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1 COASTAL PLAIN OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM  
2 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
3 PUBLIC MEETING  
4

5 Taken February 7, 2019  
6 Commencing at 1:00 p.m.

7 Pages 1 - 81, inclusive  
8

9 Taken at  
10 Tribal Hall  
11 Fort Yukon, Alaska  
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19

20 Reported by:  
21 Mary A. Vavrik, RMR  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

2 For United States Department of Interior, Lands and  
3 Minerals Management:

4 Joe Balash  
5 Assistant Secretary

6 Steve Wackowski  
7 Senior Advisor of Alaska Affairs

8 Sherman Hogue  
9 Videographer

10 For United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Land  
11 Management:

12 Ted Murphy  
13 Associate State Director

14 Nicole Hayes  
15 Project Manager

16 Mike Gieryic  
17 Attorney

18 Erin Julianus  
19 Biologist

20 For United States Department of Interior, Department of  
21 Fish & Wildlife Service:

22 Steve Arthur  
23 Biologist

24 Steve Berendzen  
25 Arctic Refuge Manager

For EMPSI:

Chad Ricklefs  
Project Manager

Amy Lewis  
Assistant Project Manager

24

25

1                   A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S (Continued)

2   For ABR:

3           Alex Prichard  
4           Senior Scientist

5   For SRB&A:

6           Paul Lawrence  
7           Senior Research Associate

8   Taken by:

9           Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

10   BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken  
11   at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before  
12   Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary  
13   Public within and for the State of Alaska.

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (Invocation offered by Charlotte  
3 Kelly-Spencer.) (Welcome by Nancy James.)

4 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: It's really important  
5 when people come into our country to respect the culture  
6 and language and to say -- to put a stop to speaking our  
7 language and testifying, I don't think that's good.  
8 That's not a very good thing to mention. Over and over  
9 again, we have been asking for translator. We do have  
10 translators available.

11 And I really don't think that it's the budget  
12 situation when you ask to report everything that you also  
13 have live translators because when you speak from your  
14 language, it really comes from the heart and that you need  
15 to realize that. So I would caution you on that.

16 The other one is that you come in with short notice  
17 for your public meeting. We in Gwichyaa Zhee are united,  
18 as always have been. And we need to remember that  
19 historical concept.

20 Today we are standing here on a land issue. We were  
21 warned about this that's going to happen 20, 30 years  
22 after the ANCSA. And that's what I see today, unless we  
23 have an input and start speaking for our young people, a  
24 new generation that is before us and to protect and talk  
25 about land and what's happening.

1           We see the global warming. Every one of us sees big  
2 changes in global warming. And when we talk about  
3 development and so forth at 1002 and coastal plains with  
4 the high seas level going up, it's going to affect all  
5 that, with the ice from the northwest to the Arctic coast  
6 opening up and now the barges are going through. If that  
7 doesn't tell you anything about protecting water and  
8 coastal plains, I don't know what history is. So I share  
9 that with you.

10           I also share the other one that when you have public  
11 meetings, you have the courtesy to let our council know  
12 because there needs -- really, this is a big issue and we  
13 need to know ahead of time. And just to assume that,  
14 well, the tribe has been contacted, that's not good one,  
15 especially with all the technology and everything else  
16 that's available.

17           And coastal plains 1002, going back to history, many  
18 of you remember the Reverend Dr. David Salmon, Tremble  
19 Gilbert, our chief, David -- many have spoken, and  
20 especially Jonathan Solomon, who I was mentored under,  
21 talking about this is exactly what's going to happen and  
22 you need to speak up and continue to do your work to  
23 protect what is going to happen in the Arctic Wildlife  
24 Refuge, or even behind the scenes between the Gwich'in  
25 Black River agreement which we have with a memo of

1 agreement.

2 And doing research, that's just a backdrop. We have  
3 a memo of agreement for anything development that happens  
4 without the local input, whether it be Arctic Village,  
5 Fort Yukon, Birch Creek, Stevens, Rampart, Beaver,  
6 Chalkyitsik, Circle, we all are affected one way or  
7 another because we are the subregion. And we are -- we  
8 are one of those that's really strong within the TCC  
9 region to organize a CATG, the Gwich'in Steering  
10 Committee, united and we are stronger.

