

A way to clean up the oil spill

To Sens. Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski and Gov. Steve Cowper:

I have attempted to bring to your attention the fact that I have developed a process that will clean up an oil contaminated shoreline. I realize that you probably have been approached by a great number of people with oil spill cleanup ideas and that it would be impractical for you to examine each and every idea.

Allow me to suggest, and I'm sure your constituents would agree, that when one of the world's top-notch oil field trouble shooters says he has an oil spill cleanup process it would be expected that an elected official seek out that expert.

At the time of my retirement two years ago I was considered to be one of those experts. For the past 25 years

I took part in, and in a number of cases was in charge of, many technically difficult projects for the oil industry.

For confidential reasons I cannot give details of those projects, but I can assure you they were much more difficult to solve than this problem of oil spill cleanup. I successfully used my copyright "Shoreline Restoration Process" to clean up an oil contaminated area 30 years ago on the Seward Peninsula.

With the addition of present day technologies to that process I can now say, with great confidence, that I am now able to restore one mile of oil contaminated shoreline to its natural state in about one week.

I am considered to be one of the top

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trouble shooters in the world, and I am telling you that this process will work. Further, I have developed a new booming and skimming operation that would greatly speed up the open-ocean recovery of oil. The equipment to accomplish this would be able to be stored onboard oil tankers, and this operation would not depend on dispersants or the burning of the oil to accomplish its end.

Almost two months have passed since I have contacted you, and I have yet to receive a response from Sen. Murkwoski or Gov. Cowper. Sen. Stevens wrote eight weeks after my initial letter, telling me that he would forward my proposal to Exxon.

I began to think that perhaps the elected officials of Alaska were not as committed to this cleanup as they would have us believe.

Thusly, I delivered to your offices a copy of a "letter to the editor" that I mailed the following day. Immediately afterward, Sens. Stevens and Murkowski extracted from Exxon a promise that "if there is a way to clean the beaches we will clean them." This "on-camera" Exxon promise is, of course, unenforceable and seems to only serve the purpose of protecting the participants' public image.

Gentlemen, I am pure-blood Eskimo. I and my people are determined that you will live up to your very public assurances that our

shoreline will be cleaned. We will not accept a "treated beach." We want it cleaned.

I have approached Exxon with my idea, but they have insisted on a waiver of confidentiality before they would listen to my idea. This would enable Exxon to use my idea or forward it to someone else without respect for the proprietary value of my process. Since no sane businessman would agree to those terms, Exxon has been able to "hold for hostage" my idea on oil spill cleanup.

I was called upon numerous times by the oil industry to solve seemingly impossible problems. As a leader of these projects I felt that it was extremely important to exude a highly positive attitude, less my charges give up on

the challenge confronting us.

Recently Adm. Robbins made a very public statement that "the beaches cannot be cleaned." This negative attitude of Adm. Robbins is inexcusable. I have written to the Coast Guard to examine and test my process, but received no response whatsoever.

The Coast Guard and Exxon have exhibited a negative attitude toward their cleanup responsibilities and a lack of resolve and ability to handle the problems inherent in this cleanup. Thusly, this cleanup should be federalized immediately with no participation by Adm. Robbins or Exxon.

Sincerely
Sam Ahwinona Sr.
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