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 Congressman Don Young
 Governor Sean Parnell

BREAKFAST MEETING

Thursday, December 16, 2010

1. Call to order – Tom Maloney, President
2. Self Introductions
3. Headtable Introductions
4. Staff Report – Jason Brune, Executive Director
5. Program and Keynote Speaker:

Update on Port of Anchorage Expansion

Bill Sheffield, Port Director, Port of Anchorage

Next Meeting: January 6: Preview to the 2011 Legislative Session, Speakers TBA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No. 10-209

Governor Parnell Releases Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Plan
Focus on Resource Development, Infrastructure, Energy, and Public Safety

December 15, 2010, Anchorage, Alaska – Continuing his focus on fostering jobs and resource development, Governor Sean Parnell today released his balanced budget plan for Fiscal Year 2012.

The governor noted Alaska's strong financial position saying, "Alaska has a balanced budget, substantial cash reserves, and a stellar bond rating."

In his budget speech before the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, Governor Parnell said, "If we are disciplined and strategic with our spending, and if we manage our savings well, Alaskans can have economic opportunities for years to come."

The operating and capital budgets total \$11.1 billion, with \$5.45 billion in state general funds. State agency operating growth has been limited to 1.9 percent. Statutorily required increases in Medicaid, payments on the retirement system's unfunded liability, debt service costs, and employee contracts result in a general fund budget that is larger than last year.

Resource Development and Infrastructure

The proposed capital budget totals \$1.6 billion, including \$644.9 million in state general funds. The capital budget includes an aggressive roads-to-resources effort and funds a comprehensive energy build out.

"This budget focuses on lowering the cost of energy throughout the state," Governor Parnell said. "Providing lower-cost energy creates opportunity for Alaskans. It opens doors and promotes responsible, sustainable development."

The budget includes \$65.7 million for the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) to conduct planning, design, and permitting for the Susitna Hydroelectric Project, which is estimated to meet half of the Railbelt's electricity demand. The budget also includes funding for weatherization programs, renewable energy, and heating assistance.

The governor's proposed budget funds additional work on a road connecting the Dalton Highway to Umiat and on a road to the Ambler Mining District.

"We are going to put Alaskans to work," Governor Parnell said. "We've included \$103 million in the capital budget to leverage more than \$705 million in federal and other funds for transportation, highways, aviation, water, sewer projects for vital infrastructure improvements. We have targeted \$60 million for roads and ports that are key to opening up resource development."

Continued efforts on natural gas development, including \$160 million for the Alaska Pipeline Project and \$5.5 million for development of the instate gas line project, are incorporated in the capital budget. The budget also includes \$100 million for the second year of the five-year deferred maintenance plan.

Public Safety

The FY2012 budget builds on the "Choose Respect" campaign to combat the epidemic of domestic violence and sexual assault (DVSA) through prevention, investigation, reporting, and services for victims. It funds 15 new Village Public Safety Officers and three new trooper positions.

"We will investigate Internet crimes against children and protect seniors and vulnerable adults from exploitation by stepping up efforts through the Long Term Care Ombudsman," Governor Parnell said. "We will strengthen criminal penalties for those who take advantage of vulnerable Alaskans."

Education

The budget also includes \$8.2 million for Alaska Performance Scholarship awards for high school students who graduate in 2011. The merit-based program for post-secondary education and job-training assistance is one of Governor Parnell's top priorities.

The FY2012 proposed budget will spend less than the amount of revenue projected for the next fiscal year. For FY2012, the oil price forecast is \$82.67 per barrel, production of 622,000 barrels per day, and total unrestricted revenue of \$5.74 billion.

Highlights of Governor Parnell's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget:

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure

- Port of Anchorage \$20 million 
- Port MacKenzie Rail \$20 million
- Skagway City Dock Improvements \$10 million
- Roads to Resources \$10.5 million
- Deferred Maintenance \$100 million

Oil and Gas Development

- Oil and Gas exploration tax credits \$400 million
- AGIA Reimbursement Fund \$160 million
- In-state Gas Development \$5.5 million

Energy

- Susitna Planning, Design, Permitting \$65.7 million
- Renewable Energy Grant Fund \$25 million
- Southeast Energy Grant Fund \$10 million
- Weatherization \$25 million

Matching/Leverage Funds

\$103 million general fund match to leverage over \$705 million in federal and other funds including:

- DOTPF Highway and Aviation \$623 million
- DEC Village Safe Water \$42.3 million
- DEC Municipal Water/Sewer \$20 million
- Municipal Harbor Grant Fund \$5 million

