.

see ALPINE page A17

continued from page A1

KYOTO

the next day, saying "Kyoto is just one of a number of risks," which extend to cost overruns and tough environmental opposition.

However, TrueNorth Vice President D'Arcy Levesque said Kyoto "right now is a big uncertainty for many companies and many projects."

Potential partners concerned

He said the uncertainties have posed problems for Fort Hills in seeking additional partners for a scheme designed to tap 2.8 billion barrels of reserves.

"A number of people have expressed interest ... but, not unlike ourselves, they're concerned about any potential costs associated with regulatory approval and any potential costs associated with Kyoto," he said. The steps taken by TrueNorth are "just prudent cost and risk management to try and understand the implications of Kyoto on our project," he said, although some analysts have suggested that Koch was never fully committed to the oil sands and may have decided to look for other sources of heavy oil to feed its U.S. refinery facilities.

The regulatory approval, expected by mid-October from the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board, is dragging behind schedule.

Environmentalists also a factor

An environmental coalition told the board in July that Fort Hills could affect 98 percent of a wetlands area, endangering plant species and migratory bird habitat.

Levesque told the regulator the claim was "misleading," and came from a group that has "publicly indicated on a number of occasions that they are opposed to oil sands development in any form."

The Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development, a member of the coalition, said last month that rapid expansion of the oil sands could put Alberta at risk of being "penalized and marginalized" under the federal government's Kyoto strategy.

The institute, in an earlier report, said that if all Alberta oil sands and coal-fired power-generating projects proceed the province's emissions could rise 64 percent above 1990 levels — the baseline year for Kyoto's reduction targets.

It advocated that no new oil sands pro-

jects should be approved unless companies could offset 100 percent of their greenhouse gas emissions — a policy that would require producing companies to purchase emissions "credits" on the domestic or international markets.

TrueNorth said Fort Hills is being designed to cut greenhouse gas emissions by half compared with existing plants. Canada's National Energy Board has estimated that it takes 50 barrels of conventional crude output to generate 1 tonne of carbon dioxide, while just eight barrels of oil sands output will produce the same quantity of greenhouse gases.

The Kyoto fear-factor has extended to other U.S.-based independents who have recently entered the Canadian market.

ConocoPhillips Canada, through the Gulf Canada Resources Ltd. assets it acquired last year, and Devon Energy Corp. both have major oil sands interests that they will continue to develop.

But a long list of others — Apache Canada Ltd., Burlington Resources Canada Energy Ltd., Anadarko Canada Corp., Marathon Canada Ltd. and Dominion Exploration Canada Ltd. — say they have no intention of reaching beyond their existing operations into the oil sands.

Apache Canada President Floyd Price said his company has no reason to consider the high-cost sector because it has no expertise in the field and is deterred by the uncertainties of Kyoto.

—Gary Park, PNA
Canadian correspondent

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THE REST OF THE STORY

continued from page A1

ROAD

In addition, villagers living in Nuiqsut could benefit from truck freight deliveries, as opposed to having consumable goods flown in. Prices for fuel range up to \$4 a gallon, and for milk, up to \$8 a gallon, said Rex Okakok, director of planning and community services department in the North Slope Borough.

"Nuiqsut is just 20 some miles from the road, and it's ridiculous that they do not have access to those existing roads to get cheaper food or gas or fuel," he said. "Since the Dalton Highway was built, a lot of people benefit from it. They drive up and down, but we don't benefit from it up here. It's just useless to us."

In a separate construction project, villagers from Nuiqsut could gain summer road access to the Colville River, under a Bureau of Indian Affairs road project. (See sidebar to this story.)

Two routes being considered

One route being considered would come off the existing oil field road network, probably around the Tarn development, McKinnon said. That road would extend west across the Colville. Total length would be 18 miles.

"One issue the oil industry has to look at is their high activity zones," McKinnon said. "Can we do bypasses ... build more of an arterial road that goes east to west, with less contact with oil field activities that you have to move through to get to NPR-A?"

The other proposed route, about 70 miles long, would be built independent of existing North Slope road infrastructure. "It follows decent (road building) terrain, somewhere from Nuiqsut east and south," McKinnon said.

That route would intersect the Dalton Highway, roughly 40 miles south of

BIA road project progressing in Nuiqsut

In a separate, but geographically related, road project on the North Slope, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs has planned to construct access from the village of Nuiqsut to the Colville River.

That road will provide a boat launching area for Nuiqsut on the Colville, and possible ferry crossings in summer months, according to Department of Transportation and Public Facilities planners working on the North Slope industrial road. Winter access across the Colville is also part of that project.

"It's a different animal altogether," said Mike McKinnon, DOT&PF senior planner. "If (the DOT&PF project) starts to take on real dimensions, maybe we can make those two connect some way."

He said the BIA project is going ahead, regardless of the DOT&PF project. Funding has been secured, McKinnon said. "We were surprised to stumble on that. We knew a road was being considered, but we did not know it was active."

Nuiqsut villagers are interested in transporting large and heavy items to the community by barge, using the BIA-funded road to make the final few miles.

"The community was very in favor of having road access to the Colville River," said Doreen Lampe, lands officer for the North Slope Borough planning department.

A portion of that river road has already been constructed in the past, Lampe said. That road runs east from the village to the fresh water lake.

BIA representatives involved with the road project could not be reached for comment.

—Patricia Jones, PNA contributing writer

Deadhorse. "We may come back and look at other types of connections that are further north," McKinnon said.

Either route is still conceptual at this point. DOT&PF hopes to produce a draft plan for this road project proposal in March 2003 with a final plan out later that year. Should funds be secured for such a project, construction would be several years in the future, McKinnon said.

"A lot of other routes were considered, but this is probably the one that has the best chance of happening in the near future," said John Aho, CH2M Hill's project manager for the North Slope road study.

DOT&PF has hired that consulting firm to provide assistance and analysis for the

North Slope access route.

Right now, neither of the proposed routes is final, both McKinnon and Aho said.

"All it is, is just a line on a map for discussion purposes," Aho said. "We have a lot of work to do the next few months to see where that line really will finally be recommended to be."

Project concept evolved from Northwest planning effort, industry and community needs

McKinnon said the North Slope industrial road idea came about during talks with oil companies, Nuiqsut villagers and research in developing the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan.

That planning document originally was designed to consider transportation infrastructure ideas that could open up vast mineral and coal deposits in the remote northwestern part of Alaska.

But preliminary analysis showed a stagnant, if not declining, worldwide market for minerals contained in underground deposits in northwest Alaska, McKinnon said.

"We saw that, while mining and coal is not going fast in any particular direction, oil and gas — especially NPR-A — has some potential," McKinnon said. "Based on the revenue source we get out of oil as a state, that kind of investment might make sense."

About at the same time — a little more than two years ago — McKinnon sat in on ice road discussions with the oil industry.

"The ice road season has shortened from 204 days down to 124 days, from (Department of Natural Resources) permits," McKinnon said. "At the same time, they're trying to further and further west, and they're having some water shortage problems."

DOT&PF has discussed the new road plan with oil industry representatives, par-

ticularly those from ConocoPhillips, which has significant exploration interests in NPR-A, and with partner Anadarko Petroleum, already announced discoveries from wells drilled in 2001.

Dawn Patience, spokeswoman for ConocoPhillips Alaska, said it was too early for the company to publicly comment on the DOT&PF road proposal.

"I think industry is interested. They're smart enough to be concerned that it be the right thing at the right time," McKinnon said. "We've got a ways to go, taking this idea and running it through industry and the borough ... we're pretty excited about the opportunity it presents, if it makes sense and we can get the kind of funding that will make it move."

No cost estimates for either route, bridge biggest barrier

No one involved with the plan provided any kind of cost estimate for the new road.

"It's too early to do that. We have to understand the design standards for the road itself," McKinnon said. "Another thing we have learned over time is that you make those first cut numbers when you have something to make them on."

Other issues include caribou migration and river crossings. Besides the Colville, such an industrial road would have to cross three other rivers, McKinnon said.

"The biggest piece is the bridge crossing," he said. "It's a big river, it's got complex soils and complex braiding. If it were easy, I'm sure the oil industry would have done it eons before."

Currently, the group is considering Colville crossing sites upriver from Nuiqsut, where the river necks down and well-established banks are present.

Another consideration is locating sources of gravel for road construction.

"We're in the first stages of really sinking our teeth into the idea — mapping it out, understanding the impacts," McKinnon said. "The key to this is making sure the North Slope Borough and Nuiqsut are comfortable with the idea, while going through the process of determining what it is."

"We want to know if a project should be extracted from the plan and be made a design and construction project," he added. "Take it from planning to a real project stage, and do it by July."

He envisions multiple sources for funding, including Alaska Industrial Development & Export Authority, DOT&PF, North Slope Borough and some industry funding.

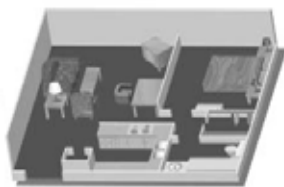
"It's a decision that the North Slope Borough and industry will make with us — if this is a practical way to improve transportation into NPR-A," McKinnon said. "I realized that we may fight about Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for years, but if we are going to develop NPR-A, we should look for ways to accelerate development of it." ♦

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ARCTIC GAS

CANADA

Foothills Pipe Lines 'head office' could be on the move

Foothills Pipe Lines Ltd., the lead promoter of an Alaska Highway gas pipeline for more than 20 years, may be on the verge seeing its identity shrink in Calgary.

TransCanada PipeLines Ltd. and Duke Energy Corp., the joint owners of Foothills, are pondering a move that would see Foothills close its office and move its operations across downtown Calgary into the TransCanada head office.

A Duke spokeswoman told the Calgary Herald Sept. 19 that the partners are "certainly looking (at the move) very seriously," although a TransCanada spokesman said the decision-making is in a "preliminary stage."

TransCanada suggested the transfer could involve the head office functions, leaving a small group of Foothills 55 employees to work on the details of an Alaska Highway pipeline.

Among analysts, the shuffle makes sense, especially for Duke, which is under pressure to squeeze unnecessary spending out of its budget.

Foothills, which has exclusive rights to build and operate the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway project, holds 62 percent of the Alaskan Northwest Natural Gas Transportation Co. and has a 25 percent stake in the Alaskan North Slope Project Sponsor Agreement.

It delivers more than one-third of all Canadian gas exports to the United States through the so-called "pre-build" portion of the Alaska Highway project, which opened in 1981 and delivers gas from Western Canada.

The "pre-build" was installed to help finance the far costlier northern section of a delivery system from the North Slope.

It currently ships 2.2 billion cubic feet per day on the eastern leg to the Midwest and 1.1 billion cubic feet per day to California and the U.S. Pacific Northwest.

—Gary Park, PNA Canadian correspondent

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Stevens pans newspaper editorial on gas pipeline

A Wall Street Journal editorial has eroded congressional support for a proposed Alaska natural gas pipeline, said U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens.



Ted Stevens

House and Senate negotiators working on the national energy bill agreed in mid-September to mandate a southern route, carrying the North Slope gas through Alaska on its way to markets in the Lower 48. Alaska's political lead-

see STEVENS page A8

ANCHORAGE

Heyworth, Houle argue merits of All-Alaska Gasline Initiative

Proposition on November ballot would create Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority to study proposal for state to acquire North Slope gas, build pipeline to Valdez

By Jen Ransom
PNA Staff Writer

With only a little more than a month to go until Alaskans go to the polls, the temperature is rising in discussions about Ballot Measure No. 3, the All-Alaska Gasline Initiative.

Scott Heyworth, the primary sponsor of the initiative, debated the proposition with Larry Houle of the Alaska Support Industry Alliance at the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Make Sept. 23. Dave Harbour of Northern Gas Pipelines was the moderator.

The All-Alaska Gasline Initiative would create the Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority,



"This is a non-economical project. The state of Alaska cannot afford it." —Larry Houle



"Everybody gets jobs out of the petrochemical plant." —Scott Heyworth

which would be a public corporation of the state, explained Harbour, who told the chamber audience he hadn't yet made up his mind on the proposition. The authority would acquire and condition North Slope gas, construct a gas pipeline to Valdez alongside the trans-Alaska oil pipeline and a spur line from Glennallen to the Southcentral gas distribution

grid, be responsible for operating and maintaining the pipeline, shipping the gas and marketing the gas. Suggested sources of income to do the gasline project include railroad bonds, appropriations from the Alaska legislature and/or funding from the oil

see INITIATIVE page A8

CANADA

Canada, NWT again warn of fall-out from gas pipeline subsidies

Northwest Territories' Antoine insists proposal before Congress is not what Canada agreed to 25 years ago, making Canada-U.S. treaties, statutes and agreements void

By Gary Park
PNA Canadian Correspondent

The Canadian and Northwest Territories governments are continuing their unrelenting drive to oppose subsidies for an Alaska Highway gas pipeline as a Congressional committee draws closer to a pivotal decision.

Northwest Territories Economic Development Minister Jim Antoine has gone as far as arguing that 25-year Canada-U.S. treaties, agreements and states in support of Alaska gas development are no longer valid.

Those cross-border deals include the Transit Treaty, the U.S.-Canada Agreement on Principles and the 1977 Northern Pipeline Act.

In a letter to Canada's Natural Resources Minister Herb Dhaliwal, Antoine said that in the intervening 25 years the concept has "substantially

changed, the natural gas market has been transformed and the understandings regarding the role of private financing versus public guarantees are about to be turned on their head."

He argued the project contemplated for employing U.S. tax breaks and loan guarantees to achieve a highway delivery system is "not what Canada agreed to and not what Canada must be forced to accept."

Joining the lobbying effort, Canada's ambassador to the United States, Michael Kergin, said government financial backing for the highway route could depress North American gas prices, undercut conventional gas production and slow development of future projects.

Gas production would increase

In a letter earlier this month to the U.S. under-see SUBSIDIES page A8

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ARCTIC GAS

continued from page A7
STEVENS

ers favor that route.

But a "malicious" editorial Sept. 19 in the Journal — titled "Alaska's Pipe Dream" — reopened the matter, Stevens told the Anchorage Daily News.

"The agreement, we're told, is off," he said. "There is no agreement right now on the right of way."

