

Jerry Rombach

Despite the wisdom of the adage "If it ain't broke, don't fix it", the attitude of the State of Alaska now seems to be "If it ain't broke, let's claim it is and throw industry, stakeholders, legislators, state agencies, the public, the business community and the environment into a state of turmoil." Everything about this process - from the initial roll-out, to efforts to 'clarify', to apparent collusion, to attempts to discredit critics - fails to pass the "smell test".

Are there elements of contingency plan regulations which might be clearer, avoid redundancy, enable the introduction of better technology or equipment or practices? Perhaps; maybe even likely. Then create a process that asks for that input and transparently evaluates the responses and resulting direction. Throwing everything out and essentially forcing interested parties to justify what needs to stay is a misguided approach and a waste of valuable resources - public and private.

Please abandon this free-for-all. Focus on investing in state agencies, consistency of review and enforcement, staff training and retention, and rigorous enforcement where warranted. Keep Alaska waters and resources protected.