11 And so we are here today. And I really don't want to  
12 take too much of my time to welcome to make a statement,  
13 mainly because I want to hear also from each and every one  
14 of you. I think it's really important in looking at that.

15 Why are we opposed to Arctic Wildlife Refuge.  
16 Because I just mentioned it, with the things that's  
17 happening: The global warming, the barge line from the  
18 east, from the northwest opening up right in front of us.  
19 All the changes that's happening. We are not just talking  
20 about economic development. We are talking about  
21 preserving water, preserving survivors and food security.

22 And so it is -- not only that, with subsistence, when  
23 you say "subsistence," we are talking about protection of  
24 food security. Climate change. And so it's really  
25 important to keep the people informed and the

1 communication, but in order to proceed with what we need  
2 to do, I would ask Mike, one of the other chiefs, to say  
3 something at this time.

4 And before we do, Joe, you could introduce your  
5 council today that is here and all that information. I  
6 understand 16 of you came in. And we have biology and  
7 everything else, information stacked up here and there.  
8 And I'll give it to you, Joe. Introduce your --

9 MR. JOE BALASH: So thank you. Thank you  
10 Chief James, for hosting us here today. And I do  
11 understand the short notice. It was unfortunate. So  
12 thank you, Chief James, for hosting us here today here in  
13 the home of your tribe and the Gwich'in.

14 We are here to talk with the community about the  
15 information contained in the draft EIS, the Environmental  
16 Impact Statement, for the leasing program for the 1002  
17 area, the coastal plain at ANWR. We are not here to  
18 convince anybody of anything. And instead, what we have  
19 brought with us is our team of scientists and experts. We  
20 have people from the BLM, from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife  
21 Service, the refuge staff, as well as some of the  
22 contractors who have helped us with this. We have a  
23 handful of alternatives that have certain conditions,  
24 stipulations that are different across each one of those  
25 alternatives.

1           And one thing that I do hope to convey is that we  
2 heard loud and clear that the Porcupine caribou herd and  
3 the calving grounds of the herd are incredibly important  
4 to protect. And I think in each of our alternatives, we  
5 have tried to take some measure of protection of that  
6 area. We have utilized the best data we had available to  
7 us to identify where the caribou are, when they are  
8 calving. We have many, many years of data to help us  
9 identify those lands and places and then have attached  
10 certain stipulations or conditions to ensure that we can  
11 look at the potential impacts to calving in those areas.

12           So please, if you would, we would be happy to provide  
13 the information. We have some of our people here that can  
14 answer your questions. And while we are noticed here for  
15 1:00 to 3:00, we definitely want to hear from everybody,  
16 so we can extend a little bit longer, if that's okay with  
17 you. And that would be fine with us.

18           Just to introduce some of the other people who are  
19 here, again, my name is Joe Balash. I'm the Assistant  
20 Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at the  
21 Department of the Interior. I grew up in Alaska in North  
22 Pole. I worked in state government for many years before  
23 going to Washington, D.C. in 2015 where I worked for  
24 Senator Sullivan and now in this particular job.

25           I'm joined with a colleague from the Secretary's

1 office, Steve Wackowski. He's the senior advisor to the  
2 Secretary on Alaska affairs, dealing not just with BLM,  
3 but with every part of the Department of the Interior. So  
4 if you have an issue with BIA, Steve is your guy to talk  
5 to.

6 Next to him is Mike Gerry. He is from the  
7 Solicitor's office. He is one of the attorneys that helps  
8 us plan our processes accordingly to the law. On down the  
9 line is Ted Murphy. He's the Acting State Director for  
10 the BLM. And then finally we have got Nicole Hayes. She  
11 is the project manager. She's the one that's been doing  
12 all of the work on this every day for the last, boy, 14  
13 months or so. And she probably knows where to find the  
14 answer to most things, even if she doesn't have the answer  
15 herself.

16 Around the room, we have a variety of other people  
17 who have these white name badges on. They are all part of  
18 our team that's here with us, and I'll do my best not to  
19 miss anybody. But Amy Lewis and Chad Prickles are with  
20 EMPSI. They are the contractor that's helping to keep the  
21 documents in line and together. We have Steve Berendzen;  
22 he's the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge manager.

