

**Willie Goodwin Talking Points
Chairman, Arctic Waterways Safety Committee
Anchorage Downtown Marriott
Anchorage, AK
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I wanted to give you an update on the work we've been doing since the last meeting in October.

In late October, I presented an update to NANA and the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee on the work we are doing as a Committee. I think it's important that we continue to share information on the work we do, and I encourage you to do the same. Although we don't have funding currently for staff, I've reached out to Jessica, Martin and Jenny to help provide me with presentations for opportunities I'm given to speak on behalf of our Committee. It's been very helpful, and I want to thank them for the work they do.

In December, I traveled to Washington, D.C. at the request of Senator Sullivan to testify before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard. My testimony included the good work we do here as a committee and the need for funding to continue protecting our waterways. I also talked about the need for communications infrastructure and investment in the Arctic. And, finally, I talked about the U.S. Coast Guard's decreased engagement with the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee and our Alaska Native communities over the past several years.

The testimony was very well received. I want to thank Jessica for her help in preparing my testimony. I also want to thank Eleanor Huffines with Pew Trusts for providing funding to make my participation possible. As you know, we have no funding for participation in meetings. Without funding from organizations like Eleanor's, we would not be able to continue our work. Thank you, Eleanor.

In February, following the testimony, we sent a letter to Admiral Bell, who's here today, to notify him that the U.S. Coast Guard's engagement with northern communities has fallen off in the last few years. We had very active participation from the Coast Guard when we first started this Committee. In fact, we started the Committee at their encouragement and with their help. I want to stress that we must have engagement from all waterways users to be effective. Thank you, Admiral Bell for being here today. I hope we can count on District 17 and Sector Anchorage to actively participate in the work we do moving forward.

Both my testimony before the Senate and the letter to Admiral Bell can be found on the AWSC website.

In January, I travelled to Washington, D.C. again for other meetings. After letting Jessica know my plans, she coordinated a meeting with staff from Senator Murkowski and Senator Sullivan's offices. During our meetings, I again stressed the need for funding for coastal communications. They invited us to provide them with a proposal for a project to be funded. I expect that we will have that for them by the end of this meeting. We also talked to them about co-management and we will be working with the

Alaska Native marine mammal hunter groups to prepare draft amendments to the language of the Native exemption in the MMPA and the endangered species ESA.

Finally, I want to talk about funding for the AWSC. We continue to struggle with finding funding for the Committee. We really need Committee members to take an active role in finding funding. Every opportunity I get, I stress the need for funding for the Committee in my presentations. The AWSC has become an important forum for vessel operators to share their plans and work collaboratively with the other waterway users to increase safety. Our meetings are not free. Our website is not free. And, we need funding to pay staff and be able to participate in meetings with folks outside of our Committee – especially as activity continues to increase in the Arctic. Right now we are limited in what we can do without funding.

I'd like to take a few minutes this morning to hear from you regarding your thoughts on potential funding opportunities for the Committee. With that, I'll open it up to the group for discussion.

Thank you.