



SELDOVIA VILLAGE TRIBE

Tradition Integrated with Technology

RESOLUTION #2020-002

Safeguarding Alaska's Oil Spill Prevention and Response Standards

WHEREAS, after the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, Alaska citizens and the Alaska Legislature worked together to protect the state from major oil spills by enacting comprehensive laws and regulations dealing with prevention, response, contingency planning, financial responsibility, oversight, monitoring, and other subjects related to the safe handling and transportation of oil and other hazardous substances; and

WHEREAS, these laws and regulations were based on real world experiences and the painful lessons of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill and were crafted in coordination with State government and oil industry partners, requiring extensive compromise in the determined Response Planning Standards; and

WHEREAS, oil spill prevention and response contingency planning regulations were adopted by the State of Alaska in 1992, and the regulations have been revised on nine occasions to clarify the requirements, streamline the review process, include new categories of contingency plans, and make the contingency planning process less onerous and the approval of those plans more predictable and expeditious; and

WHEREAS, as a result of post-*Exxon Valdez* oil spill laws and regulations, Alaska has world-class oil spill prevention and response requirements to protect its people and its environment, as well as commercial and sport fishing, aquaculture, recreation, tourism, subsistence, and cultural interests; and

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2019, the State of Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner issued a public scoping notice seeking input on existing regulations and statutes because he has "heard from many Alaskans that contingency plans are unnecessarily burdensome while lacking corresponding environmental benefits," and that his Department has identified regulations that can be eliminated or significantly reformed; and

WHEREAS, despite repeated requests, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has yet to provide information on the areas of the



statutes or regulations that have been identified as too burdensome, or that could be eliminated or significantly reformed; and

WHEREAS, it is unreasonable for the Department of Environmental Conservation to claim now, after 30 profitable years of industry compliance with the laws and regulations, that the requirements are too burdensome, and this claim disregards the hard work of hundreds of Alaskans who worked tirelessly after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill to ensure that the State of Alaska would never again suffer an environmental disaster like what occurred in 1989; and

WHEREAS, reducing the burden on industry by rolling back or eliminating proven oil spill prevention and response requirements transfers the risk and burden of another oil spill to the communities, citizens, and environment; and

WHEREAS, Seldovia Village Tribe has an interest in protecting our community's social, environmental, and economic wellbeing from any future oil spills.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seldovia Village Tribe stands strongly against any legislative or regulatory changes that erode oil spill prevention and response standards, increasing the risk of a catastrophic spill; and

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that the Seldovia Village Tribe believes that, if the system created after the 1989 spill is weakened, Alaskans will likely face an increased risk of reliving another major oil spill that could damage Alaska's commercial, sport and subsistence fishing, sport and subsistence hunting, other businesses, fish, wildlife, environment, and the culture and quality of life of the people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Seldovia Village Tribe requests that the State of Alaska provide information on the statutes and regulations the Department has already claimed can be eliminated or significantly reformed.

This resolution was duly adopted by the Seldovia Tribal Council, this 2nd day of January 2020 by the following vote: 7 Ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstain

APPROVED:

**Crystal Collier
President**



ATTEST:

**Trinket Gallien
Secretary**