23 And then as I go around, the next person I see is  
24 Paul Alexander. He's with -- I'm sorry. Alex Prichard is  
25 with ABR, one of the caribou specialists for us. Erin

1 Julianus is a terrestrial mammals biologist from the BLM.  
2 Paul Alexander [sic] is with Steven R. Braund &  
3 Associates. They gather a tremendous amount of  
4 subsistence information from across the North Slope, and  
5 that's really important to our understanding of the  
6 potential impacts. And then Steve Arthur is a caribou  
7 biologist on staff with the refuge, as well.

8 So that is our team. We are all here to help.

9 And then one other thing. Mary is our fantastic  
10 court reporter. She's got the task of keeping track of  
11 everybody's comments and making sure they get into the  
12 record. And it will be very helpful to her if you would  
13 clearly state your name for the record. And then also she  
14 may ask you some follow-up questions along the way just to  
15 make sure that we get things stated correctly in the  
16 record. So she might ask you how to spell perhaps the  
17 name of a river or a place. And we are here today to help  
18 give you information, but also to get your comments.

19 And then finally, one person who I neglected to  
20 mention, Sherman Hogue is also with us from BLM. He's our  
21 videographer and photographer who is helping us today to  
22 help document some of the meetings here that are going on  
23 so that we can further push the information out to the  
24 public.

25 And so we, again, are very happy to be here and look

1 forward to hearing what you have to say today. Thank you.

2 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: And to keep this  
3 moving, I want it stated as the chief representing the  
4 Gwichyaa Zhee tribal, that this is in no way a tribal to  
5 tribal consultation. I expect Joe and your panel to come  
6 back after all the hearing. And that's a request that we  
7 have as a tribe. So I just want to make sure that this is  
8 not a tribal to tribal consultation. So noted. Mike.  
9 Chief. You want a mic?

10 MR. MICHAEL PETER: I'll wait till the  
11 comment period.

12 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Mary Beth. I want to  
13 recognize my council first if they want to speak. Mary.

14 MS. MARY BETH SOLOMON: Good afternoon.  
15 My name is Mary Beth Solomon. I'm currently a council  
16 member on the tribe here. And I also work in the  
17 educational field. I have been involved in many different  
18 issues in my community and the region. Sometimes I do  
19 some statewide stuff.

20 However, we're here together today to listen to some  
21 comments on 1002 area that I know of. I remember when I  
22 was young it was something I never knew about, but  
23 throughout the years I learned, as well as anybody here  
24 can learn. Today we are here talking about protecting the  
25 1002 area, better known as Arctic Refuge or the ANWR area

1 along the coastal area up there in the northern area to  
2 our -- from our village.

3 As we all know, we depend on the Porcupine [sic] that  
4 goes up there and calve in the spring, which is right  
5 around the corner. That's our food security. We depend  
6 on this animal for our food, our basic needs. We also  
7 make clothing out of it. We use their bones to make tools  
8 and such things like that, that we are teaching our kids  
9 to do that because I believe in the future that we won't  
10 be able to go down to the store and buy food. We won't be  
11 able to go to the gas station. So I encourage our people  
12 to get healthy and learn how to do these things.

13 We fight for fish, and we will always fight for our  
14 food security because that's what we will depend on.

15 I remember when I moved back to Fort Yukon, 1970, my  
16 grandfather, Paul Solomon, Sr., said to my mother, the  
17 Yukon River could be full of money, but if there is no  
18 fish in there, where are you going to buy food? So think  
19 about that and learn and teach your people how to do these  
20 things. Invite them to your camps. Invite them out so  
21 that we are fighting for something we actually believe in.

22 We need to protect our land and animals and resources  
23 out there so we can continue living throughout the  
24 generations. As you all know, we have been here for over  
25 10,000 years, and no matter what the outside people do to

1 us, we will continue to survive for our future people. We  
2 are all going to be grandparents. We are going to get  
3 old, and I hope that I see our people grow with that. We  
4 need to continue that.

5 And also we fight for our water. Water is important.  
6 Your body is made up of 98 percent of water. Come on,  
7 folks. You got to drink water. We provide water. We are  
8 bringing water in, bottled water. For goodness sakes,  
9 let's protect our land out there and protect our water,  
10 animals and resources.