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention \$7.4 million
- 15 New VPSOs and 3 New Trooper Positions

EDUCATION

- Full Funding of K-12 Education \$1.13 billion
- Alaska Performance Scholarships \$8.2 million
- School Major Maintenance – 14 projects - \$19.9 million
- School Construction – Quinhagak K-12 Renovation–\$28.5 million

STATEWIDE

- Retirement System Unfunded Liability \$479.5 million
- Community Revenue Sharing \$60 million
- Tourism Marketing \$16 million (\$9 M operating; \$7 M capital)

Draft budget bills and more detailed information on the budget are available on the Office of Management & Budget website at omb.alaska.gov/

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ACTION ALERT

Public Input Solicited On Shell's Beaufort Sea Drilling Plan and Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan

Requested Action:

Alaska's OCS is again under review and public comments are requested. RDC members are encouraged to provide comments on the Shell's 2011 Beaufort Sea Exploration Plan, as well as the Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan (ODPCP). Comments are due December 22 on the exploration plan and December 23 on the ODPCP. Please consider submission to each separately, or if you prefer, comments can be combined to address both topics in one letter.

Submit comments to:

Regional Supervisor, Leasing and Environment
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement
3801 Centerpoint Drive, Suite 500
Anchorage, AK, 99503

Comments specific to the exploration plan can be submitted by email to:
CamdenBayEPSEA@boemre.gov, or by fax to: (907) 334-5242.

Comments specific to the ODPCP can be submitted by email to:
AK_OSCP_Comments@boemre.gov

Background:

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEM) has issued a notice requesting public comments on Shell's 2011 exploration plan for the Beaufort Sea and an associated supplemental environmental assessment. The agency is also soliciting comments on the Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan.

BOEM is conducting the supplemental assessment on Shell's exploration plan to take into account changes the company made to its plan in October in light of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. BOEM will consider "new information" from the Gulf oil spill and examine environmental impacts of new support vessels Shell has added to its project on a standby basis to enhance oil spill response capabilities in the unlikely event of a blowout.

Points to consider specific to the exploration plan

- BOEM completed a careful analysis of the impacts of Shell's proposed Beaufort Sea exploration program, including a detailed cumulative impacts analysis of a multi-well program, and determined that Shell's plan would have no significant impacts on the marine environment or the marine mammal, bird or fish species common to the Arctic.
- Shell's 2011 exploration plan has been revised to include provisions to reduce discharges to the marine environment, changes that only bolster the previously approved 2010 exploration plan, which was reviewed and upheld by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. In response to local concerns, Shell updated its plans to include using a barge to collect waste such as drilling cuttings and sanitary waste from the drilling vessel, rather than discharging this waste into the sea, as permitted by law.
- As the Anchorage Daily News emphasized in an editorial on December 2, 2010, "Let Shell go to work in 2011 to explore for oil -- and also restore faith in the industry's ability and will to do it right, to tap Alaska's oil and gas treasure while abiding by the highest and

environmental and safety standards on the planet. We need the oil. We need the jobs. And we need to provide them while protecting the Arctic environment and its communities.”

- Alaska OCS Development will sustain and promote job growth during a period of high national unemployment, reduce America’s dependence on foreign energy supplies and create additional federal offshore revenues for state and federal governments. New offshore oil production would also reverse declining throughput in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, which is now operating at less than one-third capacity.
- According to a study by the University of Alaska’s Institute of Social and Economic Research, new offshore energy production in Alaska would produce an annual average of 35,000 jobs and total payroll of more than \$72 billion over the next 50 years.
- In Alaska, approximately 43,454 jobs are supported by the industry. These jobs add \$6.1 billion to Alaska’s gross state product, or 16.6 percent of its wealth. The unemployment rate is already up to 8.9 percent in Alaska.
- New offshore oil and gas development in Alaska would also generate thousands of new, high-paying jobs throughout the 50 states, including steel and pipe manufacturers in the Midwest, shipping on the coasts, advanced computer technology in California and Seattle, and union labor for pipeline construction and maintenance.
- Not developing our offshore natural resources is projected to cost energy intensive industries nearly 13 million jobs and cumulatively decrease the nation’s real disposable income by \$2.34 trillion, according to a new report issued by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.
- Oil and gas are vital components of our nation’s economy and will remain so for the foreseeable future, even as we strive to transition to renewable forms of energy. Domestic energy production must be a priority under any scenario.

