

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Alaska Railbelt Utilities and State of Alaska Join Forces to Address In-State Energy Security**

Today, six Alaska utilities announced the formation of a working group to assess future gas supply needs and energy security in Cook Inlet. The group was formed in recognition of the expected decline of aging Cook Inlet assets; and in conjunction with recent discussions with Hilcorp Alaska, LLC, as well as the potential impacts of recently-introduced clean energy legislation.

The utilities include: Chugach Electric Association, Interior Gas Utility, Matanuska Electric Association, Homer Electric Association, Golden Valley Electric Association, and ENSTAR Natural Gas Company. The utilities are joined by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and the Alaska Energy Authority as they collectively explore long term gas supply solutions to meet utility and customer demand.

The working group issued the following statement:

“Communities from Homer to Fairbanks directly or indirectly depend on natural gas to generate electricity and heat homes and businesses. Natural gas is a cost-effective and efficient fuel that is critical to our utilities and the Alaskans we serve. In our individual capacities, we have researched enhanced energy security options, including infrastructure, renewables, and legislative support for further development in Cook Inlet.

Today, we add another tool to our toolbelt by joining forces to address potential future challenges regarding natural gas supply in Cook Inlet. We understand the uncertainty inherent in relying on a single source to meet a significant portion of our demand.

Our goal is to work together for long-term solutions. This requires a better understanding of each utility’s constraints and needs based on existing contracts and forecasting our collective demand growth into the next decade as well as considering additional options to meet the unique energy needs of our region.

We recognize the need to be proactive and concerted in our planning. In 2010, our collective efforts resulted in the development of the first public in-ground natural gas storage facility and supported legislation that welcomed Hilcorp’s expanded operations into Cook Inlet.

This group will work collaboratively as utilities and in partnership with the State of Alaska to ensure our ability to reliably and efficiently meet the energy needs of Alaskans in the Railbelt region over the long term.”

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