

## Alaska Oil and Gas Association

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*Marilyn Crockett, Executive Director*

March 3, 2010

Ms. Kaja Brix  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Protected Resources Division, Alaska Region  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
ATTN: Ellen Sebastian  
P.O. Box 21668  
Juneau, AK 99802-1668

**Re: RIN 0648-AX50; Comments of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association on December 2, 2009  
Proposed Rule Designating Critical Habitat for the Cook Inlet Beluga Whale (74 Fed.  
Reg. 63,080)**

Dear Ms. Brix:

The Alaska Oil and Gas Association (AOGA) is a private, nonprofit trade association whose member companies account for the majority of oil and gas exploration, production, transportation, refining and marketing activities in Alaska, including those companies operating in the Cook Inlet region.

As a member of the Resource Development Council for Alaska (RDC), AOGA has actively participated in the development of the substantive comments RDC has submitted on the Agency's critical habitat designation proposal and the *Draft Regulatory Impact Review (RIR/Section 4(b)(2) Preparatory Assessment/IRFA for the Critical Habitat Designation of the Cook Inlet Beluga Whale*. AOGA fully supports those comments as well as the *Preliminary Investigation of Economic Impacts Related to Proposed Critical Habitat Designation for Cook Inlet Beluga Whale*, prepared for RDC by Resource Dimensions. Rather than restate the concerns and recommendations contained within the RDC comments, AOGA hereby adopts and incorporates by reference those comments and attachments.

AOGA and its members have been actively engaged in efforts focused on Cook Inlet beluga whales for well over a decade and we remain committed to doing so well into the future, including through my participation in the Cook Inlet Beluga Recovery Stakeholder Panel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Marilyn Crockett'.

MARILYN CROCKETT  
Executive Director