The editorial criticized both the route requirement and a financial incentive package intended to encourage construction of the \$20 billion project.

Incentives criticized

The editorial criticized both the route requirement and a financial incentive package intended to encourage construction of the \$20 billion project.

"If the bill passes with the (incentives), taxpayers will be on the hook for up to \$20 billion in subsidies and another \$10 billion in loan guarantees," it says.

The Journal called the provisions "a political scam" and said the private sector should be free to choose the line that makes the most economic sense.

Over-the-top route proponents thrilled with editorial

A Texas-based consortium, Arctic Resources Co., has been pushing for the "over-the-top route" that would send the line under the Beaufort Sea and south through Canada. That north-

ern route, the company says, is shorter and cheaper. It would also be able to transport gas from northern Canada.

The group is lobbying the congressional negotiators to ditch the gasline language Alaska is seeking.

A spokesman said Arctic Resources was thrilled the editorial brought attention to its perspective.

"Generally, no one pays attention to this provision because there are so many other issues in the bill," Jack Jacobson said.

Alaska's congressional delegation, the Legislature and Gov. Tony Knowles say piping gas under the Beaufort Sea would be an engineering nightmare and would prompt environmental objections that would tie the project up for decades.

Sending the line through Alaska would provide more economic benefits to Alaskans, they say.

Alaska delegation scrambling

Stevens, R-Alaska, said the delegation is trying to counter the editorial's impact.

"We're all trying to scramble to make sure that people understand that it is absolutely a disaster to think that anyone would agree to put the pipeline across the top of Canada," he said.

Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, who is leading the charge for the gasline provisions, says the financial incentives would reduce the risk if gas prices drop but would not cost taxpayers because the tax credit would have to be paid back once the price rises.

Jacobson, the Arctic Resources spokesman, said gas prices are likely to stay low when Alaska gas hits the market and it could cost taxpayers plenty.

—The Associated Press

continued from page A7
INITIATIVE

and gas industry companies.

In support of Ballot Measure No. 3

Heyworth, a lifelong Alaska resident and a longshoreman for the last 32 years, is the primary sponsor of the All-Alaska Gas line Initiative. He says the initiative offers no incentives, no loan guarantees and no handouts. While figures for the first year's cost have been estimated as high as \$250 million, Heyworth says that only \$3 million to \$5 million would be spent during the first two to five years. He says railroad bonds would be used to pay for the project, and that the authority would stand alone and not receive support from the permanent fund or the state revenue fund.

Markets for gas would have to be confirmed before the pipeline could be built, he said.

Heyworth's big push is that Alaska would not attempt to sell the gas outright. Instead, Alaska could mimic the petrochemical success of Alberta and invest in producing products from the now-stranded gas.

"Everybody gets jobs out of the petrochemical plant," said Heyworth. "One hundred and ninety-one products now come out of Alberta, why can't we do the same?"

Heyworth says that other pluses include filling up southbound supply ships with Alaska products, which he says would actually bring down the cost of goods in Alaska, since we are now paying for both trips because the supply ships are normally empty when returning to from Alaska. Heyworth also mentioned the environmental impact of building the gas line alongside the trans-Alaska oil pipeline: the infrastructure is already in place, he said, meaning very few roads would have to be built to construct the gasline.

The opposition

Larry Houle, of the Alaska Support Industry Alliance, opposes Ballot Measure No. 3. Houle, who says that he wants a gas pipeline just as much as the next Alaska resident, says that he opposes the measure because the state cannot finance the pipeline. Houle even went as far as to say that he sees the initiative as the biggest obstacle in getting a pipeline to transport the North Slope gas.

"This is a non-economical project," said Houle. "The state of Alaska cannot afford it."

Nor should it pay for it, according to Houle. The industry has looked at building a gas pipeline to Valdez for export of gas as liquefied natural gas and found it too risky, too expensive. Houle says the state should not take that commer-

Want to know more?

If you'd like to read more about the All-Alaska Gasline initiative, go to Petroleum News • Alaska's web site and search for these recently published articles.

Web site:
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2002

- **July 7** Heyworth drops out of race, throws support to Murkowski
- **May 5** Status of oil, gas bills in state Legislature
- **April 28** Heyworth would not accept HB 302 as substitute for ballot initiative
- **April 15** All-Alaska Gasline initiative could be pulled from ballot
- **March 10** Resolution urging national support of gas pipeline moves in House
- **March 24** Heyworth, Condon square off on gas authority costs
- **Jan. 20** Group delivers petitions with 42,105 signatures endorsing an all-Alaska gasline

2001

- **Sept. 23** Lieutenant governor certifies ballot initiative for state gasline authority
- **Aug. 28** Citizens group files initiative for all-Alaska gas line
- **July 30** Ballot measure orders Legislature to create all Alaska gas project
- **June 25** Poll finds super voters think Alaska benefits most if gas goes to Valdez
- **May 28** Heyworth funds company promoting all-Alaska gasline

cial risk — that's up to the private sector.

Houle says that energy companies have already spent over \$20 million to determine the All-Alaska gas pipeline is not economical; Alaska gas is just not marketable as LNG to Japan and Korea, because the cost of getting it out is so high and there is already plenty of gas available in the Pacific Rim.

Houle is also worried about how the state would fund such a large project. He says that the Authority may attempt to take the money out of the general fund, which houses the permanent fund earnings. And in response to Heyworth's talk of industry financing the project, Houle said that first, the industry has already found the project non-economical, and second, no industry would finance a project 100 percent. Even if Alaska got 70 percent of the funds needed, where would the other 30 percent come from, Houle asked?

After both sides made their arguments, Harbor concluded the debate by telling the chamber audience:

"You have the burden of proof. You have to do your homework, you have to figure out the facts before you cast your vote."

Election day is Nov. 5. Information on Ballot Measure No. 3 is available at www.gov.state.ak.us/ltgov/elections/petitions/status.htm#01gsln. ♦

continued from page A7
SUBSIDIES

secretary of state for economic and business affairs, Kergin said "increasingly higher levels of Alaskan gas production encouraged by the (Senate's proposed guaranteed floor price) will tend to depress prices in the region, in Alberta and elsewhere in North America."

Dhaliwal said Sept. 18 that during his recent visit to Washington, D.C., he received a presentation from BP Plc on a Congressional committee's proposal for a production tax credit that would kick in when Alaska gas prices dropped below US83 cents per thousands cubic feet.

The Canadian minister said he was not impressed with the alternative.

"Fundamentally, we are against subsidies. A subsidy is a subsidy," he said.

Even Exxon Mobil Corp., the largest owner of Alaska gas reserves, viewed the latest effort to find a solution with skepticism.

"If the project were to go forward, it really should be able to stand on its own merits and not have the subsidy and the supports that really this entails," spokesman Bob Davis told the National Post, a Canadian daily newspaper. "We believe subsidies create an artificial price environment and we disagree with the assessment of them."

The congressional committee is expected to reach a conclusion next month on an incentives package for an Alaska pipeline. ♦

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KATALLA

Forest Service issues revised EA for Katalla

The U.S. Forest Service has issued a revised environmental assessment for Cassandra Energy Corp.'s proposed oil and gas drilling near Katalla southeast of Cordova. The drilling will be on private land; the assessment focuses on access.

Chugach National Forest Supervisor Dave Gibbons said in an Sept. 24 letter that the Forest Service decided to revise the document after the Alaska Department of Fish and Game objected to one of the alternatives in the original assessment, and suggested a modification. That suggested modification, Gibbons said, became a new alternative, No. 4. The alternatives are: No. 1, no action; No. 2, an ocean-going barge would off load equipment and supplies at a site on the west side of the Katalla River on state land and a shallow-draft small barge would move equipment and supplies some 1.5 miles up the Katalla River where the riverbank would be graded to create an access ramp.

Both the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Habitat Division and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service suggested having the barge landing site about 500 feet downstream from the site proposed in Alternative No. 2. "They felt that there would be less disturbance of the river bank at this location and less of a chance of introducing sediments into the river and downstream spawning channels," the Forest Service said in the revised assessment.

Alternative No. 3 is similar to No. 2, except that the operator would build a one-half mile temporary road.

Alternative No. 4, the new alternative, is similar No. 2, except that the operator would build approximately 550 feet of new temporary road from the end of the old existing roadway to a gravel bar downstream on the east bank of the Katalla River.

The Forest Service said that the river bank at the No. 4 location "is a gradual slope that would not require any excavation for an access ramp."

—Kristen Nelson, PNA editor-in-chief

COOK INLET

Evergreen Resources receives 8 drilling permits

The Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission issued drilling permits Sept. 10 to Evergreen Resources (Alaska) Corp. for eight wells in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, although the wells cannot be completed or produced until the commission rules on a spacing exception request.

In public notices published Sept. 11, the commission tentatively scheduled an Oct. 15 hearing on the eight wells to allow exceptions to regulations for spacing — the distance between wells — for "completion and production" of the "vertical gas wells within 3,000 feet of each other, and within 1,500 feet of a property boundary and within the same governmental section."

see *EVERGREEN* page A10

FAIRBANKS

New energy sources discussed for rural Alaska

Energy conference includes talks about alternative resources for remote villages

By Patricia Jones
PNA Contributing Writer

Diesel reigns as the primary fuel source for creating electricity in Alaska's rural communities, providing nearly 90 percent of electric power in remote areas throughout the state.

But it's a costly source for electric power. About 300 people interested in rural electric issues gathered in Fairbanks Sept. 17-19 to discuss methods of increasing efficiencies of existing diesel-based power systems, as well as to share information about emerging alternative energy sources that could augment or eventually replace traditional diesel systems.

"Diesel technology is improving and its efficiency is going up," said Dennis Witmer, acting

director of the Arctic Energy Technology Development Laboratory and one of the conference organizers. "But wind is being demonstrated ... there have been successes with hydro projects and other projects are in the development phase, such as fuel cells and small fossil fuel projects like natural gas and coalbed methane.

"The purpose of this conference is to get this group together networking and exchanging new ideas," he added.

Alternative fuel sources discussed at the conference included existing and proposed hydro power projects, natural gas, coalbed methane, wind power, biomass energy, hybrid systems and batteries and fuel cells. Diesel plant efficiencies, bulk storage tank systems, transmission systems and financing were also discussed.

A 90-minute talk about the Healy Clean Coal Plant was also included. PNA will provide coverage of several of these topics in future issues.

see *SOURCES* page A19

NORTH SLOPE

BP reports to AOGCC on A-22 well; commission schedules hearing

Company has implemented new testing and operating procedures, investigation team recommends evaluation of remote monitoring; failed casing will be sent for analysis

By Kristen Nelson
PNA Editor-in-Chief

BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc. has provided the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission with a review of the Prudhoe Bay A-22 well explosion Aug. 16 which seriously injured a BP worker, including recommendations its investigation team made to BP management and action plans. The commission has scheduled a hearing for Nov. 14 on all of its orders on the Prudhoe Bay field.

BP said the A-22 well, drilled in 1982, had been shut-in for about six days prior to the incident due to facility issues. Production had been averaging 500 barrels of oil per day.

Each of the 137 wells that could not be maintained at or below 1,000 psi was to "undergo testing to reconfirm the integrity of its surface casing" prior to being started up.

The well had been diagnosed with gas pressure communication between the production casing and surface casing annulus; no leaks at surface or down hole had been identified.

BP had added the well to its annulus pressure management program. Approval from the company's well integrity group was given to initiate production with up to 2,000 psi outer annulus pressure

see *WELL* page A10



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continued from page A9
EVERGREEN

The commission said that if it does not receive requests for hearings by Sept. 27, it will consider ruling on the request without a hearing.

Pioneer unit wells

These wells are in the Pioneer unit, which Evergreen Resources acquired in 2001 from Unocal and Ocean Energy Resources Inc. Evergreen told the state earlier this year that it plans an eight-well exploration project to test the ability of coals in the 72,000-acre unit to produce gas.

Evergreen said the wells will be drilled, completed and tested in two pilot areas, each area laid out with one

well in the center, and the other wells 1,000 feet to the north, southeast and southwest of the central wells.

"It is important to understand that we currently propose an exploration program designed to test the coal's ability to produce natural gas," Evergreen told the state.

"Exploration pilots incorporate a pod of wells being produced within close proximity to one another. In a development program, wells will be spaced at greater distances," the company said.

One group of four wells is on fee acreage and state of Alaska oil and gas lease ADL 374121 south of Houston.

The second group of wells is on state oil and gas lease ADL 384685 east of Houston.

—Kristen Nelson, PNA editor-in-chief

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WELL

on Aug. 15, and the well was put in production that evening.

Surface casing failed

The 13-3/8 inch surface casing failed 17 feet below grade Aug. 16, some five hours after the well was put on production, and lift gas and fluid flowed up the 20 inch conductor by surface casing annulus, blowing gravel and boards up into the well house.

BP said the ignition source could have been a spark from flying debris or electrical equipment damaged by the blast. The subsequent fire was sustained by high-pressure gas-lift gas through a needle valve damaged by the blast. Well production was isolated with surface safety valve closure, the company said. The fire was extinguished within six hours and the well controlled within 24 hours.

BP recovering damaged pipe

The team that BP formed to investigate recommended that wells that could not be maintained at or below 1,000 psi should be shut-in; 137 wells were shut-in Aug. 29.

BP Exploration (Alaska) spokesman Paul said told PNA Sept. 20 that as of Sept. 19, 26 of the 137 wells were on-line and producing; 21 additional wells were ready for production as soon as routine maintenance was completed at Gathering Center 2. The 90 wells not ready to come back into production accounted for 27,000 barrels per day of production.

Laird said BP is "in the process of recovering the damaged section of pipe from A-22 right now and expect to have that in hand sometime in the next week and then we'll be sending it off for further analysis and that will help pinpoint the root cause of the explosion."

The workover rig is on site, he said, and work began earlier in the week. He said BP does not have an estimate of how long it will take to reach a conclusion once the pipe has been recovered.

Investigation team, hearing

BP's investigation team recommended a hazard review of the company's well integrity program and implementation of appropriate improvements and BP told the commission that new testing and operating procedures have been implemented. Each of the 137 wells that could not be maintained at or below 1,000 psi was to "undergo testing to reconfirm the integrity of its surface casing" prior to being started up.