11 Mahsi.

12 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: As part of the  
13 courtesy, before we open the panel, I would like to  
14 recognize our elected council members, any one of you.  
15 Gerald, would you like to make a comment?

16 MR. GERALD ALEXANDER: I'll wait for the  
17 comment period.

18 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Carol.

19 MS. CAROL SHEWFELT: I'll make a comment,  
20 yeah. I get nervous.

21 So my name is Carol Shewfelt. I grew up in -- I am  
22 from Fort Yukon, but I was raised in Arctic Village. And  
23 my brother Paul is over there. But I'm really learning  
24 this -- I didn't learn about the Native way of life until  
25 after I left my parents' home because my dad raised us up

1 white. My mother agreed with that. That's how we grew  
2 up. Even my brother Paul, he didn't start fishing until  
3 after he left home. We didn't know about stuff like this  
4 until after we left home, so this is really a learning  
5 experience for me, too.

6 And you know -- and we do -- the Porcupine caribou  
7 herd is really important to me because I grew up in Arctic  
8 Village. And you know, we do have to protect our land and  
9 our water, you know.

10 If you think about -- I don't think about my  
11 grandkids. I think about my grandkids' grandkids and what  
12 we are going to leave them. Okay. I have to teach my  
13 grandkids about protecting the land and water because if  
14 that's gone, then there is nothing. So what's going to  
15 happen to my grandkids is their grandkids. That's how far  
16 we got to think ahead. So that's all I want to say.

17 Thank you.

18 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Thank you. Charlotte.

19 MS. CHARLOTTE KELLY-SPENCER: I'll wait.

20 I'll wait.

21 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Bernadette, would you  
22 please. As you all know, Bernadette is chief of the  
23 Gwich'in Steering Committee. I know that in a western way  
24 they call her an executive director, but she is the chief  
25 of the steering committee.

1 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: (Speaking in  
2 Gwich'in.) First I want acknowledge Jonathan Solomon's  
3 family and just that this is his hometown, also. I do a  
4 lot of -- I follow his path a lot of the times. I want to  
5 welcome you guys. This is my hometown. And we are the  
6 ones who is going to have to live with the aftermath of  
7 the destruction you are going to be causing. I do  
8 understand that you guys are changing a refuge into an  
9 oilfield, but we are going to be the ones who have to live  
10 with this aftermath. I know you don't care about our  
11 human rights or our survival, but we come from strong  
12 people that survive some of the coldest, harshest winters,  
13 and we will always remain here.

14 But what you are doing is wrong. You guys are not  
15 trying to take any -- in your reports, you have no local  
16 indigenous input. There is nothing in there about what's  
17 going to happen to us or what's going to happen to our  
18 future generations, what's going to happen to our food  
19 security. We are real people with children, with jobs,  
20 with families, and our concerns are valid.

21 70 percent of the United States oppose development in  
22 the Arctic Refuge. And this is considered federal land.  
23 So why aren't you having meetings outside of Alaska  
24 besides Washington, D.C.? I think that you guys should  
25 also -- you are just bulldozing your way in here and doing

1 what you want. You are not listening to the people of the  
2 U.S., of this country, and you are not listening to the  
3 local indigenous people.

4 The scientists -- you say you bring scientists.  
5 Well, we have scientists that also say that this is the  
6 wrong move to make. I know you guys, you know, have a job  
7 to do, but you have 13 communities, plus many others. We  
8 have 42 federally recognized tribes from the Tanana Chiefs  
9 Conference. We have Council of Athabaskan Tribal  
10 Governments are all telling you to stay out of the Arctic  
11 Refuge, to stay out of the calving grounds of the  
12 Porcupine caribou herd, but you are still moving in there.

13 You are having all these meetings, but you're not  
14 even taking any of our concerns. You are not putting it  
15 in any of your reports whatsoever.

16 You are still moving -- I mean, if you were listening  
17 to our voice, you would have slowed down this process.  
18 Something that takes four years, you are doing it in one  
19 year. And we have every right to be concerned. We have  
20 every right to be worried. And I'm worried. I have  
21 children that's going to have to live with the mistakes  
22 that you guys are making.