Points specific to the Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan

- Drilling in the Arctic offers distinct differences than deep water exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. The pressure encountered in Gulf deep water drilling is multiple times greater than in Alaska where wells would be drilled in very shallow water.
- Another distinction is that Shell’s proposed exploration program is seasonal in nature. Exploratory drilling would occur only during the summer and fall open water season.
- In light of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, Shell has taken unprecedented steps to bolster its response capabilities in the highly unlikely event of a blowout.
- Shell’s oil spill contingency plan is robust and includes capabilities for the recovery of a “worst case” discharge. Oil spill response personnel, vessels and equipment will all be pre-positioned in the area to respond immediately to any oil spill event.
- Shell is well prepared to prevent any well control event. Well control is the primary focus of all of Shell’s exploration drilling plans. Every activity is geared toward maintaining well control and integrity. Shell will deploy the latest and best available technologies to carry out its program.
- Shell’s exploration and Oil spill contingency plans were the subject of extensive public review and comment prior to being approved by both federal and state regulators. Both plans meet or exceed all federal and state regulatory standards.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No. 10-208

State Sues to Overturn NMFS Decision on Western Steller Sea Lions

December 14, 2010, Anchorage, Alaska – The State of Alaska today filed suit in the U.S. District Court for Alaska against the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) over the agency’s decision to significantly curtail fishing in the western Aleutian Islands out of concern for Steller sea lions.

The state argues that NMFS failed to make “a rational connection” between the facts it found and the conclusions it reached, given that western Steller sea lions had an average annual population growth between 1.0 and 1.5 percent between 2000 and 2008, and now number more than 70,000.

“The agency’s conclusion that additional fishing restrictions are necessary is not supported by the best available scientific information,” Governor Parnell said. “The drastic measures proposed by NMFS are simply not necessary given the overall health of the Steller sea lion population. This decision will have immediate and significant impacts on local communities and fishermen in the area.”

As many as 900 people are employed by fisheries fleets in the area facing restrictions. NMFS acknowledges that implementation of its decision would cost fishery losses of up to \$66 million annually.

State officials also believe the federal agency committed numerous procedural violations, which had the effect of limiting the opportunity for public and expert comments.

“The state submitted extensive comments on both the process and the foundational science used to reach this decision,” said acting Fish and Game Commissioner Cora Campbell. “We are extremely disappointed that NMFS did not adequately consider these concerns and did not more fully incorporate the recommendations of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council in its action. We are also very disturbed about the lack of meaningful public process.”

A copy of the complaint is available at:

http://gov.alaska.gov/parnell_media/resources_files/soavlubchenco.pdf

###

Scientists cling to hope for polar bears in a warming world

Associated Press

(12/15/10 11:48:19)

Two groups of scientists are suggesting a sliver of hope for the future of polar bears in a warming world.

A study published online Wednesday rejects the often used concept of a "tipping point," or point of no return, when it comes to sea ice and the big bear that has become the symbol of climate change woes. The study optimistically suggests that if the world dramatically changed its steadily increasing emissions of greenhouse gases, a total loss of critical summer sea ice for the bears could be averted.

Another research group projects that even if global warming doesn't slow -- a more likely near-future scenario -- a thin, icy refuge for the bears would still remain between Greenland and Canada.

A grim future for polar bears is one of the most tangible and poignant outcomes of global warming. Four years ago, federal researchers reported that two-thirds of the world's polar bear habitat could vanish by mid-century. Other experts foresee an irreversible ice-free Arctic in the next few years as more likely.

The new study, which challenges the idea of a tipping point, says rapid ice loss could still happen, but there's a chance that the threatened bears aren't quite doomed.

"There is something that can be done to save polar bears," said lead author Steven Amstrup, the former senior polar bear scientist for the U.S. Geological Survey in Alaska. "The problem is not irreversible."

His research, published in *Nature*, shows there's a steady relationship between greenhouse gas emissions, sea ice and polar bear habitat. As emissions rise, sea ice and polar bear habitat decline. But unlike previous research, there's no drop-off tipping point in Amstrup's models.

Essentially until all sea ice is gone permanently in the summer there is still a chance to prevent the worst-case, if global warming is stopped in time, Amstrup's research shows.

"Such a tipping point would mean that future reductions in greenhouse gas emissions would do little to save the polar bear," said Amstrup, who is now chief scientist for the conservation group Polar Bears International. "It seems clear that if people and leaders think that there's nothing they can do, they will do nothing."

Some experts called Amstrup too optimistic, but said his computer models made sense.

"I wouldn't say that we can rule out a tipping point, but it does show that a tipping point isn't inevitable," said Walt Meier, a senior scientist at the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder, Colo.

