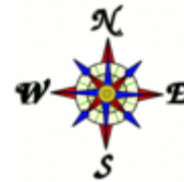


CSAW
Campaign to Safeguard America's Waters



Earth Island Institute



Responsible Cruising in Alaska

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The citizen's groups Responsible Cruising in Alaska and Campaign to Safeguard America's Waters of the Earth Island Institute filed a 45-day notice of intent to sue today with the State Attorney General over alleged violations that cruise lines are restricting access of Alaska Ocean Rangers to cruise ship treatment equipment and personnel.

In 2006, Alaska voters passed the Alaska Cruise Ship Ballot Initiative, a set of comprehensive reforms addressing issues of taxation, commission disclosure and pollution prevention into State law. One provision of the law requires the cruise lines provide full access to licensed marine engineers working for the State (Ocean Rangers) to oversee pollution control practices and equipment.

A June 23rd report filed with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation by Ocean Rangers Program Manager Paul Johnson, a marine engineer and former Port Engineer for the Alaska Marine Highway System, alleges multiple violations of the cruise ship law. According to Mr. Johnson, Rangers are being prohibited from seeing specific areas of the ships, interacting sufficiently with ship personnel, and viewing ship logbooks: "I believe Alaskans will be offended when they learn that some cruise ships feel they have the right to restrict what and when the ranger is allowed to observe."

Citizens of Alaska have the authority to sue the cruise lines to force compliance with the law, and sue the State if necessary to force the State to require compliance from the industry. A "citizen's suit" procedure was incorporated into the ballot initiative, requiring that the State be provided with a 45-day notice period during which they can undertake their own legal action before the citizen action commences. RCA and CSAW, sponsors of the ballot measure, filed papers with the State Attorney General today to start the clock.

According to RCA President Theodore Thoma, "...We are disappointed but not really surprised the cruise industry continues to act as if they are above the laws of our State. These guys have made it clear they intend to try and undo the 2006 popular vote in next year's legislative session and some of them appear to be ready to ignore the law. The cruisers recent environmental-performance "show and tell" in numerous Alaska ports of call, complete with lunch on the Lido Deck, is a farce. We now know they have been refusing access to qualified observers who can accurately assess their level of compliance."

Gershon Cohen Ph.D., Project Director of CSAW and co-drafter of the initiative's pollution provisions, wonders what they are trying to hide: "...The Rangers should be an asset to the industry, which has been convicted on numerous occasions for felony pollution-related violations. If they are adequately treating ship wastes and not purposefully bypassing treatment equipment, the Rangers will provide independent verification they are in compliance with the law. Obstructing the Rangers from doing their job can only raise suspicions about what is going on in the bowels of the ship. If we have to take them to court to force their compliance with Alaska law, we will."

For more information, contact Gershon Cohen @ 907-766-3005 or Theodore Thoma @ 586-2117.