

EDITORIALS

From the Chairman

WHICH MIDDLE SEAT DO YOU WANT?

YOU HAVE TO GET UP pretty early in the morning to secure a window or aisle seat on the Shared Services flight from Anchorage to Deadhorse on Alaska's North Slope. Take your chances on a check in only 90 minutes before departure and you are smilingly asked, "Which middle seat would you like?"

My trip to the North Slope was arranged by the IADC Alaska Chapter when I had the opportunity to attend a meeting in Alaska this August. Although I had long heard of the technical and environmental performance of these operations, there is no substitute for being on site to really appreciate the achievements of the companies that operate north of the Arctic Circle.



Lawrence R. Dickerson, Chairman

If more people could see how petroleum is produced and the environment is protected then I'm sure that support would increase for additional drilling in Northern Alaska. Imagine if the North Slope hadn't been developed and all of the wages, taxes and profits spent in Alaska and in the lower forty-eight hadn't existed? Measured against all of the economic value which has been built in our largest state, the minimal environmental footprint of our activity is indeed small.

The proposed expansion into ANWR has an even smaller impact as improvements in technology enable greater areas to be drilled from an even smaller base. The siting of drilling in ANWR is also located in areas much the same as the current North Slope and far from the more scenic areas often portrayed in anti-drilling literature. But with large scale opposition to development we won't have to imagine the impact of lost wages, taxes, and profits—you will be able to see it in Alaska's economy.

For the real irony of opposition to ANWR drilling is that the residents of Alaska overwhelmingly support development of natural resources located within their state. Off-shore moratoriums have been put in place in Federal waters off other states in consideration of local opposition to development. Yet, the local belief in Alaskan development is not given the same weight.

Our industry has demonstrated a commitment to the environment and we will often compromise our plans to placate concerns of our opposition. How nice it would be if those organizations who support the environment would seek out common ground with the energy industry. Funds

generated by responsible development could be used to increase environmental protection while providing badly needed jobs. Instead of a uniform position of opposition to all development, wouldn't it be great if environmental organizations were also given a choice of "Which middle seat do you want?" ■

IADC ANNUAL MEETING

If you haven't already, I strongly encourage you to register for the upcoming 2003 Annual Meeting, 24-26 September in Houston. We've put together one of our most adventurous programs yet, and I guarantee it will provide great take-home value for anyone in the industry. Check it out on the website at www.iadc.org.

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From the President

ZAP THIS!!

IT HAD TO HAPPEN. For twenty years video games have progressed from simple paddle-ball games that went "pong", to life like animated, interactive ones like "The Matrix". Mostly, game players were able to zap an absurdly large number of enemies, aliens, monsters and assorted miscreants while running, jumping, driving or flying every imaginable mode of transportation.



Lee Hunt, President

Finally, game creators have reached the bottom of the barrel of villains. The oil-barrel, that is. A new game from the company that produced "Ecco the Dolphin" now has a deranged shark roaming the ocean in search of prey. High on the enraged predator's list of snacks are oil-drilling crews.

"Sole Predator" features 20 missions in which drilling crews can be attacked and dismembered piece-by-piece. This super-shark is also capable of destroying piers and platforms in the ocean. I don't know if the drilling crews have any defenses for defeating the shark. I sure hope so.

Thank goodness for small favors, though. At least the nemesis of drillers is a real ocean predator, the shark. Imagine if Ecco the Dolphin had been driven to enraged madness, turning on his land based mammal cousins with oversized flippers. Meanwhile, to the list of "mussel watchers", "bird watchers", regulation "watch-standers" and soon to be installed "security officers" aboard off-shore drilling rigs, we will need to add "game master" to the crew complement. Zap! ■