The investigation team said "monitoring resources are not adequate to monitor multi-well startups" and recommended that some type of remote monitoring be evaluated for wells with outer annulus pressures that exceed 1,000 psi.

The team also recommended review and update of startup, bleed-down and annular pressure procedures and field practices and said a database should be developed to record operator notes, annular pressure readings and pressure bleed events.

A safety bulletin was issued Aug. 28 was to reflect what was learned from the A-22 incident. The team recommended training be developed for operators and supervisors on annular pressure issues and a six-month progress review on the recommendations.

The commission said Sept. 20 that it has scheduled the hearing "to consider prescribing a rule to govern the operation of development wells within the Prudhoe Bay field with pressure communication or leakage in any casing, tubing or packer." The commission will also accept written comments through Nov. 14. ♦

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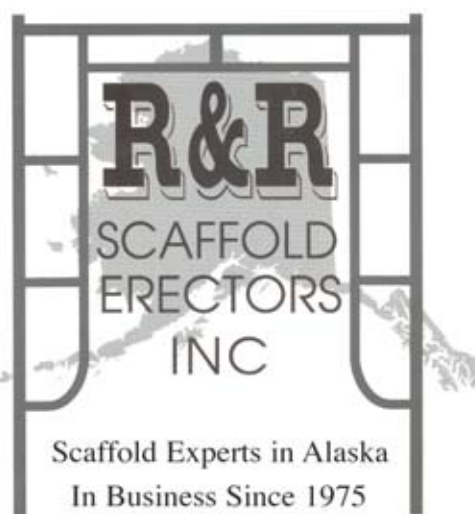
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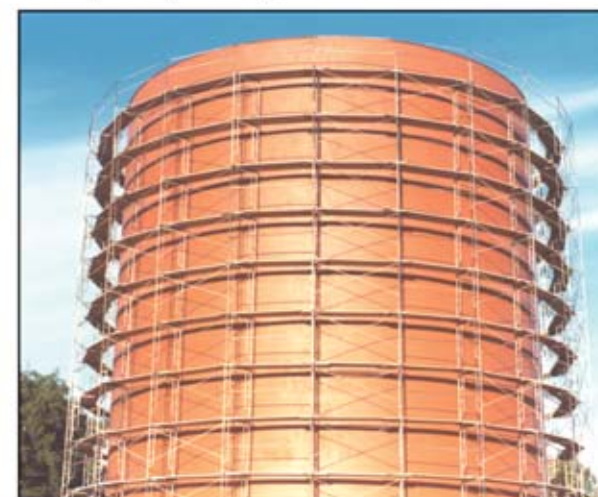


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LAND & LEASING

COOK INLET

Next Trust land sale planned for spring

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Office plans to hold its next oil and gas lease sale in the spring.

Mike Franger, The Trust Land Office's senior resource manager, told PNA Sept. 24 that a potential sale this fall has been shifted into next year.

"We are now planning on having the sale in the spring, and including acreage on the Kenai as well as west side lands," Franger said.

The Trust Land Office conducted its first lease sale in September 2001, attracting nine bids for eight tracts and leasing some 40,000 acres. With subsequent leases, the agency now has almost 50,000 acres under lease in the Cook Inlet basin.

NPR-A

BLM issues leases from June NPR-A lease sale

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management has completed work on bids received at the agency's June 3 National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska oil and gas lease sale.

BLM said Sept. 23 that its NPR-A bid assessment team completed analysis of the bids submitted at the sale and the agency is accepting all winning bids, from six companies. It expects to have all the leases awarded by Oct. 1.

Bidders are paying BLM \$1.9 million for the first year's lease rentals plus an additional \$63.8 million in bonus bids, 50 percent of which ultimately goes to the state of Alaska.

"I am excited about the validation of the bids and the fact that we have some new players in NPR-A," said Henri Bisson, BLM Alaska state director. "I look forward to working with the public and the companies as we move forward," he said.

Bidders in the June sale include existing leaseholders Phillips Alaska Inc. (now ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc.) and Anadarko Petroleum Corp. The new players include TotalFinaElf, which dominated the dollar side of the sale with more than \$53 million of the \$63 million in apparent high bids, and EnCana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc.

The 60 tracts leased in the June sale cover 579,269 acres in the northeast corner of NPR-A.

Bidders are paying BLM \$1.9 million for the first year's lease rentals plus an additional \$63.8 million in bonus bids, 50 percent of which ultimately goes to the state of Alaska.

ANCHORAGE

MMS director sees potential in Alaska outer continental shelf

Cooperation between state, Native communities and federal government important in development of Alaska's energy, Burton says, as is bringing in more industry

By Kristen Nelson
PNA Editor-in-Chief

Department of the Interior officials have made a lot of trips to Alaska in the last year, Minerals Management Service Director Johnnie Burton among them.

There is a reason for this, Burton told PNA in a Sept. 11 interview: a good energy policy is high on the president's list and lands managed by the Department of the Interior, "public lands onshore and offshore, provide close to 30 percent of total domestic production of energy."

While Alaska's contribution of energy production from public lands has been from onshore so far, "we think the outer continental shelf, for which MMS is directly responsible ... offers tremendous opportunities," Burton said.

"We also know it has tremendous challenges ...

probably tougher than any of the other OCS environments."

But, she said, we know the resources are here.

"And that's a big thing. They're not easy to extract, they're even more difficult to get to the point where they can be used ... and yet this is where we need to focus big effort because the resource is here."

Kuvlum, Sandpiper in 2003 sale

Alaska is a big player in national energy policy, Burton said, "so we need to focus here in Alaska. And we hope we can tell industry to try us again, come back."

see DIRECTOR page A12



Johnnie Burton, director, Minerals Management Service

ANCHORAGE

Environmental group wants wilderness studies for NPR-A

By The Associated Press

The 23 million acres designated as the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska should be "cherished as a long-term bequest of nature" and studied for possible wilderness protection, according to a new environmental group.

"By all rights it should be the 'National Wilderness Reserve-Alaska,'" the Campaign for America's Wilderness said in promotional materials distributed to reporters Sept. 23. The vast area sits to the west of the existing oil-production complex of Prudhoe Bay.

"Heavens. 'Wilderness reserve,'" Drue Pearce, Alaska adviser to Interior Secretary Gale Norton, murmured when told of the name suggestion.

It seems, she said, that the group has forgotten the area's history. President Harding set the land aside in 1923 as a potential oil source for the Navy.

As production falls in other areas of the North Slope, interest in NPR-A has increased.

Last year, Phillips Alaska Inc., now part of ConocoPhillips, announced it had discovered significant oil and gas deposits there.

In May, government geologists increased their estimate of the amount of oil it contains, concluding that the reserve has 1.3 billion to 5.6 billion barrels of economically recoverable oil, assuming prices of \$22 to \$30 a barrel.

The Interior Department is planning a major lease sale next year.

Group asks for evaluation

Mike Matz, director of the new group, said the area is important to raptors, caribou and other wildlife. "Tens of millions of waterfowl migrate here," he said.

The Campaign for America's Wilderness is not proposing that the government designate all of NPR-A a wilderness but rather that it evaluate the many ecosystems within it for possible protection, said Tim

see NPR-A page A12

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LAND & LEASING

continued from page A11

DIRECTOR

Current projects in the Alaska OCS include Northstar, already in production, McCovey which is scheduled for drilling this winter and Liberty which is being reevaluated by its operator, said John Goll, MMS Alaska region manager.

There are known discoveries at Kuvlum, Hammerhead and Sandpiper, he said. The leases have been relinquished but those prospects will be available in next year's Beaufort Sea lease sale.

The development challenge for those prospects remains, he said, but there are opportunities "and part of our role is making it available — to offer the access."

What next?

Communication is going to be essential to get Alaska's energy produced, Burton said.

"I think that the key to all this happening is getting the state, all the Native communities and the federal government to agree and understand the role Alaska has to play."

That requires exploration of the state's natural resources "in an environmentally

sensitive way," Burton said.

The role of the federal agencies — both MMS and the Bureau of Land Management — is "to bring all these people to the table and get them to agree on how to do things."

Another role, maybe more essential, is attracting industry back to Alaska, she said. Industry left Alaska a long time ago, she said, and while it has come back to some extent and some good things have happened recently, government needs to do more to make us competitive with other areas in the world.

One of those things is predictability.

"Industry wants to know that once it commits to coming here to explore, that they can produce, once they've explored and discovered." The role of government — state, federal and local — is to give industry "that assurance that if they invest lots of money in getting a lease, they'll be able to explore it, develop it, produce it."

Streamlining permitting in Alaska a goal

While documentation won't go away, Burton said, "we need to streamline that as much as we can." Where several federal agencies are involved, "we need to take a good look at that. Where can we avoid

duplication? Where can we streamline a function so everybody's satisfied in their need for documentation — but yet we don't have industry do it four times. They do it once and we hate it."

That's the kind of thing government can do, she said.

Burton said Goll is going to work on streamlining permitting in Alaska.

In Washington, she said, Interior is putting together work groups from different agencies to meet monthly, keep each other advised of what the problems are and how to get problems and needs reconciled among the agencies. Sometimes, she said, that may involve higher management — "maybe assistant secretary level, to reconcile policy differences that may surface at the lower level of staff. It's going to be one step at a time. You don't change the world in one day."

Goll said they may find some things that require changes in regulations.

"Part of it's a matter of will of the different agencies and especially among the federal agencies, sort of marching in the same direction, since we all work for the same boss," he said.

Gulf made a come back

Burton told the Alaska Support Industry Alliance Sept. 12 that while Alaska's is described as a "mature province and in industry's lingo, a mature province means everything's declining. And you're on the down slope.

"I'm not sure that's true," she said.

"Look at the Gulf of Mexico 10 years ago — it was considered a mature province. Today, thanks to some industry foresight, thanks to technology and thanks to government trying to work with industry to make this happen, today in the gulf we have 4,000 active facilities... We have 25,000 miles of pipeline and in the last 10 years we have seen about 100 new discoveries with 35 already on production."

Technology, Burton said, "has allowed companies to invest in real deepwater and that has given a rebirth to that region.

"I contend that you have the same situation in Alaska," she said. "It is — at this point — an untapped resource."

In addition to a technology role in developing Alaska's OCS, industry will also have to come back, she said.

The other thing the Gulf of Mexico has going for it, she said, is "cooperation between agencies at their level, at their regional level. And hopefully we're getting there in Alaska," she said.

MMS looking at incentives

In addition to streamlining permitting, Burton said MMS is also looking at possible incentives for Alaska OCS lease sales. She said she hopes to have a menu of possible incentives to choose from later this year.

The incentives would appear as part of sale notices and would have to do with royalty rate and the volume of production that could be free of royalties. This is the type of thing that has been used to encourage deep-water exploration and development in the Gulf of Mexico, Burton said.

Goll said there are a number of things that could be done under the OCS Lands Act.

"We're shooting for Thanksgiving," he said, to have a list of possible incentives for the approval of the secretary.

In addition to royalties, which only apply once production begins, Goll said MMS is also looking for possible up-front incentives. "Right now," he said, "the law works that a company would have to be in production before they get some of these things — or a brand new lease." MMS might have to get authority from Congress for incentives on existing leases, he said.

"When the staff comes back with a menu of options," Burton said, "then it's my job to get the secretary to approve them." ♦







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NPR-A

Mahoney, the organization's lobbyist.

In particular, environmentalists point to the wetlands of the Teshekpuk Lake area near the northeast corner of the reserve as very important to birds, including snowy owls, tundra swans, yellow-billed loons, Pacific black brant, and Steller's and spectacled eiders.

Government geologists say the area of the reserve that looks most promising for oil lies to the south of the lake area, perhaps slightly overlapping the wetlands' southern border.

"For once, generally speaking, the most sensitive environmental area does not correspond to the area of greatest oil expectation,

in our opinion," said David Houseknecht of the U.S. Geological Survey.

Matz, the group's director, is a veteran of the Fairbanks-based Northern Alaska Environmental Center and a founder of the Alaska Wilderness League.

He would not say how much money his new group has to work with or where its money comes from, saying both are in flux. The organization has 10 full-time employees, he said. The only funding source he identified was the Alaska Conservation Foundation. The board includes leaders from other environmental groups: Earthjustice, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Wilderness Society.

NPR-A is one of six areas in five states the group has selected as illustrations of what it says are unprotected wilderness. ♦

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STATE OF ALASKA Announces Two Oil and Gas Lease Sales
 The Alaska Division of Oil and Gas (DO&G), will conduct NORTH SLOPE AREA WIDE and BEAUFORT SEA AREA WIDE competitive lease sales on OCTOBER 23, 2002 in Anchorage, Alaska.
North Slope Area wide 2002 Bidding Method: Cash bonus - \$10/acre minimum bid on all tracts. Fixed Royalty Rate: 12.5% on tracts below T7N, 16-2/3% on most tracts above T6N, Sliding scale royalty on 5 tracts along the Colville R. Term of lease: 7 years on all leases.
Beaufort Sea Area wide 2002 Bidding Method: Cash bonus - \$100/acre minimum bid on tract 79; \$10/acre on all other tracts. Fixed Royalty Rate: Set at 12.5% and 16-2/3%, depending on location. Term of lease: 10 yrs. and 7 yrs., depending on location. Visit www.dog.dnr.state.ak.us/oil/ for sale announcements, instructions to bidders, bid forms, and regional tract maps. If unable to access this information, contact Suzanne Gaguzis, (907) 269-8803, email at msg@dnr.state.ak.us. Published: 7/30/02.

consideration, email resume and salary history to GEOTEMPS at oil@geotemps.com. **Wire Line Operator** Wire Line personnel performs well completion, maintenance and servicing. Operator is responsible for putting in place or removing down hole tools (gauges, safety valves, BCS, etc.). They must have a broad working experience on different down hole tools and valves. Experience: Minimum of two years Location: Wyoming Salary: Market rates For consideration, please email resume and salary history to oil@geotemps.com.