23 On record I would like to ask that you guys  
24 acknowledge the local indigenous people of this -- of  
25 Alaska, not just the corporations, but the indigenous

1 tribes. I'd also like to ask that you recognize the  
2 Gwich'in Nation of Canada because they, too, are also  
3 going to be affected by the decisions that you make.

4 You guys are the ones who are in charge of this. You  
5 guys can slow it down. You guys can make a  
6 recommendation. You have visited enough of our  
7 communities to have made some sort of connection with us.  
8 And I feel like you guys are not listening. We are  
9 worried. Start taking our concerns and our -- serious.  
10 That's what we are asking. So Mahsi Cho.

11 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: I think before we have  
12 information presented, it's really important with the time  
13 span for them to hear from every individual, so please  
14 raise your hand if you want to speak. You are welcome to  
15 speak. I encourage you.

16 MS. KELLY FIELDS: Hello. My name is  
17 Kelly Fields. I am from Fort Yukon. I had the pleasure  
18 of traveling down Lower 48 and witnessing other tribes  
19 that do not have the privilege that we have of hunting and  
20 fishing. I see them going to the stores for their meat,  
21 for their berries, for their fish. I recently learned how  
22 to cut fish, process meat and gather berries. And I do  
23 not want to see that for my grandchildren or their -- or  
24 any of our children. So I oppose drilling in the National  
25 Wildlife.

1 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Thank you. Vera.

2 MS. VERA ENGLISHOE: My name is Vera  
3 Englishoe. Before I speak, I would like to sing a little  
4 verse here. (Singing.) Praise God.

5 I would like to say if this meeting was coming on  
6 like 30 or 40 years ago, our elders, our strong leaders  
7 would have said no because they know what they are talking  
8 about. We all come from strong leaders. And I remember  
9 that.

10 I was born and raised here. And I am totally not for  
11 what's going on. We are going to lose it. We are going  
12 to lose our animals. That's what we eat. And for our  
13 generation, we have to think about them. So make the  
14 right decision. Money don't mean nothing. Our land is  
15 very important. We need to leave it alone.

16 Thank you. God bless all of you.

17 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Thank you, Vera.  
18 Anybody else? Bobby.

19 MR. BOBBY SOLOMON: Mahsi. You know, I  
20 traveled up that Porcupine River with my dad Charles  
21 Solomon. Every fall we hunt caribou to bring back meat to  
22 our family. We got a big family. I go to Venetie with  
23 snowmachine. I hunt caribou. I go to Old Crow with boat.  
24 I go above Old Crow and hunt caribou. These are the  
25 Porcupine caribou herd we are talking about here.

1           You know, I know you got these alternatives for C, B  
2 and whatever it was. But the last ones, the D1 and D2, no  
3 drilling activity on -- on the calving grounds of the  
4 Porcupine caribou herd. I think the Gwich'in people  
5 should stand up together and say that. All villages,  
6 stand up and say, hey, we want Alternative D or D1 or D2.  
7 No drilling activity on calving grounds of the Porcupine  
8 caribou herd, and this is why.

9           As Gwich'in people, we are -- we have been in this  
10 land, like Mary Beth said, 10,000 years. You know, we  
11 have been taught how to preserve meat, how to even tan  
12 skin, how to make our own clothing, everything, hunt,  
13 fish. This is our land. This is what we need to teach  
14 our kids. That's why there should be no drilling there  
15 because our generation that is still not here is what we  
16 are fighting for.

17           You know, if my dad was standing up here, I don't  
18 think you guys -- he would be really mad. Everything he  
19 did, he even gave his life to the Gwich'in people, to all  
20 of you Gwich'in people, so you wouldn't want to drill on  
21 that land. And now it's open because of Trump and his  
22 bunch.

23           So you know, take our word seriously here. I know  
24 you don't get much statements in Fairbanks from probably  
25 too much Gwich'ins, but we are in the village now. This

1 is where the meat comes. It doesn't go to Fairbanks.

2 Mahsi Cho.

3 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else?