But that all hinges on reducing greenhouse gas emissions -- carbon dioxide and other pollution from the burning of fossil fuels, said Mark Serreze, director of the center. "Time is running out. Humankind needs to make a choice," he said.

Time has already run out, said Henry Jacoby, a management professor at MIT and founder of its MIT Global Change Joint Program.

Jacoby examined the computer models Amstrup used in his paper and said it is based on a "world that's already long gone." The two scenarios of emission reductions are points that the world has already passed or will pass in the next few years, Jacoby said.

After the global recession led to a one-year dip in carbon dioxide emissions, they are soaring again, according to a recent study. And vague international agreements made in Cancun last week and in Copenhagen last year don't do enough, Jacoby said.

"Even given the pledges on the table, we don't come close to what these guys use in their hopeful scenario," he said.

Study co-author Eric DeWeaver of the National Science Foundation called the scenarios he used "plausible."

But DeWeaver and Amstrup agree the polar bear is in deep trouble if emissions continue to rise as they are now.

A second study was to be presented Thursday at the American Geophysical Union conference in San Francisco. That research considers a future in which global warming continues at the same pace.

And it shows that a belt from the northern archipelago of Canada to the northern tip of Greenland will likely still have ice because of various winds and currents.

The sea ice forms off Siberia in an area that's called "the ice factory" and is blown to this belt, which is like an "ice cube tray," said Robert Newton of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University.

That "sea ice refuge" will be good for polar bears and should continue for decades to come, maybe even into the next century, he said.

Just how many polar bears could live there still has to be figured out, according to the research by Newton and Stephanie Pfirman of Barnard College.

Amstrup's study doesn't downplay the nature of global warming and its effect on polar bears, especially if emissions increase.

"The changes that are occurring in the Arctic are going on at a much more rapid rate than elsewhere in the world," Amstrup said. "So the changes that are occurring and affecting polar bears really foreshadow much more significant changes that are likely to occur worldwide."

Online:

Nature: www.nature.com/nature

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Spring 2011: PADM A671

Introduction to Public Land Management (Public Decisions on Resource Development)

Tuesday 5:30 - 8:15 pm 1/10/2011 • 4/30/2011 • Location: SSB 223



*Upper level undergraduates are also encouraged to take the course,
with consent of the instructor*

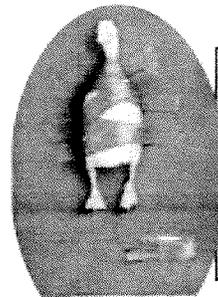
How does the public make decisions to approve or deny resource development projects such as mining, timber, or oil and gas?

This course provides an overview of the legal, economic, and political framework for making decisions about resource development. It is intended for people who may work in industry, government, Alaska Native corporations, or consulting firms. The class will involve readings on the topics described below and discussion about Alaska resource development decisions.

Topics covered in the course include:

- Introduction to water law, mineral law, and certain land law concepts
- Basic economic and technical description of resource development industries
- Landowner perspectives on resource development
- Elements of taxation and other public payments for resource development
- Permit requirements and process, with emphasis on the major permitting laws

→ **Bob Loeffler, Visiting Professor of Public Policy, ISER**
907-786-5449; bobl@uaa.alaska.edu



Bob Loeffler has over 25 years of government, management, and natural resources experience, including seven years as director of the Alaska Division of Mining, Land, and Water. He has a master's degree in Environmental Engineering (Stanford University), and a master's degree in City and Regional Planning (Harvard University).

UAA MPA Program

<http://www.cbpp.uaa.alaska.edu/pubadmin/publicadministrationhome.aspx>

THE ALASKA
*Marine
Gala*

January 16, 2011
*Fundraiser Banquet & Charity Auction
Dena'ina Center, Anchorage*

Guest Speaker
National Geographic Photographer
Joel Sartore

Dance music provided by Anchorage's
award winning band "H3"

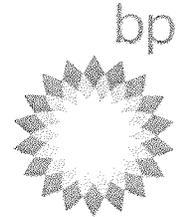


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Tickets & more information: www.alaskasealife.org/alaskamarinegala

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www.akrdc.org

Membership Application

Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc.
121 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite 250
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GOLD	\$1500	\$300
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BASIC	\$500	\$75

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Alaska Resources 2011

Resource Development Council's 31st Annual Conference

RDC would like to thank the many sponsors of Alaska Resources 2011, which drew 976 registrants from across North America. Without our many sponsors and members, RDC would not be able to do the important work of educating and advocating for the responsible development of Alaska's natural resources. To our generous sponsors and members, thank you for your support!

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