Sr. Accountant Position: Industry: exploration and production Experience: 5 year+ Education: B.S. in Accounting Skills Required: Working knowledge of MS-Word, MS-Excel and extensive experience using an accounting system on a network. Network administrative experience would be a plus. Several years of responsibility for annual audit are required. Previous experience with journal entries, cash receipts, cash disbursements, joint interest billing, revenue disbursement, royalty payments, A/R sub ledger reconciliation, account analysis, financial statement preparation, supplying data to CPA firm for tax return preparation and bank reconciliation. Compensation: Salary is competitive and based on experience Hours: Full-time position 8-5 plus seasonal overtime. Location: Nevada Interested candidates, please send resume to oil@geotemps.com.

Petroleum News Alaska is seeking an experienced **circulation sales representative**. Position is FT, based in Anchorage. Personality is a plus! Submit your resume by email to Dan Wilcox at ceo@gci.net.

Alaska Oil and Gas Partners Independent Oil Company looking for professional & experienced personnel in all aspects of Oil & Gas industry in Alaska. Including: **Landmen, Geologists, Geophysicist, Drillers**, and other related positions. Please forward your resume to 1420 N. Atlantic Ave., #302, Daytona Beach, FL 32118, Attn: Human Resources Dept. Ph: 386-257-9415 or Gemicallef@yahoo.com

CIVIL ENGINEER Seeking self-motivated civil engineers with 5 - 10 years of utility, airfield, and/or road design experience

to work on unique projects throughout AK. Successful applicants will be responsible for designing urban and remote projects. Rural experience a plus. Applicants must be registered civil engineers (P.E.) in at least one state, and capable of registration in Alaska. Salary range: \$50- \$85 K DOE per year. **CIVIL ENGINEERING DESIGNER/ DRAFTING TECHNICIAN** Seeking self-motivated civil engineering design/drafting technician with at least 2 years AutoCAD experience in a civil engineering environment. \$12-\$22 per hour to start DOE. The benefits package for the above jobs includes: 3 weeks paid vacation per year, 12 paid holidays per year, excellent medical/dental/vision/disability, and 401 (k) with matching contributions. Our corporate culture reflects a casual working environment amongst a team of working professionals. Please send your resume or direct inquiries to: LCMF Incorporated; 139 East 51st Avenue; Anchorage, AK; 99503. hmunoz@lcmf.com (907) 273-1848; Toll Free: (800) 955-1830; Fax: (907) 273-1831

Avalon Development is seeking personnel interested in anticipated 2002 field positions. These are no-nonsense geology oriented field positions in remote camps. Positions are as follows: **Senior Geologists:** +5 years experience, Alaska experience preferable, expertise in PGE, Rare Metal or gold exploration required. Salary DOE. **Junior Geologists:** Bachelors degree in Geology required, Alaska experience preferable, experience in PGE, Rare metal or gold exploration helpful. Salary DOE. **Geotechnicians:** Experience in gridding, sampling, power auger drilling drill sampling and GPS navigation preferable. Salary DOE If you are interested in learning more about Employment opportunities in Alaska with Avalon Development, submit a resume along with references. Resumes may be emailed to: avalon2@alaska.net, Faxed to 907-455-8069 or mailed to Avalon Development, attn: AV-Jobs2002, PO Box 80268, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

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Udelhoven Current Immediate Openings: 4 NICET level 2 and 3 Certified Technicians. Work Site: North Slope send resumes to Jgilbert@udelhoven.com **Positions we are always accepting applications for include:** Administrative, clerical, As built, Material Handler, Carpenter, Electrician, Electrical Inspector, Engineer, Equipment Operator, FCO Technician, HVAC, Instrument Technician, Laborer, Millwright, NICET, Operator, Pipe fitter, Plumber, Project Control, Project Manager, Quality Assurance, Safety, Surveyor, Welder. Please e-mail your resume to: rfrontdesk@udelhoven.com or fax to: (907) 522-2541 Attention: Lisa

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Investment Opportunities

Alaska Independent needs operator to explore and develop prime North Slope/Cook Inlet prospects. Call Rick 907-456-2300 or email bluemax@gci.net.

Leases/Prospects Available

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Looking for partners for five prospects in Cook Inlet - Astosch-Tutna, Corsair, Olson

Creek, Valkyrie, Viggen. See www.forestoil.com for some prospect information. Click on the Banc of America Securities Presentation, June 18 PDF file, and then go to page 16. Contact: Jim Arlington, Land Manager, at jdarlington@forestoil.com. Serious inquiries only.

North Slope Oil Opportunity Prospect just north of the Kuparuk River Unit. Analysis of 3-D seismic indicates Kuparuk A and C sand potential of 20 million or more barrels. Can be drilled as tract operation from existing KRU Drillsite with year



Doyon Drilling, Inc. is currently accepting resumes for Electricians, Pitwatcher (Solids Operator), and Mechanics. Doyon Drilling, Inc. accepts resumes from individuals with direct on or off shore drill rig experience at the floorhand level and above. You may fax, mail or e-mail your complete resume to our Human

Resources Department. Our mailing address is: Doyon Drilling, Inc., 101 W. Benson Blvd., Suite 503, Anchorage, AK 99503 Phone: 907-563-5530, Fax: 907-561-8986, Email: jobs@doyondrilling.com Attachments should be in one of the following standard formats: Microsoft Word (Windows) or RTF. Resumes should contain a listing of employment experience on oil and gas drilling rigs and should have a minimum of three verified references. Other application paperwork will be provided at the time of hire.

Electricians: Summary: Installs, maintains and repairs drill rig electrical systems, apparatus and electrical and electronic components of drill rig machinery and equipment. Essential Duties: Maintains and repairs the electrical and electronic equipment associated with drill rig top drives, draw works, iron roughnecks, SCR's AC motor controllers, DC motors, AC generators, air conditioners PLC's and oil-field mud and gas monitoring systems. Installs power supply wiring and conduit for newly installed machines and equipment such as mud pumps, motors and conveyors.

Pitwatcher (Solids Operator): Summary: Performs drilling fluid mixing operations, drilling fluid property sampling, monitoring of well bore returns, maintenance of mud pumps and drilling fluid circulation system. Essential Duties: Maintain drilling fluid solids control and circulation equipment, Carry out routine drilling fluid property sampling, Mixing of drilling fluid chemicals and maintenance of drilling fluid properties, Cleaning and maintenance of rig drilling fluid pits, Follow DDI and customer operating and reporting procedures, Maintain clear communications with relief, mud engineer, Derrickman and Driller.

Mechanics: Summary: Responsible for the operability, maintenance and repair of all drill-rig related machinery and support equipment such as engines, motors, pumps, winches, pneumatic tools and conveyor systems as directed by the rig toolpusher. Essential Duties: Works on the following: Drill rig top drive systems, Drill rig draw work systems, Drill rig mud pumps, SCR systems, Caterpillar and Detroit Diesel engines, Allison transmissions, air conditioners, glycol, hydraulic and pneumatic systems, Drill rig heating and heat distribution systems including boilers and fans.



ACCT/INDUSTRY SPECIALIST Job Overview: Position is responsible for expanding & accelerating the penetration of the 3M Oil & Gas product line calling on all segments of the industry (exploration, production, transportation, refining & retail) i.e. providing solutions for the Oil & Gas markets. Primary focus: call on end users to promote the use of 3M products. Provide end user seminars & product presentations to promote awareness of 3M

solutions at key accounts & generate 3M product specifications into projects. Manage existing end user accounts by offering solutions to solidify existing business. Identify new opportunities, quantify, prioritize & close the sale. Work closely with 3M domestic & international colleagues to increase end user penetration. Act as a liaison between customers & divisions. Support 3M sales reps & distributor sales reps through training on products, markets & applications; joint sales calls at key end user accounts; & participation at seminars/trade shows. Provide strategic information to management. Position will be based in Anchorage, Alaska. Position is full time, salary + commission. Compensation is competitive and based on experience. Skills & Qualifications: Position requires a minimum of 5 years industry experience & a BS degree in an engineering or related discipline. Oil & Gas industry knowledge & experience is very desirable. Applicant should be familiar with the product commercialization process, have a successful history of new product launches, be results-oriented, & have excellent written & oral communication skills. The position requires a highly creative hands-on person who can work with customers & 3M personnel to transfer customer needs into product solutions with minimal supervision. The person should be a strong team player who has the ability to energize creativity in others & can interface with a diverse global team. Strong computer skills a must. Mail resume to: Oil/Gas Manager, 3M Alaska, 11151 Calaska Circle, Anchorage, AK 99515. 3M is an equal opportunity employer M/F/D/V.



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Legal Notice

Notice of Public Hearing STATE OF ALASKA Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission Re: Pioneer Unit, Matanuska - Susitna Borough Sections 1 and 2, T17N, R3W, Seward Meridian Affected Leases: Fee acreage, State of Alaska ADL 374121 Evergreen Resources (Alaska) Corporation by e-mail application dated and received September 7, 2002 has applied for an order allowing spacing exceptions in accordance with 20 AAC 25.055 (a) (2) and (a) (4) for the completion and production of four vertical gas wells within 3,000 feet of each other, within 1,500 feet of a property boundary and within the same governmental section. D.L. Smith No. 1 Surface Location: 3293 feet FNL and 293 feet FWL, Section 1, T17N, R3W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same Gary & Jo Ann Stromberg No. 2 Surface Location: 1386 feet FNL and 933 feet FWL, Section 1, T17N, R3W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same Robert L. Smith No. 3 Surface Location: 3272 feet FSL and 606 feet FEL, Section 2, T17N, R3W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same Cornhusker No. 4 Surface Location: 2426 feet FNL and 141 feet FEL, Section 2, T17N, R3W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same The Commission has tentatively set a public hearing on this application for October 15, 2002 at 9:00 am at the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission at 333 West 7th Avenue, Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. A person may request that the tentatively scheduled hearing be held by filing a written request with the Commission no later than 4:30 pm on September 27, 2002. If a request for a hearing is not timely filed, the Commission will consider the issuance of an order without a hearing. To learn if the Commission will hold the public hearing, please call 793-1221. In addition, a person may submit written comments regarding this application to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission at 333 West 7th Avenue, Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. Written comments must be received no later than 4:30 pm on October 11, 2002 except that if the Commission decides to hold a public hearing, written comments must be received no later than 9:00 am on October 15, 2002. If you are a person with a disability who may need a special modification in order to comment or to attend the public hearing, please contact Jody Colombie at 793-1221 before October 1, 2002. Cammy Oechsli Taylor Chair, Alaska Oil & Gas Conservation Commission Published Date: September 15, 2002

Legal Notice

Notice of Public Hearing STATE OF ALASKA Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission Re: Pioneer Unit, Matanuska - Susitna Borough Section 30, T18N, R1W, Seward Meridian State of Alaska Affected Lease: ADL 384685 Evergreen Resources (Alaska) Corporation by e-mail application dated and received September 7, 2002 has applied for an order allowing spacing exceptions in accordance with 20 AAC 25.055 (a) (2) and (a) (4) for the completion and production of four vertical gas wells within 3,000 feet of each other, within 1,500 feet of a property boundary and within the same governmental section. Cook No. 1 Surface Location: 991 feet FSL and 888 feet FEL, Section 30, T18N, R1W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same Lowell No. 2 Surface Location: 967 feet FSL and 1329 feet FEL, Section 30, T18N, R1W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same Bering No. 3 Surface Location: 1523 feet FSL and 471 feet FEL, Section 30, T18N, R1W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same Baranoff No. 4 Surface Location: 504 feet FSL and 423 feet FEL, Section 30, T18N, R1W, SM Bottom Hole Location: Same The Commission has tentatively set a public hearing on this application for October 15, 2002 at 9:00 am at the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission at 333 West 7th Avenue, Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. A person may request that the tentatively scheduled hearing be held by filing a written request with the Commission no later than 4:30 pm on September 27, 2002. If a request for a hearing is not timely filed, the Commission will consider the issuance of an order without a hearing. To learn if the Commission will hold the public hearing, please call 793-1221. In addition, a person may submit written comments regarding this application to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission at 333 West 7th Avenue, Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. Written comments must be received no later than 4:30 pm on October 11, 2002 except that if the Commission decides to hold a public hearing, written comments must be received no later than 9:00 am on October 15, 2002. If you are a person with a disability who may need a special modification in order to comment or to attend the public hearing, please contact Jody Colombie at 793-1221 before October 1, 2002. Cammy Oechsli Taylor Chair, Alaska Oil & Gas Conservation Commission Published Date: September 16, 2002 ADN AO# 02314011

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AVCG looking for qualified partners for 104,000 acres on North Slope. Call Bo 316-263-2243.