4 MR. JOHN STOFFA: Hello, everyone. My  
5 name is John Stoffa. I was raised by the late Isaac Adsoe  
6 [ph] here in Fort Yukon. You know, my birth mother is  
7 from Barrow. And so I have the best of both worlds. You  
8 know, I'm Inupiat by blood, but I'm Gwich'in by tradition.  
9 And that's how I was raised all my life.

10 Most of my childhood I spent on the Black River up  
11 until I was 12 years old. As long as I can remember, I  
12 was out in the woods with my mother and grandmother,  
13 Margaret Adsoe, who always went with us every fall to go  
14 hunting.

15 But anyways, I have family in Nuiqsut and other  
16 places where Alpine oilfield opened up. And I remember, I  
17 worked on the Slope when they first opened up. They were  
18 like 400 yards, the size of their whole drilling pad,  
19 everything. They promised the Inupiat there they  
20 wouldn't encroach on the river, which they were hundreds  
21 of yards away from the river at that time.

22 Since then, they have gone expanded over 4,000 yards  
23 from one runway to two or three runways. They encroached  
24 right up to the Meade River. They've got fences all along  
25 the main riverbank there. Every promise -- almost every

1 promise they told the Inupiaqs they wouldn't do, they have  
2 done, all for the name of oil and wealth.

3 So I know a lot of people don't agree with a lot of  
4 things I have to say, but this is one thing I do agree  
5 with everybody here, especially the Gwich'in: That there  
6 should not be any oil drilling in ANWR.

7 MR. RICHARD CARROLL, JR.: Hello, my name  
8 is Richard Carroll, Jr. Born here in Fort Yukon. I'm a  
9 little disappointed in your Environmental Impact Statement  
10 survey, I guess, statement. But under your current  
11 administration, I guess you guys are kind of -- I guess  
12 you can't really say no to whoever is paying your salary.  
13 Commander in Chief. Going to set us back about 50 years,  
14 but that's another story.

15 But our nation is being run by profit-made  
16 corporations only, and the human rights of the Gwich'in  
17 people have been totally ignored. I don't agree with your  
18 survey. You did a good job, apparently, or maybe you  
19 didn't. I wasn't there. I almost went to Venetie when  
20 you had meetings up there and you had meetings in Arctic  
21 Village. That's fine.

22 You missed one other village, though, you know.  
23 Canyon Village is a village. There's nobody presently  
24 living there, but it is an existing village. You got  
25 property owners, you got Native shareholders of their

1 group, of their native group residing not only here in  
2 Fort Yukon -- I don't know if you met with them. You  
3 totally ignored one whole community of people. You know,  
4 they're living there.

5 And myself personally, 1974 I graduated from high  
6 school. I went out trapping that winter. I wanted to be  
7 a trapper since I was a little kid. And I spent almost 40  
8 years, winters, fur trapping. I'm not like some of my  
9 uncles trap, you know, in the off-season. That's a joke.

10 They used to say if it's worth 50 in the winter, it  
11 must be worth 20 in the summer. Bad joke, just to loosen  
12 you up a little bit.

13 My own -- my family, my dad, helped establish the  
14 village of Canyon Village and the community of Canyon  
15 Village in the '50s. They didn't end up staying there  
16 until -- only spent a couple years there, but later on my  
17 dad got a Native allotment about ten miles below Canyon  
18 Village.

19 And we established a home, had a home base there, you  
20 might say, for our outdoor activities. And I  
21 home-schooled my kids there. Two of my children  
22 home-schooled. They spent quite a bit of their youth  
23 there. And you know, hey, did you sit down and talk with  
24 us? How many families did you know living in the Arctic  
25 National Wildlife Refuge besides the ones you see on TV?

1 Is that what America is watching, a bunch of hippies out  
2 there making a living off the land when they really don't  
3 have to?

4 My income was fur trapping. I never had a regular  
5 job in 30 years. And the last one I got got my blood  
6 pressure so high I had to leave before I get permanently  
7 laid off. That's a joke, too.

8 But anyway, you just ignored people. You can't do  
9 that. You ignored a whole community. You ignored  
10 families that spent 30 years. A lot of summers I worked  
11 in tourism telling stories like this, you know, but true  
12 ones. But you ignored them. That's not right. Your  
13 whole process excluded too many people.

