

Alaska's good luck charm: Petrotechnical Resources Alaska

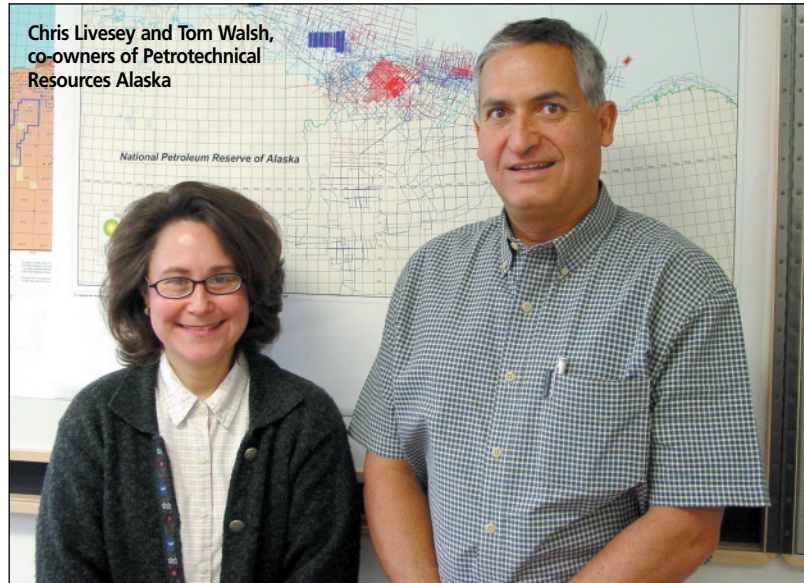
Mr. Tom Walsh and Dr. Chris Livesey, co-owners of Petrotechnical Resources Alaska (PRA), will tell you that at least some of their achievements in Alaska's petroleum industry arise from fortunate coincidences. If unexpected luck truly has something to do with PRA's success, consider spending more time in close proximity to this first-class team—if some of it rubs off the results might be impressive.

One lucky firm

Take for instance the original formation of this consulting firm. In 1997, five independent consultants in the Alaska petroleum industry, including Walsh, understood that their marketplace needed to change to meet client needs. Industry demands "forced us to create this company, basically," says Walsh. "It just turns out that the model we landed upon seems to be very accommodating to a lot of very talented people." The chosen model supports a firm that has enormous depth and breadth of technical expertise but has minimal overhead costs. Its efficient design allows the real assets of the company, the people, to shine.

Two of those brilliant assets are Tom Walsh and Chris Livesey. Walsh has worked for twenty-four years in Alaska's petroleum industry in almost every aspect of exploration and production. His local knowledge and technical expertise cross the state. Livesey's work as a professional geologist spans fifteen years. In addition to working for Chevron, BP and ARCO, she taught geology classes and planned new courses for the University of Alaska as an adjunct professor.

Progressing from five original partners to seventy employees in seven years has resulted from an array of elements, including PRA's knack for luck. "People with broad skill bases and great depth of knowledge tend to gravitate toward PRA. The word is out, the reputation is there—there's a strong pull," says Walsh. Part of the attraction lies in



Chris Livesey and Tom Walsh, co-owners of Petrotechnical Resources Alaska



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the high ethical standards at PRA. The firm "takes great care to protect our clients' data and ideas, and our reputation in the community," Walsh elaborates.

A combination of talents old and new promotes an all-around vitality. Walsh says that Livesey and he "feel very fortunate to work with a great team of people. I think we've got some of the most talented people in the oil industry."

Fortunate clients

A consulting firm that magnetically draws top-notch petroleum experts will naturally attract any organization in the industry as clientele. Oil and gas companies are lucky to have PRA as a resource. The firm caters to the geoscience, engineering and project management needs of corporate clients of every shape and size. The company also offers valuable services to government agencies. All of PRA's offerings hinge on a common theme. According to Walsh, "we feel we're here to very strongly promote the growth of the oil and gas industry in Alaska."



Chantal Walsh, right, one of the company's certified professional engineers.

Impressive services

The large oil producers that hold the major existing stakes in Alaska's petroleum industry tend to call upon PRA to extend the life of oil fields. From Prudhoe Bay expansion and advancement projects to Cook Inlet gas storage and development jobs, PRA professionals in every field of expertise work with companies such as BP, Unocal, and Conoco Phillips to keep petroleum products flowing from wells that naturally decline in productivity over time.

As part of a natural market cycle, smaller oil companies continue to emerge in Alaska. These new stakeholders encounter barriers in their transition to this market that PRA helps ease. For instance, PRA facilitates land access by "supporting these companies' review of lease-sale activity, helping state and federal agencies put together lease sales, and working with Native corporations on the management of their lands," Walsh explains.

Livesey and Walsh present one recent accomplishment as PRA's favorite new offering—a facilities sharing study. Any stakeholder in the Alaskan oilfields can see the capacity and current usage of existing petroleum processing and storage facilities by accessing the report at

Alaska's Division of Oil and Gas website at: <http://www.dog.dnr.state.ak.us/oil/products/publications/othereports>.

The good luck charm

Perhaps the Roman philosopher Seneca thought about the workings of a company like PRA when he stated, "Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity." The skill, ethics, and experience of the professionals at Petrotechnical Resources Alaska foster its capacity for successful ventures. ■