



**CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED
RESOLUTION 2010-5-18**

**A RESOLUTION by the CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED (CDFU)
BOARD of DIRECTORS CALLING FOR THE CREATION of a TRANS-ALASKA
PIPELINE CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL to PROVIDE OIL PIPELINE
OPERATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL OVERSIGHT and MONITORING**

Since 1935, CDFU has been representing the economic, political and environmental interests of commercial fishing families involved in the fisheries of the Copper River Delta, the North Gulf of Alaska and Prince William Sound. Over 500 fishing families own commercial salmon harvest permits for the world famous Copper River salmon fishery. These small businesses, and the local services they support, are the lifeblood of our regional economy.

Over the past three decades, these fishing families have developed the Copper River salmon they harvest into an internationally recognized brand that represents quality, taste, and natural purity. Fishing families generate over \$20 million annually from harvest, and another \$12 million is generated from processing Copper River salmon.

We represent these fishing families.

In 1989, the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill devastated our regional fisheries. In areas of western Prince William Sound, lingering oil from the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill can still be found just below surface gravel. After 21 years, the oil that remains is still highly toxic, and expected weathering has not taken place. Herring are still listed as “not recovering” from oil spill impacts, and consequently we have not had a commercial herring fishery since the species collapsed following the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

Over 20% of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline passes through the Copper River watershed. Hundreds of river, stream and wetland crossings carry hot oil at high pressure to Valdez, where it is loaded on tankers for shipment. Over 800,000 gallons a day are transported. Since construction, the pipeline has lost over a million gallons of oil through spills. Recent notable spills include 670,000 gallons in 1978, over 285,000 gallons in 2001 and an estimated 267,000 in 2006.

If there is a break in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline at a strategic river crossing in the Copper River watershed, within 30 hours of a spill oil can be transported by river currents to tidal sloughs, and wetlands on the Copper River Delta - home of our premier salmon fishery. The oil will impact sensitive habitats that nurture fish and supports over 235 species of birds, including millions of shorebirds. There are no efforts within the pipeline response plan to look at potential impacts from upriver

spills on lower river habitats. The 700,000 acre Copper River Delta is one of the most important wetland systems on the west coast of the Americas, and is a critical link in fisheries habitats. The absence of reference in Alyeska Pipeline Service Company plans to address potential impacts from spills to this critical habitat area is an unconscionable error and omission, and is just one illustration of the disconnect between reality and oil spill planning and pipeline monitoring.

Any size spill into the Copper River and her tributaries might impact our fisheries. Any significant oil spill occurring from March through September will seriously impact our Copper River salmon fisheries, and has the potential to foul fish, nets and people. An oil spill that closed the world famous Copper River salmon commercial fishing season, even for a few days, would destroy the reputation of Alaska's premier branded salmon. A spill would affect the marketplace for years and devastate our coastal fishing economy. Even if the season were not closed, news coverage of a significant spill into any of the waters of the Copper River will have huge impacts to a market image that we have spent decades creating. The negative image would take years to overcome, and our market niche might be lost forever.

Because of the above, and for other significant reasons, the members of the board of directors of Cordova District Fishermen United find and resolve that:

WHEREAS, safe transportation of oil through pipelines requires continued diligence in oversight of operations on the part of all three interests: operators, regulators and regional stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, operators interests in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System are represented by the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company; and

WHEREAS, State and Federal regulator interests are represented by the Joint Pipeline Office, responsibly for providing permitting services to pipeline operators; and

WHEREAS, regional stakeholders, and local citizens dependent on subsistence, sport, personal use and commercial fish and other important game resources at risk from pipeline spills are not formally represented in the process of oversight of pipeline operations; and

WHEREAS, local citizen involvement in oil pipeline oversight should be organized, formal and funded sufficiently to be a relevant and meaningful component of the process to monitor the safe operations of oil pipeline systems; and

WHEREAS, these resident interests have the most at stake relating to safe operations, as these regional lifestyles depend almost completely on productive environments, and the resources upon which they depend for subsistence, sport, and commercial fishing activities are most threatened by potential oil pipeline accidents; and

WHEREAS, these resident stakeholders are not currently a component of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline oversight process; and

WHEREAS, citizen involvement is already being accommodated for oil terminal and oil tanker operations through the congressionally recognized and established Regional Citizen's Advisory Councils; and

WHEREAS, the council process has become an integral part of safe operations, and this effective partnership has developed what is considered by many to be the safest marine oil transportation system in the world; and

WHEREAS, a mechanism must be established which fosters the same type of long-term partnership between industry, government, and local communities in overseeing compliance with environmental concerns in the safe operation and continued maintenance of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline, and the oil transportation system that feeds it.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Cordova District Fishermen United formally requests that the State of Alaska and the Federal Government take appropriate action to create and fund a Trans-Alaska Pipeline Citizen Advisory Council to provide for pipeline operations environmental oversight and monitoring.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Citizen's Advisory Council that is created include a membership that reflects the diverse interests of the communities and residents within the areas exposed to the impacts expected from catastrophic and chronic oil pipeline failures and spills.

*First adopted by the CDFU Board of Directors on September 20th, 2006.
Adopted with revisions on this 18th day of May, 2010.*

Signed:
Gerald McCune, President