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Meetings/Events

9th Annual Information Technology Expo & Conference <http://www.sourdough.net/events/itbe/index.html> Where you are on October 1-2 could determine where you will be for years to come! October 1-2 o 10:00 am to 6:00 pm Egan Center o 555 W. 5th Ave Anchorage, Alaska FREE admission on www.sourdough.net ALL the industry heavyweights - National representatives of Apple, Cisco, Dell, HP, Microsoft, Citrix, Veritas, and over one hundred other leading national and Alaskan companies. Show Management 907-277-7469

Alaska Miners Association Annual Convention and Trade



CAREERS AT VECO Principal Design Specialist- Anchorage, Alaska Recruiting Authorization No. 825 One opening for an individual with fifteen (15) years related experience as a Mechanical/Piping or I&E designer to lead well tie-in design projects. Must be proficient in AutoCADD. Working knowledge of Rebis a plus. Oversees the implementation and completion of all phases of assigned projects. Works with Project Engineer, clients, and discipline leads to develop scope, schedule and budget. Acts as the focal point for multi-discipline technical issues. Provides conceptual input to projects during the planning stages, including P&ID development, unit locations, equipment layout, and conceptual piping studies. Provides technical guidance and reviews completed assignments for compliance with engineering principles, company standards, and client specifications. Supports field assignments and leads field walk-downs as required. Requires strong organizational, interpersonal and communication skills. Familiarity with well tie-in construction and maintenance techniques required. Working knowledge of BP standards, drawings, specifications, and MOC process a plus. Cold regions experience a plus. North Slope travel required. Position reports to the VECO BP Project Manager. Anchorage Based. Regular Full Time Exempt Position. Position open until filled. Fire & Gas Technician - Prudhoe Bay, Alaska Recruiting Authorization No. 1335 Summary: Installs, maintains, calibrates and adjusts fire and gas detection systems, instrumentation and instrument loops. Essential Functions: Calibrates and adjusts, repairs and installs fire alarms and gas detection systems. Interprets test data. Performs functional testing including the interface to process control and shutdown systems. Uses and maintains tools and equipment employed to perform calibration testing (precision regulators and test gauges, volt-ohm meter, potentiometers, thermocouple calibrator, signal generator, leak detection unit oscilloscope and manufacturers specialized test equipment; i.e. Pyrotronics SU-9 calibrators. Routinely performs safety and productivity observations; shop, field, and vehicle inspections and is required to attend various components of technical, developmental and safety training. Must demonstrate support for the company's environmental management system objectives. Qualifications: Five (5) years experience as a process instrument technician or electrician in the oil or chemical industry and two (2) years of related technical/vocational training preferred. Must be able to work as part of a team; communicate effectively with fellow workers and alternate; and demonstrate adherence to established safety policies and procedures. Must have knowledge of ISA Standards as well as the functional operations and adjustments of the various components of instruments and instrument loops such as controllers, transmitters, and level indicators; calibration; and trouble shooting instrument loops and loop tuning. Must have experience reading and interpreting drawings, specifications, vendor data, and technical data sheets. Must demonstrate knowledge of OSHA safe work prac-

tices associated with instrument power voltages; programmable controllers and distributed control systems; and fire and gas alarm and shutdown systems as related to explosion proof atmospheres. Electronics skills a plus. Driver's license required (note that this requirement may be waived at the company's discretion for employees hired on a temporary basis). Must possess Alaska State licenses 1B in Fire Alarms and IIIA in Special Hazards (and corresponding NICET certifications). Note: Skills tests may be required of new hires to demonstrate core proficiencies, or of existing employees to advance to a new job level. Physical Requirements: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. MOBILITY: Employee frequently required to stand; walk; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; and stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl. The employee is occasionally required to sit. Must be able to work from ladders and scaffolds to access instrumentation. FINE MOTOR SKILLS: Frequently required to use hands and fingers with sufficient dexterity to perform close, exacting and repetitive tasks. HEARING: Must be able to hear audible safety alarms and warnings. VISUAL ACUITY: Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision. Vision must be adequate to perform above listed tasks in a safe manner. LIFTING: The employee must regularly lift, pull and/or move up to 40 pounds, and occasionally lift and/or move up to 70 pounds. COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Must display ability to read and understand job descriptions, safety/technical manuals and safety/warning signs. Must display sufficient oral communication skills to be able to give and receive oral safety warnings, instructions, and task assignments. ENVIRONMENT: While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently exposed to severe arctic weather conditions. The employee is frequently exposed to high, precarious places, confined spaces, and the risk of electrical shock. May be required to work with toxic or caustic chemicals. DISCLAIMER: The above description covers the principal duties and responsibilities of the job, specific to, and intended for, VECO Greater Prudhoe Bay projects only and may or may not reflect general duties and responsibilities on other VECO projects. This description should not be construed as a complete listing of all duties that may be required. This is a Regular Full time position located in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, with a rotation of 2 weeks on 2 weeks off. Please submit your resume to: VECO Corporation Alaska Region Attn: Ken Sigurdson 6411 A Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99518 USA Phone: (907) 277-5309 Fax: (907) 550-8890 Email Resume to: Careers@VECO.com or fax (907) 762-1040 VECO Corporation Job Website: www.veco.com. Please quote the Job Title and Recruiting Authorization No. (if applicable) in all correspondence. VECO Corporation is an Equal Opportunity Employer that Supports a Diverse Workforce. Positions Require U.S. Work Authorization.

Legal Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS ALASKA OIL & GAS CONSERVATION COMMISSION Under the Open Meetings Act (AS 44.62.310), notice is given that the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission will meet in public meetings on dates September 4, 11, 18, 25, 2002, October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 2002 and November 6, 13, 20, 27, 2002 at 9:00 AM in the Commission's Conference Room in Anchorage, Alaska at the address below. The Agenda may include: general commission business including personnel; regulation matters; policy and budget matters; oil and gas conservation issues; legislative issues; and agenda items deferred from prior meetings. The public is invited to attend the meetings, however, commission business meetings do not provide for public testimony. A finalized agenda will be prepared and posted at the Commission's office by noon of the workday before each of the scheduled meetings. Circumstances may cause items to be either added or deleted from an agenda. If you have any questions about the agenda, please contact Jody Colombie at the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 333 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, (907) 793-1221. If you are a person with a disability who may need special accommodation in order to attend the public meeting, please contact Jody Colombie at the address or phone number indicated above as soon as possible but at least 72 hours before the accommodation is needed, to ensure that any necessary accommodations can be provided. Cammy Oechsli Taylor Chair Published August 9, 2002

Legal Notice

NOTICE Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, acting as Agent for and on behalf of the Owners of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), intends to offer for salvage and removal four complete mainline pump stations, which include three complete topping units. These pump stations are situated in various arctic and sub-arctic locations along the 800 mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline and are accessible from the State of Alaska road system. The scope at each facility will include the removal of all pump station buildings, piping, valves, pumps, generators, control devices, tanks and living quarters. Interested parties are urged to submit their company profile, experience, previous projects and/or other relevant company information to PSRD@alyeska-pipeline.com. For additional information, contact **Kevin Cassidy** at 907-787-8592 or **Steve Schudel** at 907-787-8617. Responses will be used to develop a bidder's list for a competitive solicitation.

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continued from page A5

ALPINE

"Ballpark costs will be \$100 million gross for those expansion costs," he said.

That costs could be worthwhile, considering discoveries by Phillips and partner Anadarko Petroleum in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, Meyers said. Those successful exploration wells lie roughly 40 miles west of Alpine, well beyond existing infrastructure.

"There could be synergies from that," Meyers said. "Clearly you can justify it on what's known right now."

VECO spokesman Smith said the work planned for this summer was a "good size job. There's no question about it."

He added that the contract was worth "up there, a little less" than the \$100 million figure cited by Meyers last November.

"To my knowledge, it's not going to go away. The job is still to be done," he said. "We're in the wings, waiting to be told to go forward."

Delays not unusual, merger might have played a factor

It's not unusual, he added, for oil producers to plan a project and then delay start of construction. "Look how long it took to do Northstar," Smith said.

Johansen said that he was told preliminary engineering costs came in too high, and the consultants were requested to design a smaller expansion project.

He also wondered if the merger with Conoco could have played a part in the apparent delay.

"Maybe they wanted to make the merger more palatable for stockholders," he said. "But the merger is all done and there's no talk about any more work. In the past, you would have a lot more cyclical business — good years and bad years — but there was always something on the horizon out there."

Yet he has no orders for steel pipe, something that requires about a six-month lead time.

"As long as that was out there, we were working on it, and they kept telling us that bids would be out any day," Johansen said. "They talked to us several times about truckability of modules, how much they would build in Anchorage and Nikiski."

Want to know more?

If you'd like to read more about the Colville unit and its Alpine facilities expansion, go to Petroleum News * Alaska's web site and search for these recently published articles. (These are just a few of the articles available on PNA's web site.)

Web site:
www.PetroleumNewsAlaska.com

2002

■ **Sept. 8** Phillips applies to expand Colville unit....

■ **March 3** Westward expansion proves challenging

■ **March 3** Phillips targets West Sak ... \$100 million Alpine facility expansion to go to Phillips' board in third quarter

■ **Jan. 27** Alpine's benefits flow to Alaska Natives

■ **Jan. 20** Anadarko to cut 2002 capital spending by half

■ **Jan. 13** Corps of Engineers reviewing Colville Delta satellite plans

2001

■ **Dec. 16** Phillips Petroleum capital budget up 2 percent; Alaska share down

■ **Dec. 9** Alpine "good news story" for Phillips, Meyers tells analysts

■ **Nov. 4** Alpine facilities might be expanded

■ **Oct. 21** NPR-A, Alpine yield high quality crude

■ **Oct. 7** Alpine production averaging 5,000 barrels per day above expected levels

■ **Aug. 28** Phillips submits applications for Colville River satellite development

The rush to build this summer and fall was part of an overall time line, Johansen said, that would allow for transporting the truckable modules to the North Slope this fall, in time to be hauled out to Alpine on the winter ice roads.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Phillips Alaska Inc. (now ConocoPhillips Alaska) has told Petroleum News Alaska over the last year that a decision on expansion of the Alpine facilities was expected in the third quarter of this year.

Clearly, contractors expected that a decision would be made in time for work to begin this summer. ♦

CANADA

Shell Canada hangs question mark on B.C. offshore reserves

No-one knows how much oil and natural gas can actually be recovered from the British Columbia offshore, raising doubts about reserve projections for the region, said Scott Trollope, Shell Canada Ltd.'s chief geologist and manager of new business development for the frontier business unit.

He told a natural gas conference in Vancouver Sept. 19 that widely quoted resource figures are subject to misunderstanding because they have "created expectations that are not likely to be met."

The most used numbers are from the Geological Survey of Canada, which has estimated reserves at 9.8 billion barrels of oil and 25 trillion cubic feet of natural gas for the Queen Charlotte Basin, the dominant basin off the British Columbia coast.

Trollope said it is still not certain how much of the "in place" resources can be extracted. However, the general rule of thumb suggests that 25 percent of oil and 70 percent to 80 percent of the gas are recoverable.

Meanwhile the Queen Charlotte reserves "are only conceptual," he said.

Shell Canada, Petro-Canada and Chevron Canada Resources own the significant leases in the area. All three have said the unresolved issues of ownership and management of the offshore, plus aboriginal land claims, environmental concerns and whether the reserves can be commercially developed means there is a long way to go before they make any firm decisions on exploration.

—Gary Park, PNA
Canadian correspondent

CHINA

BP signs agreement to supply LNG to China's Fujian terminal; company at forefront of China's LNG strategy

BP and its partners in Indonesia's Tangguh natural gas project signed an agreement Sept. 26 to supply liquefied natural gas to China's Fujian LNG terminal.

BP said the agreement puts it in all three legs of China's LNG strategy.

In August, China selected Australia's North West Shelf consortium — in which BP is an equal (16.7 per cent) shareholder — to supply 3 million tons of LNG a year to China's first LNG terminal in Guangdong Province.

BP was also chosen last year as China's foreign partner in the construction of the Guangdong LNG terminal and pipeline, which will access a market that is forecast to grow rapidly. Gas currently meets just 2 percent of China's energy needs, but this is projected to increase to 7-8 percent by 2010.

BP said the 25-year LNG sales and purchase agreement signed in Jakarta between Tangguh and the China National Offshore Oil Corp. will involve the supply of up to 2.6 million tons of LNG a year to Fujian. It said that an agreement in principle for China National Offshore Oil participation in Tangguh was also signed.

Construction of the Fujian terminal is expected to start in 2004 and operations are scheduled to begin by 2007, shortly after completion of the Guangdong terminal.

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Show Sheraton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska, November 4 - 8, 2002 Short Courses Nov 4 - 5, 2002 Technical Sessions and Trade Show, Nov 6 - 8, 2002 Convention: Suppliers to the mining industry are represented at the Trade Show. The Technical Sessions cover a spectrum of topics, including highlights in 2002 exploration

activity in Alaska, issues affecting Alaskan miners and more. Gem & Mineral Show: Nov 8, Friday, 4:00 - 8:00 pm and Nov 9, Saturday, 10:00 - 6:00 pm. FOR MORE INFORMATION : Web Site: www.alaskaminers.org ama@alaskaminers.org Alaska Miners Association 3305 Arctic Blvd., Suite 202 Anchorage, AK

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IADC annual meeting Mark the date for the annual meeting of the International Association of Drilling Contractors, Sept. 25-27, in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 123 Losoya St. on the Riverwalk, San Antonio. This event is the premiere gathering of drillers and drilling service

contractors throughout the world. Conference fee is \$500. Contact Leesa Teel 281-578-7171 ext 21 (leesa.teel@iadc.org) for more information or to make an advanced reservation.

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Alaska Support Industry Alliance events:

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Thursday, October 17:

Luncheon 12:00-1:00 p.m. At Anchorage Hilton Hotel. Guest speaker Kevin Meyer, Conoco Phillips: A Global Perspective

Friday, January 24, 2003:

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Business Spotlight



Forrest Crane

Sharon Shern, Accounts Executive

Wood Group Alaska Inc.

Wood Group Alaska is an internationally recognized business that began operations in Alaska in May 1995. Worldwide the company specializes in the repair, servicing and installation of gas turbines. The Alaska operation also provides calibration and instrumentation services statewide. Wood Group has worked projects for BP, ConocoPhillips and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. and currently has its mobile calibration unit at the WOA, BP, Prudhoe Bay facility.

Sharon Shern, accounts executive, was born and raised in Alaska. She has been with Wood Group since May 2000, bringing with her experience in the oil industry, having worked both on the North Slope and in Anchorage. Sharon and her husband Steve enjoy snow machining in the winter. Sharon enjoys cooking, working on her home and spending time with their two children.



Forrest Crane

Kathy Lorec, Vice President Sales

Span-Alaska Consolidators

Span-Alaska Consolidators, headquartered in Kent, Wash., began doing business in 1978. The company is one of the largest LTL (less than truckload) carriers into Alaska and is provides door-to-door service from points in the Lower 48 states. There are operations in Kent, Anchorage, Fairbanks and Kenai, with just over 100 employees.

Kathy Lorec, vice president of sales, has been with Span-Alaska since 1982. She received her degree in economics and transportation from Washington State University and worked as traffic manager for Kroger in Los Angeles and with United Lumber after moving to Alaska in 1980. She is a past president of Soroptimist International of Cook Inlet. Kathy and her husband John have two boys. The family is actively involved in camping, fishing, and the boys' schools.

THE REST OF THE STORY

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SOURCES

Understanding rural electric sources and demands

About 78,000 residents of Alaska receive electricity from rural generation sources, according to Steve Colt, associate professor of economics at the University of Alaska's Institute of Social and Economic Research.

"Those users consume 5,400 kilowatt hours per person, per year, which translates to 360 gallons of diesel per person, per year," he said. "That's about \$390 per person, per year in fuel costs."

But fuel prices are just the tip of the iceberg for rural electric costs. Colt said that diesel fuel costs are only 25 percent of the total cost to produce electricity in rural villages.

