

# PRESS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

### **Local port stakeholders launch Aleutian Islands Waterways Safety Committee Workgroup following meeting in Unalaska**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – Residents of Western Alaska have taken the next steps to establish an Aleutian Islands Waterways Safety Committee after a public meeting in Unalaska on April 26 that attracted more than 40 participants.

The committee will convene diverse waterway users to discuss and recommend safe navigational practices that complement existing regulatory requirements.

“The Waterways Safety Committee will provide a valuable and on-going forum to discuss mutual navigational safety, mobility, and environmental protection concerns where shipping activity is expected to continue to increase,” said Captain Paul Albertson, Commander of Coast Guard Sector Anchorage. “We look forward to working with both public and private stakeholders.”

The organizational mission and geographic scope will be developed by a convening workgroup, which met May 16. The group will nominate the first Board of Directors, which will carry the work forward through establishing the committee and various workgroups.

“The formation of the Waterways Safety Committee will encourage dynamic cooperation among maritime stakeholders that will further enhance the good work completed during the Aleutian Islands Risk Assessment after the Selendang Ayu incident,” said Mayor Frank Kelty from Unalaska.

The Aleutian Islands Waterways Safety Committee follows on the founding of both an Arctic Waterways Safety Committee and Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee in the past three years. These committees join dozens of others nationwide. For more information on the group in the Aleutians, see: <http://aleutianislandswsc.org>.

Facilitation of the group’s founding and first full year of operations is being funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation with settlement funds from the motor vessel Selendang Ayu oil spill in 2004.

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