Transportation and storage of fuel, combined with the purchase price and maintenance cost to maintain generator equipment at a remote location, also contributes to the high cost of rural electricity.

Rural residents pay anywhere from 39 cents to 49 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity, according to Meera Kohler, president and CEO of the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, which oversees power generation facilities in 51 of Alaska's villages.

State and federal funds funneled through the Power Cost Equalization program defray a portion of those costs, sometimes up to one-third of the utility system's expenses.

"Without PCE, we'd be in a world of hurt," she said.

Those expenses, coupled with temperamental diesel operations in cold weather, have motivated people who pay for, maintain and rely on such locally produced electric systems to look for ways to improve diesel power efficiency.

"In the last 15 years, we've doubled the energy received from each gallon of diesel," Kohler said, a rate that has increased from six to 12 kilowatts per gallon of fuel. "We think we can go another two or three kilowatts per hour, if we can capture the heat (created from the generator engine) and deliver it to customers."

Financial assistance secured by congressional delegation

Jack Phelps, staff representative for Sen. Frank Murkowski, said in a speech at the conference on Sept. 18 that the U.S. Senate

Energy and Natural Resources Committee has approved authorization of a \$45 million lump sum payment to the PCE fund. That state program provides money to reduce monthly bills for rural electric utilities that apply and qualify for the funding.

"While that (\$45 million payment) increases the viability of the endowment, it's a longer term, short term solution for sustaining PCE until we can find a more permanent solution," he said. "We should hope that we will someday be in a place where we don't need PCE."

Also included in the Senate energy bill conference discussions is additional financial assistance, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utility Service, available to communities with

high electric costs.

The standard of qualifying for that assistance is that electric costs must exceed the national average by 150 percent, Phelps said. "We couldn't say, 'This is for communities in Alaska,' but by setting the standard at 150 percent, it did the same thing."

Barrow will also benefit from creation of a new Arctic research station, with \$35 million in federal funding to replace the old Navy research station, Phelps said. "Not only does that put money in the economy, but it encourages research activities that might provide additional economic activity."

The Denali Commission, which has already paid for replacement of 25 bulk fuel storage facilities in rural Alaska, anticipates more spending on such electric power systems this year, said co-chair Jeff Staser.

In all, the commission should have about \$100 million in funding this year for rural Alaska, and typically about two-thirds of the funding goes for energy projects, he said.

"We do not want to put money into projects if a loan is possible. Grants are dangerous, because they are not sustainable," he said. "It's grant scat — you see little piles of it around." ♦



Steve Colt, associate professor of economics at ISER



Jack Phelps, staff representative for Sen. Frank Murkowski

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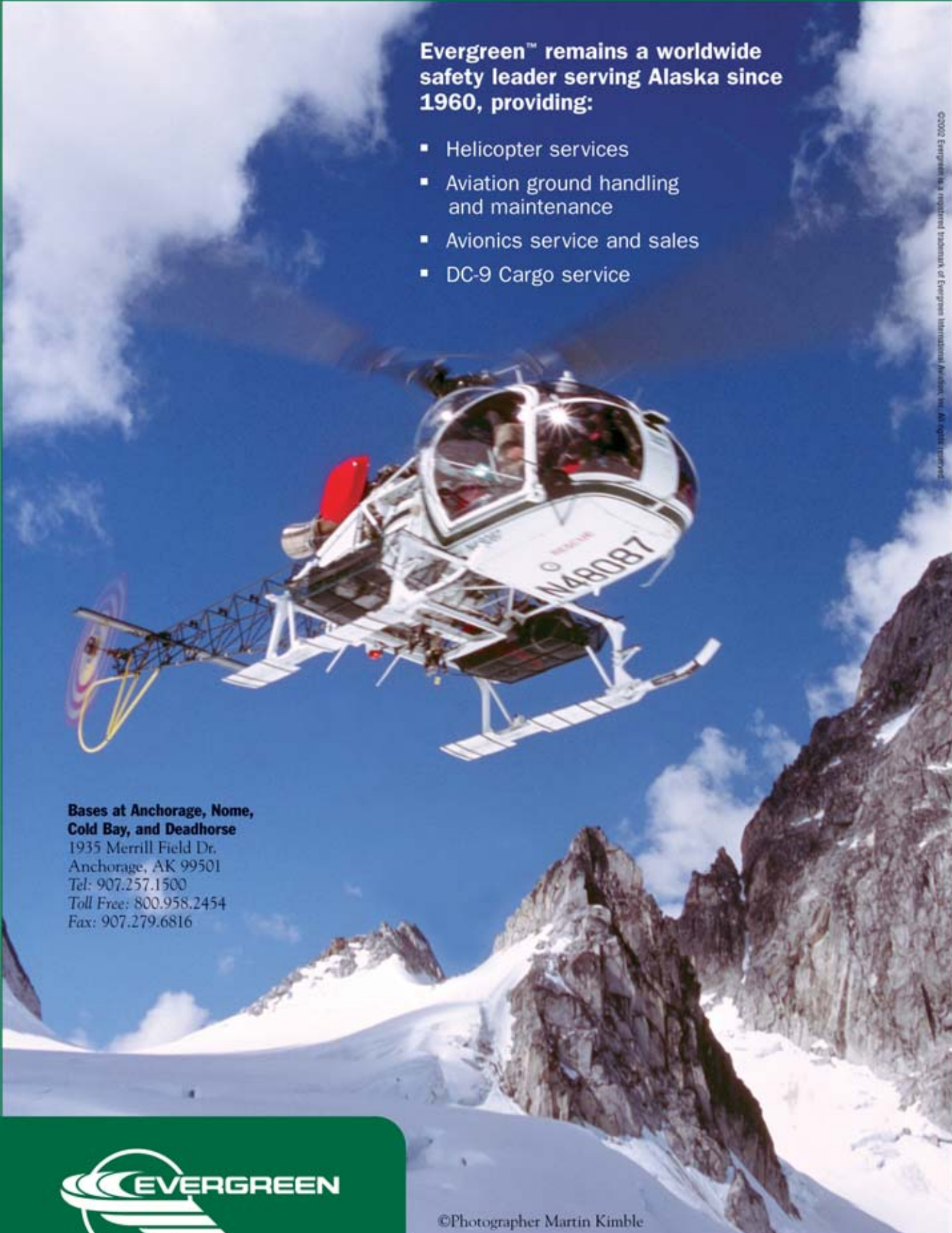
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MOU

“I am very pleased to help advance development of this exciting new field through this streamlined permitting process,” Knowles said in a statement.

“Development of Point Thomson will add significant production from the North Slope, and the gas reserves could ultimately figure prominently in the development of a gas pipeline. This billion-dollar investment could be the biggest development on the North Slope since Kuparuk,” he said.

Development not a done deal

“This agreement with the state should improve the efficiency of the permitting and environmental review which in turn could improve the chances of identifying a commercial project,” said ExxonMobil spokesman Mike Todd in a Sept. 24 statement. “Although a final development decision is not expected until early 2004, we are committed to moving forward with the permitting process,” Todd said.

“The purpose of the agreement is to define roles and responsibilities of the state and ExxonMobil during the permitting process for the Point Thomson gas cycling

Want to know more?

If you'd like to read more about the Point Thomson unit, which was formed in 1977, go to *Petroleum News • Alaska's* web site and search for these recently published articles in PNA's archives. These are just a few of the articles available.

Web site: www.PetroleumNewsAlaska.com

2002

- July 28 Point Thomson owners opt to pay penalty, drop acreage
- June 30 State issues decision on Point Thomson unit expansion...
- May 19 Drilling will be challenge at Point Thomson....

2001

- Oct. 7 Point Thomson pegged at \$1.3 billion...
- Sept. 30 State accepts 18th plan of development for Point Thomson
- Aug. 28 Point Thomson unit aligned, Phillips now an owner
- June 25 Point Thomson owners want production flexibility
- May 28 State asks for production from Point Thomson ... by 2008
- April 28 Exxon's (17th) plan for Point Thomson brings field closer to development

project,” Todd said.

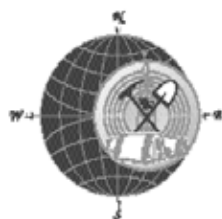
DNR lead state agency

The MOU, signed by Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Pat Pourchot for the state and Jack Williams of ExxonMobil Production Co., representing the Point Thomson unit owners, establishes the terms by which ExxonMobil will reimburse the state for costs incurred by DNR,

the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Department of Fish and Game and the Division of Governmental Coordination, in reviewing the project. The Point Thomson unit, some 60 miles east of Prudhoe Bay on the North Slope, is expected to produce 75,000 barrels of gas condensate per day at its peak.

DNR is the lead agency for coordination of state permitting activities — and for state coordination with the federal review process. LeFebvre is full-time Point Thomson permitting manager. The MOU specifies that he has 30 days to develop, in consultation with state agencies and ExxonMobil, an overall state permit processing plan which includes a target permit decision-making date of Dec. 31, 2003.

LeFebvre worked as a senior land manager for DNR from 1976 until his retirement last year. He held the position of deputy director of lands and most recently served nine years as the large-mine coordinator leading the state permitting of several major mines including Fort Knox, True North and Greens Creek. ♦



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There's no place like home — extreme catering in rural Alaska

Chiulista Camp Services provides remote site catering and personnel and gains a reputation while its clients gain weight

By Mara Severin
PNA Contributing Writer

What does the word “home” mean to you? A white colonial with shutters and a picket fence? A luxury apartment complete with Jacuzzi? Perhaps you have simple tastes and favor a log cabin with one room and a fireplace? Whatever your preferences, it is unlikely that you conjured up a home on the North Slope. Few people call this terrain home. And what about the view? Do you see a city skyline from your home’s windows? Or perhaps a wood, or another house. Probably not the Arctic desert dotted with oil rigs.

Not many Alaskans call this home, but many Alaskans call it work. These Alaskans live, at least some of the time, in the remote sites where the petroleum, mining and construction sites set up camp. The view from their windows is oil rigs. And that’s where Chiulista Camp Services comes in. This company that provides catering and housekeeping services, as well as temporary remote site personnel would like to change the definition of home. “We try to provide a home away from home under severe conditions,” says its president, George Gardner.

Getting their feet wet in Donlin Creek

In 1995, this wholly owned subsidiary of Calista Corp. undertook its first project at Donlin Creek, a major gold exploration project in the Calista region, and it was a doozy. Chiulista Camp Services not only provided workers for the site, but also provided the catering through a joint venture. Setting up

the camp required constructing the living and working structures, laying 17 miles of roads, and building the 5,000 foot airstrip. Once the camp was set up, five drills were put into operation at once. Gardner was right there at the inception of the company working as an expeditor. He recalls the scope of the project with a smile. “We really got our feet wet on that one.”

A few years ago, the company dissolved the joint venture and went into catering on their own. “It’s one of our big focuses now,” says Gardner, “providing cooks and housekeepers for remote site projects.” The Donlin Creek Project is still a client. “There’s a lot of gold resource out there,” says Gardner. The job of determining the size and the scope of the gold that’s there has provided and continues to provide a venue for Chiulista’s services.

Hiring rural Alaskans for rural Alaskan jobs

Chiulista’s talent base goes beyond cooks and housekeepers, according to Garner. In addition to providing catering, the company is in the business of providing heavy equipment operators, mechanics, geotechs, diamond core drillers, survey personnel, and general laborers.

Employee supply and demand works both ways, he says. While the company is committed to providing the workers to keep these sites operating, it is also committed to providing employment for the people in the villages located near these sites. “One of our big services is providing temporary remote site workers,” says Gardner, “and, as much as possible, we try to recruit people from the surrounding villages. It’s definitely a good fit. It makes good business, economic, and social sense



George Gardner, president, Chiulista Camp Services



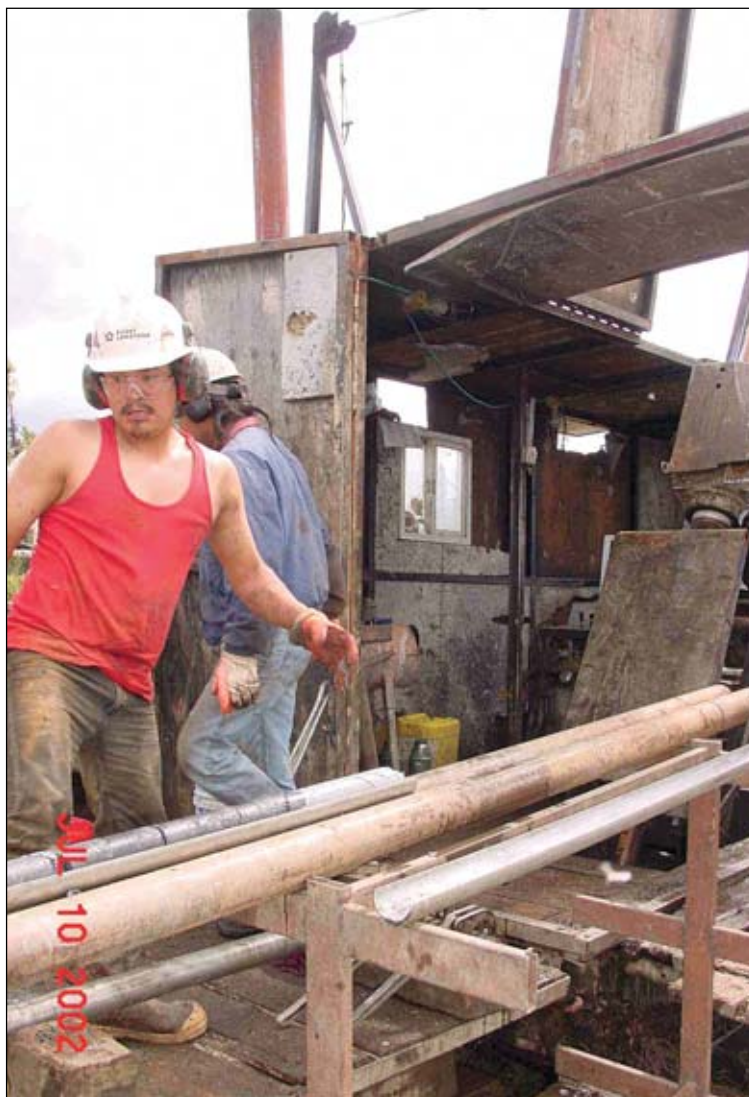
The soft-walled vinyl dining tent at Donlin Creek during evening mealtime

“You can’t stay in business if you don’t provide excellence.” —George Gardner, president, Chiulista Camp Services

to hire locally whenever possible.”

“One of our mandates is to hire as many Calista shareholders as possible,” he says, “and we’ve been very successful at that.” During the high season this year, 55 people were employed through the company, 90 percent of whom are Calista shareholders. “I’m kind of proud of that,” he says.

The advantages are not all on the employee side, says Gardner, though he is pleased to help provide his corporation’s shareholders with jobs, training and



Temporary remote site personnel and Calista shareholders Dennis Zaukar and Nick John operate a diamond core drill at Donlin Creek.

experience. According to his philosophy, hiring from this employment pool is an advantage to the company seeking the personnel. “Village residents are familiar with rural Alaska,” he says, and that provides an edge. “The quality of our people is outstanding.”

And they have to be, he says, “You can’t stay in business if you don’t provide excellence.”

Easy living where the living ain’t easy

Providing catering day after day for groups of 10 to 50 people in sites as diverse and remote as Donlin Creek and Prudhoe provides intense logistical planning. “Every project has its own challenge,” says Gardner. “The cost of transportation is certainly one of the biggest factors that affect our industry. We have to think about transportation every day.” Harsh conditions can impede the delivery of supplies, but more importantly, can affect the comfort of the site’s workers.

“We have the very difficult job of making people feel happy and warm and fed,” says Gardner, in conditions where those words are the last that would come to mind.

They appear to succeed however. Jim Winchester, of Wilder Construction, worked with Chiulista Camp Services while working on an airport job in a remote location. He says they handled the logistics very well. Camp services is not his own “forte,” and he, quite simply, doesn’t want to have to worry about it. When dealing with Chiulista, he says, he didn’t. “I was able to focus on my job because they did theirs,” he says firmly.

The survival of the fittest

Gardner’s investment in his company and in the future of the industries it serves is obvious. A born and bred Alaskan with 30 years business experience under his belt, Gardner is modest but confident about Chiulista Camp Services’ future. “We’re a small company,” he says, “but we’ve survived and grown and maintained a profit throughout our existence.”

Making a profit, he says, seems assured, in light of their reputation. “We fully expect to grow the company as our name becomes more widely known and our reputation remains unblemished. We have a good reputation with our clients and that in itself will grow the company. Alaska’s expansion is going to go into rural Alaska and we’ll be right there with it.”

Reputation is all very well, but what about the real measurement for the success of a catering company? Winchester describes Chiulista’s gifts in a nutshell — “We all gained ten pounds,” he recalls with a laugh. ♦

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About the cover

The cover photo of a drill bit was taken by Petroleum News • Alaska contract photographer Judy Patrick. Based in Wasilla, Patrick specializes in photographing oil, construction and mining activities.



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Millennium Hotel provides Alaska charm, service

Great food, comfortable rooms and 24-hour room service equals a great night sleep

By Jen Ransom
PNA Contributing Writer

It's the kind of hotel I look for when I travel," said Bill Remmer, director of sales and marketing at Millennium Alaskan Hotel Anchorage. Remmer, who has worked in the hotel industry for 15 years, says that the Millennium staff prides themselves on providing travelers a home away from home. And with its unique to Alaska atmosphere and rooms with simple touches like decorator pillows, 24-hour room service and a view over the floatplane capital of the world, Millennium seems to be doing just that.

Millennium Alaskan Hotel, formally the Regal Alaskan, has been operating in Alaska since the Millennium Copthorne Hotels purchase of U.S. Regal Hotels in 1999. Millennium Alaskan Hotel was renamed officially in 2001, but the service and comfort that visitors came to expect with Regal continues on with Millennium, says Remmer.

The 248 room hotel offers modem lines, voice mail, refrigerators, a 24-hour health club (including a whirl pool, steam bath, sauna and Stairmaster and treadmill equipment), 24-hour room service along with access to the Lake Spenard jogging path and the hotel's very own floatplane dock. Remmer says it's not unusual to have a pilot dock at the Millennium for a quick bite to eat at the hotel restaurant, The Flying Machine, open from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. And for those not at the pilot seat, The

Fancy Moose Lounge, the hotel's bar, is open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. Remmer says that both locals and hotel guests frequent the lounge.

Unlike many Anchorage hotels, Remmer says that Millennium does not rely heavily on tourists for its business.



Most of the hotel guests are individual corporate travelers, and many are return guests.

According to Remmer, approximately 65 percent of Millennium's guests are repeat visitors. He chalks this up to friendly service, comfortable rooms, great food, easy



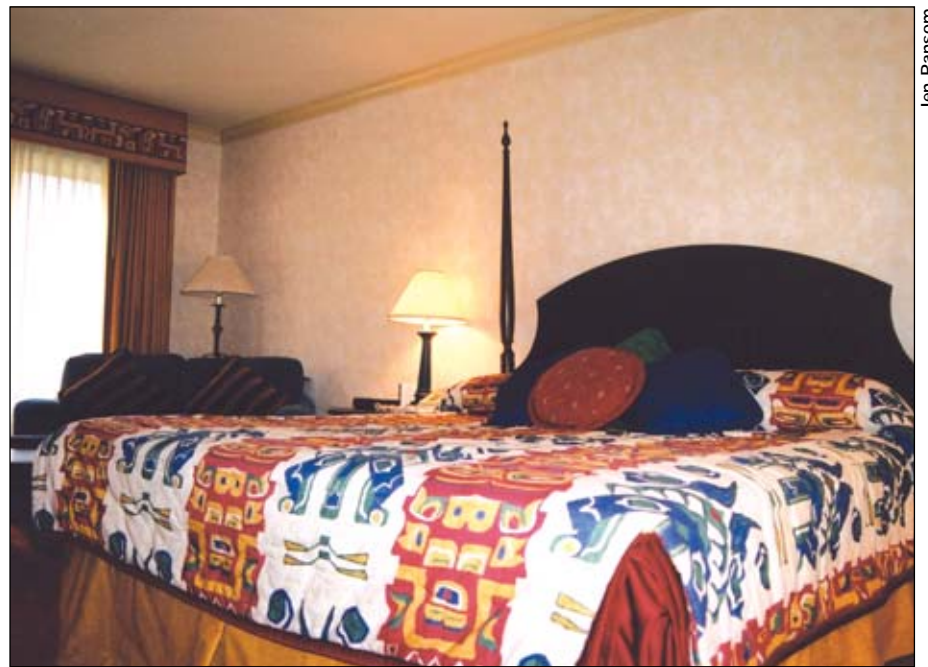
Millennium Alaskan Hotel sits on Lake Spenard, the floatplane capital of the world. Visitors can enjoy watching the takeoffs and landings, and if one desires, they can bring their own plane to the Millennium floatplane dock. Many pilots enjoy lunch at the Flying Machine before heading back to the skies.

access to the airport (one mile) and downtown (10 minutes), and a true Alaska atmosphere.

"The rooms are designed to have an Eddie Bauer feel," said Remmer, "while



Formally the Regal Alaskan, the Millennium Hotel has an outdoor patio for guests to enjoy their meal or a drink. The windows above the sign reflect into the Spenard Rooms I, II and III, which can be rented for banquets or business meetings.



The Millennium Hotel offers 24 hour room service along with many other accommodations, such as coffee, a workout facility and access to the Spenard Lake running path. The rooms are designed to have an "Eddie Bauer" feel to them.

the front lobby is designed like a hunting lodge."

The lobby certainly does have Alaska charm, with old-time photos, animal skins, Alaska artifacts, a rock fireplace and a one-of-a-kind 6-foot diameter globe.

Also available to the corporate world is the hotel's 6,000 square feet of versatile meeting and banquet space. Seven

meeting rooms can house up to 300 people, and the Lake Spenard rooms have a view over Spenard Lake. Millennium also has audiovisual equipment to rent, such as sound and slide projectors, overhead projectors, even a piano is available. A screen, podium and microphone are included in the room rental package at no extra cost.

Remmer invites travelers to come enjoy Millennium Alaskan Hotel — whether it be for an afternoon on the lake front patio deck or an evening of rest in a spacious room. For those traveling frequently, be on the look out for the Millennium Partner Card, already available in Europe and coming out in the United States this fall. Travelers will get pay benefits of three percent on everything they spend, including room fees.

Millennium Alaskan Hotel Anchorage is located at 4800 Spenard Road. For more information call 907-243-2300 or log onto www.millennium-hotels.com. ♦

Remmer invites travelers to come enjoy Millennium Alaskan Hotel — whether it be for an afternoon on the lake front patio deck or an evening of rest in a spacious room. For those traveling frequently, be on the look out for the Millennium Partner Card, already available in Europe and coming out in the United States this fall. Travelers will get pay benefits of three percent on everything they spend, including room fees.



The Fancy Moose Lounge not only caters to the traveler, many locals can be found sitting along the bar on any given night. The hotel also has a restaurant, The Flying Machine, which opens daily at 6 a.m.

Negotiating the ice pack and the Arctic weather to deliver cargo

Northern Transportation's fleet of shallow draft tugs and barges provides a unique delivery service along the Arctic coast from Point Hope eastwards

By Alan Bailey
PNA Contributing Writer

Moving supplies and equipment by ship to the communities and industrial complexes along Alaska's north coast must count as one of the world's most unusual and demanding transportation challenges. Negotiating the brief ice-free season and the changeable Arctic climate requires extensive experience, business flexibility and careful planning.

Northern Transportation Co. Ltd. has provided marine services along the western Arctic coast since 1957.

"After 40 years we have a few people who know what they're doing," Lynette Storoz, director of marketing and traffic for Northern Transportation, told PNA. "We work very hard to make sure (the cargo) gets where it's going."

Founded in 1934

The company, which is wholly Native owned, first started transporting cargo in the Mackenzie River watershed in 1934.

Over the years the company expanded its operations westward into Alaska and eastward along the Arctic coast of Canada. From the company's headquarters and main base in Hay River, Northwest Territories, barges now deliver fuel and other supplies to locations as far apart as Barrow in Alaska and the Baffin Island region of Canada. A Northwest Transportation subsidiary also provides cargo management services in northeastern Canada.

The company has been involved in oil development on the North Slope right from the earliest exploration drilling.

"We were the first to actually land a drill rig by barge at the Colville River delta in 1963," Storoz said. "Over the years we've shipped a considerable amount of cargo, particularly during the development phases of the North Slope."

Extended season

Storoz explained that the company's use of shallow draft barges and tugs extends the delivery season along Alaska's Arctic coast by several weeks — Northern Transportation can normally deliver to the North Slope from around the last week of July to the middle of September.

This extended season gives the company a major advantage over operators moving deeper draft vessels up the west coast of Alaska.

"Our tugs and barges do not physically draw more than six feet of water when fully loaded," Storoz said.

"What that does is give us the ability to sneak into Alaska earlier." When the ice pack starts to recede, the shallow draft vessels are able to slip between the land and the ice. The offshore ice barrier keeps the open water almost as smooth as glass, Storoz said.

The proximity of the North Slope to Northern Transportation's terminal facilities also enables the company to make maximum use of the open water season. The company operates a major transshipment terminal at Tuktoyaktuk on Mackenzie Bay, just 430 miles from Prudhoe Bay.

"It's only a two to three day trek from Tuktoyaktuk to Prudhoe Bay," Storoz said. "We have equipment staged at Tuk, so once the cargo comes from Hay River to Tuk there's a fleet of vessels available to do the delivery."

COMPANY PROFILE



In fact, people find the whole supply route through Canada very convenient for shipping cargo to the North Slope. Cargo can go by road and rail from anywhere in North America to Northern Transportation's main terminal at Hay River — Hay River sits at the northern railhead of the Canadian railroad system. From Hay River barges transfer the cargo down the Mackenzie River to Tuktoyaktuk.

Courtesy of Northern Transportation Co. Ltd.



Northern Transportation's terminal at Hay River, Northwest Territories

Oil industry projects

Northern Transportation's Canadian supply route has proven particularly valuable for drilling rig construction.

"We've had tremendous success in shipping the modular rigs that are built in Canada," Storoz said.

For example, Doyon contracted Northern Transportation to ship one of its drilling rigs from Canada. Following construction in Alberta, the rig modules were broken down and trucked to Hay River. After re-assembly of the modules in Northern Transportation's yard, barges carried the rig to the North Slope.

The shipment of the production modules for the Badami field again proved the value of the company's supply route. Following partial construction of the field production facilities in Calgary, trucks conveyed the modules in 150 ton pieces to Hay River during the winter.

Construction workers spent six months completing and testing the modules in Hay River, so that Northern Transportation could

barge everything up to the North Slope right at the beginning of the summer open-water season.

"The project was under budget — it was actually one of the earliest deliveries we ever made to the North Slope and it went without a hitch," Storoz said. "I think we had about 120 people at one point that helped pull it off. They did a tremendous job."

Village communities

Alongside its support for the oil industry, Northern Transportation supplies the Arctic coastal villages and towns with everything from construction materials to fuel. The Arctic communities have come to rely on the company's services.

"We've (carried) water and sewage projects, drilling materials, we have supplied fuel to the North Slope communities," Storoz said.

In one of its more intriguing assignments, Northern Transportation shipped a school to Barrow, Storoz said.

And Northern Transportation is particularly sensitive to the needs of the Native communities — the company's relatively long delivery season provides time to avoid clashes with village activities such as whaling.

Gearing up for projects

Maintaining the regular delivery services along the Arctic coast when gearing up for oil industry construction projects can prove quite a challenge. The large scale of the construction projects usually requires major build ups of people and equipment for the brief summer delivery window.

The lead time and cost involved in obtaining equipment and trained people, coupled with uncertainty about the timing and size of the projects, inevitably leads to some level of business risk — Northern Transportation may have to start acquiring resources well before a project begins.

"You don't just pick up the phone and say 'deliver four tugs and 12 barges, and by the way we need them in July of next year'," Storoz said. "Ultimately we have to find the equipment to move (the customer's) cargo."

However, with only four summer months available for delivering cargo, the company can focus on long-term planning and marketing during the winter. Winter also provides an opportunity to maintain the fleet and develop the port and terminal facilities.

"All of our vessels come back to Hay River (for the winter)," Storoz said. "We have a fully-functional shipyard ... our maintenance crews are extraordinarily busy making sure that the hulls are in shape, all the shafts are clean and that the engines are overhauled."

"You have to be prepared to be flexible ... that ability to adapt with so many customer needs is something that we feel we do very well ... (our customers) rely on us to deliver." —Lynette Storoz, director of marketing and traffic for Northern Transportation Co. Ltd.

Positioned for the future

With Northern Transportation's long history of supporting construction on the North Slope, Storoz sees great potential for future business from gas development.

"Certainly the gas is just a tremendous opportunity, not just from the transportation perspective, but from



Loading the modules for the Badami field at Northern Transportation's Hay River terminal

Courtesy of Northern Transportation Co. Ltd.



Offloading fuel from a barge on the North Slope

Northern Transportation Co. Ltd.

the overall logistics planning and cargo management that's involved," Storoz said. "We're one of the companies positioned to be involved in that."

And the company's unique and extensive experience along the Arctic coast will continue to ensure reliable cargo delivery in a very challenging environment.

"The challenge every year is the weather ... it is a very harsh environment," Storoz said. "You have to be prepared to be flexible ... that ability to adapt with so many customer needs is something that we feel we do very well ... (our customers) rely on us to deliver." ♦

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Geoscientists, petroleum engineers play key roles in oil development

Petrotechnical Resources of Alaska's petrotechnical experts provide most of the oil companies in Alaska with exploration and production consulting services

By Alan Bailey
PNA Contributing Writer

Increased activity in the Alaska oil industry by small, independent exploration and production companies and relentless pressure on costs are driving some innovative ways to muster petrotechnical expertise. Instead of trying to maintain all of their expertise in-house, oil companies now tend to seek specific expertise to tackle specific assignments on a project by project basis.

Petrotechnical Resources of Alaska LLC's cadre of consultants excels in this new way of doing business. The company, commonly known as PRA, provides exploration and production consulting services, ranging from geology and geophysics to petroleum engineering.

"We're really the only company that can provide full-cycle exploration and production consulting services, from frontier basin analysis to oil sales," Tom Walsh, a PRA geophysicist and managing partner, told PNA, "and we have all the individuals with those skill sets ... we're a kind of knowledge bank of the industry up here."

Founded in 1997

PRA started in April 1997 as a group of five individual consultants who saw benefit from working together. The formation of the company eliminated any co-employment issues associated with contract work and enabled the partners in the company to leverage off each other's knowledge and skills.

"There was advantage for those people already doing independent consulting to

work together, do marketing together and to provide these more integrated teams," Chris Livesey, a PRA geologist and managing partner, said. "It was advantageous for the individuals and advantageous for the clients as well."

The company has expanded steadily since its initial formation.

We started with no contracts and we now have service agreements with many of the companies that operate in Alaska, as well as with government agencies, Walsh said. "There's a strong network that is formed now — we have 60 people associated with the company," he said.

The majority of PRA's staff has amassed 20 to 25 years of experience in the oil and gas industry.

A broad spectrum of services

PRA offers integrated teams or individual experts to work a wide range of petrotechnical assignments.

"We're recognized as a leader in integrated services on the geoscience side of things and have started to build a reputation on the engineering side too," Walsh said.

Geoscience projects range from the assessment of a complete sedimentary basin by a team of PRA specialists to the assignment of an individual geoscientist for well site geology or well planning.

"We do seismic program planning, acquisition planning, (seismic) interpretation and mapping," Walsh said. "We have a fully integrated geoscience workstation that we can (use to) provide full-spectrum interpretation ser-

vices, geology, geophysics and engineering."

On the reservoir engineering side, PRA does well design, well completion design, reservoir modeling and surveillance. PRA consultants can also perform economic analysis to assess the feasibility of anything from a single well to a large field development project.

Frontier basin analysis

PRA's integrated team approach becomes particularly valuable in a project such as a frontier basin analysis. In this type of assignment the PRA consultants assess a complete sedimentary basin for oil and gas potential.

Depending on how much geological information already exists, PRA may send out a field geologist to study the surface geology of the basin. Geologists then integrate the surface geology with any subsurface information available from well logs. PRA geophysicists interpret seismic survey data and tie the seismic data into the geological data. Specialists may also be able to obtain and



Alan Bailey

Tom Walsh and Chris Livesey, managing partners in PRA



Alan Bailey



Geologist Dave Volper and geophysicist Martin Novak check seismic data at a PRA computer workstation

use aeromagnetic and gravity data.

"We've just finished a project like that for the U.S. Geological Survey, where we looked at the Yukon Flats Basin," Walsh said. "We're working with them to integrate our study of basin architecture with their existing studies that they've done on the surface geology."

Statewide experience

Frontier exploration assignments are enabling PRA to diversify from the company's original focus on the North Slope. The company has started to build a track record of experience in the Interior basins and in the Cook Inlet.

"We've also added some project work in the Cook Inlet with Unocal and some of the independents there," Walsh said, "... so we're really ... blanketing the state now in terms of our expertise in exploration and production ... services."

In addition, PRA is compiling a statewide database of well information, including directional survey data, e-log information and hydrocarbon production data.

"We're loading (the well data) into our integrated system and then we can print out (well) logs or use it in the

seismic interpretations," Walsh said. "The production data is all here on a month by month basis, so we can pull rate profiles for any field and well."

Currently PRA uses information from the database in conjunction with exploration or production projects; clients can pull whatever data they require. However, PRA plans to make the database more widely available.

"Eventually we intend to market that database, probably as a web-based e-commerce service," Walsh said.

Support for smaller companies

PRA's depth of experience and knowledge in Alaska, coupled with the company's ability to assemble integrated teams of specialists, is proving of particular value to small companies that are new to the state.

"They want people who know the stratigraphy, the regional geology, the production history of all these fields," Livesey said.

PRA can provide the smaller companies with the same type of integrated teams that the larger operators use.

"When a client comes in the door and they need anywhere from one, two, three to 10 people ... we can draw from the 60 people that we have working through this office," Livesey said. "These are people with strong geoscience, engineering and project management experience in Alaska."

Confidentiality and reputation

Maintaining confidentiality becomes particularly important when working with a diverse set of clients — PRA places top priority on distinguishing between proprietary and public domain information.

"Alaska is still a fairly small oil patch community and we work for most everybody here," Walsh said, "so it's absolutely critical that we maintain our

excellent reputation both technically and ethically ... we're capable of working for a variety of clients and maintaining confidentiality of their information while providing them with a versatile set of services."

PRA also takes community involvement very seriously.

"We're involved in the community in terms of United Way ... and involved in the professional societies," Walsh said. Walsh himself is an immediate past president of the Society of Petroleum Engineers and immediate past secretary of the Alaska Geological Society.

And PRA's reputation has underpinned the company's success.

"Really, most of the business has been based on just reputation," Walsh

said. "We have just some excellent people who are called by name to work for various companies."

With a wide client base and diversification across Alaska, Walsh and Livesey see a bright future for PRA. The company expects to continue providing services for its established clients while also gaining business from new entrants to the Alaska oil industry.

"We're well aware of the fact that there's upwards of 7 billion barrels of oil in the ground and it's going to come out," Walsh said. "We're just in a good position to help the companies that want to produce that oil." ♦

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Telecommunications on the North Slope — big changes for small villages

ASTAC develops wireline and wireless infrastructure that takes North Slope telecommunications out of the shack and into the future

By Mara Severin
PNA Contributing Writer

You could call Fairbanks, and you could call Moscow, but you couldn't call your neighbor across the street," says Dave Fauske, describing life in rural Alaska, prior to the formation of the Arctic Slope Telephone Association Cooperative, ASTAC. Fauske, General Manager of ASTAC, briefly described communication options if you lived in a village community in the 1970s.

The Alaska Bush phone usually resided in a little shack or in an entry way to a building, and the people in the village would line up to use it, he says. You'd pick it up, get an operator in Fairbanks, and you were limited to credit card and collect calls. Receiving a phone call was even dicier. "If you called a village, and there wasn't a full blizzard blowing, someone would pick up and say, 'this is Kaktovik answering,'" explains Fauske, with a chuckle. "And you might say, 'I'm trying to get a hold of John Doe,' and the other guy might say, 'Well, I think I saw him down at the store.' And then he'd go off to look for him." Not the smoothest operation any way you look at it.

Creating a truly cooperative co-op

Now that ASTAC offers North Slope residents not only local and long-distance telephone service, but also wireless and internet services, those days seem almost as remote as the villages themselves.

ASTAC's journey from idea to reality began only as far back as the passing of the Land Claims Bill in 1971. "These regional corporations like ASRC and village corporations were supposed to plunge ahead into business entrepreneurship with no communications," says Fauske. "They tried it for a year or two, but it was impossible to bring about corporate development without basic telecommunications." By the mid-'70s, the borough assembly, the borough utility board and the regional corporation concluded that there would have to be a phone system.

Fauske, at that time, worked for the regional corporation and was assigned to do research and development for a regional telephone system. Nobody was interested, he says. "The major companies wanted to serve Prudhoe, but to heck with the villages," he says. The research led him to conclude that the only viable option was to form a cooperative. This route would allow them to qualify for low interest REA loans and long term payback. The steps that followed show how truly cooperative the members of the co-op would prove to be. The regional corporation provided the seed funding for pre-engineering study costs.

The borough made land and buildings available for the new co-op's central offices which speeded things up and reduced start-up costs.

Work began in 1980 and by 1982, all eight original service districts had the basic phone service that the urban communities of the state had long taken for granted.

Fauske likes to dwell on the truly cooperative nature of the phone service. It is even the basis for ASTAC's most recent advertising campaign which states: ASTAC, where you actually belong. "The people that get the service own the company," says Fauske emphatically. "We're in the arctic, on 92,000 square miles, in this northern corner of America. Our member/owners are not only BP and Phillips and Halliburton. Our member/owners are subsistence hunters and subsistence fishers who have been here for 6000 years." Quite an Alaska image.

Wooing the wary through their wallets

If it sounds like a business fairy tale, it came complete with its poison apples. "Before we got approval we were understandably opposed by every single oil company and nearly all the oilfield contractors in the North Slope," says Fauske. "Alascom, which held a special certificate for local service, had a lot of influence," explains Fauske, "and all the leaders in Prudhoe filed opposition to this petition from such a small unknown start up." The opposition was disconcerting, however it was short-lived.

One afternoon, ASTAC distributed the required list of proposed tariff charges and the next morning, nearly every single company withdrew their opposition. "At that time the price of these special business lines for local telephone service ranged up to several hundred dollars per month," explains Fauske with a smile. "Ours was \$11.65."

According to Fauske, this motivated the attorneys and accountants for the various companies to look more carefully at ASTAC's application.

"They looked and saw that a very thorough engineering and financial plan had been filed," he says. "It took a few years for them to develop total confidence in our ability to provide all of the services that they require." But as the years have gone by, he says, "we have provided these services efficiently, faithfully, and economically and now these business relationships prosper."

From jet plane to these three-wheeler — ASTAC technicians get around

Providing these services "efficiently, faithfully, and economically," in the harsh

COMPANY PROFILE



Courtesy of ASTAC



ASTAC's central office in Deadhorse is topped by a state-of-the-art microwave tower.



Courtesy of ASTAC

President Dave Fauske and ASTAC technician John Huffman consult at a newly upgraded switch.

conditions of the North Slope is no walk in the park. Logistically, says Fauske, it requires complex planning, flexibility, and employees with an adventurous spirit. A video that ASTAC produced for viewing at an FCC hearing on universal service issues, shows a well-traveled day in the life of an ASTAC technician. In it, Jeff Anderson is seen leaving Anchorage and flying to Barrow, then getting on a little airplane to fly to a village, then getting on a three wheeler and driving around a small village fixing telephones and performing various system maintenance. At the end of the day, Anderson gets on another small airplane, flies to another village, and does it all over again.

In addition to constant and varied travel, an ASTAC technician provides a wide variety of services unlike, according to Fauske, the jobs of technicians at ACS or other large, urban phone companies. "The first thing a technician might do is climb a pole and do outside plant work. The next thing he might do is go to a private home and do an installation or inside repair work. Then, he might go to the school and assist in reconfiguring distance delivery education equipment and consult on distance education applications. Then he might go over to the village corporation and talk about a new key system," says Fauske. "So our technicians are doing outside plant work, inside plant work, customer service, marketing and then maintenance — maintaining the switch, maintaining the battery plant, and the vehicles."

Not everyone could stand up to the rigors of this kind of job. "It sounds like a real remote, tough, nasty job, and you'd think that our employees wouldn't last very long, but it's just the opposite," says Fauske. "It is remote and it is challenging but we've had really exceptional field employees and

extraordinarily low turnover in our 22 years of existence." He points out that in addition to competitive pay and comprehensive benefits, all technicians who do field operations work a three-week-on, three-week-off schedule. "Some people thrive on that schedule," he says. "You have to find a cadre of people whose lifestyle and happiness is augmented by that kind of schedule."

Keeping up with the industry's 'nova star'

A day in the life of a technician might serve as a good model for ASTAC's overall philosophy. "You can't stand still," says

**"The major companies wanted to serve Prudhoe, but to heck with the villages."
—David Fauske, General Manager, ASTAC**

Fauske. "You have to continually upgrade." Recently, ASTAC performed switch upgrades including the central office switch in Deadhorse which has been replaced with a more state-of-the-art switch. The wireless switch was also replaced and the service upgraded recently.

Now ASTAC has the wireline and wireless infrastructure in the oil patch enabling it to meet most of the requirements of the industry. "The trick now is to keep up with expansion," says Fauske. "The problem with the oil patch is that it doesn't stand still. It's like a nova star. As the industry moves and expands our mission is to keep up."

But keep up quietly, according to Fauske. "We like to use the word 'transparent'. Our customers want to pick up the phone and the dial tone is there. For many, many years, prior to the telecommunications explosion happiness, for a telephone company, was not being noticed." Too late. For quality of life for the residents and workers in the North Slope, they've noticed. There's no doubt that they've noticed. ♦

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NORTH SLOPE—Wellhead at sunset.

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