14 And for myself, 1962, 1963 in Canyon Village all the  
15 men went upriver, come back with 150 caribou, raft  
16 together, logged, boomed together. While they were gone,  
17 caribou ran through the village. I remember that. And  
18 later on in the late '70s -- I myself, I've killed  
19 hundreds of caribou, hundreds. I mean hundreds. I mean,  
20 the joke was, they should just have a zipper on them.

21 And you only get one chance at it, most of the time.  
22 That's the thing. They do not winter in that area. You  
23 miss that one chance, you are -- you are out of caribou  
24 for the rest of the year. Very seldom in the  
25 springtime --

1           A few years ago, maybe about four years ago, I  
2 noticed I got -- I spent the winter up there -- this is  
3 going to be my third winter I haven't been there in many  
4 years. Just due to complications and medical reasons and  
5 my family, I have been here in the village. I was getting  
6 pretty hard to put up with people. But thousands and  
7 thousands of caribou from about the Canadian border right  
8 into the village of Old Crow because this is May 9th, now.  
9 Ice had went out, and my wife and I and the kid and  
10 grandson, we went to Old Crow just to visit. We had  
11 plenty of gas left over, you know, and there was nobody  
12 around. We had been there a couple months by ourselves.

13           Anyway, thousands of caribou. And the only reason  
14 they were there was the unusual ice breakup. It happened  
15 so fast that in about 30 hours, you had a 40-foot drop.  
16 Ice went by and stacked the ice, stacked the ice. And as  
17 it was dropping, it was piling ice up. So for about 30  
18 miles below Old Crow, you had a canyon of five layers of  
19 ice like that, just like that.

20           That's very unusual. I talked to people when I was  
21 up there. They never seen nothing like it. We spent two  
22 days just chopping our way down to -- ice was piled up all  
23 over the place.

24           These kind of activities, these kind of changes --  
25 three years ago, I couldn't travel more than four miles

1 from my house because of warm winters.

2 There is global warming going on. I don't care what  
3 your boss says to you. It's happening. And you know, we  
4 can't be brow-beated and getting till we can't respond.  
5 That's what's happening to us. We're getting bombarded  
6 with fake news, you know. We know the source. So can't  
7 fool us.

8 But these are -- these are facts that has been  
9 ignored in your impact statement. You ignored people.  
10 You ignored knowledge of people who live there. Stanley  
11 Jonas, chief of Canyon Village, just recently passed away.  
12 Did you go see him before he passed away? He lived to be  
13 over 90 years old. I don't think you did. I don't think  
14 you did. My dad is still alive, but I don't know what  
15 good he will do now. Just end up telling you jokes, you  
16 know.

17 These people lived years and years in our side. And  
18 the Canadian -- we got a treaty with Canada. We have a  
19 treaty with Canada to protect the caribou herd. You  
20 ignore them. You ignore them. Are you going to tear this  
21 treaty up like the president done every other treaty? You  
22 can't do that. We live here. I'm not going to retire to  
23 Palm Springs. North to Alaska just don't work for us. We  
24 are going to die here. Born and raised here, not leaving.

25 Yeah. I'm not here to -- yeah. There might be an

1 oil boom or I might get a job on the pipeline. That's  
2 good. I'll get enough money just so I can spend it on  
3 trapping.

4 But anyway, those are some of the -- you didn't match  
5 up on some of those areas. And I ask you to go over it  
6 again. Go over it. Don't ignore people. Don't ignore  
7 people. We live. We are alive. We are real.

8 That's about all I can say. Thanks for your time.

9 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else? Paul.  
10 Gary.

11 MR. GARY LAWRENCE: My name is Gary  
12 Lawrence. Fort Yukon. I oppose any development on the  
13 refuge. There is no clean way to drill for oil. It's a  
14 dirty business. There is going to be contamination.  
15 There's going to be a lot of infrastructure, pipelines,  
16 roads.

17 And then this whole EIS process. You know, you guys  
18 aren't only violating Section 810 of ANILCA for  
19 subsistence priority, but you are violating Executive  
20 Order 13750 signed by Bill Clinton,  
21 government-to-government relationships. And also under  
22 the National Historic Preservation Act -- I forgot which  
23 section, but Section 7, 8 -- stating any development  
24 within our traditional territories, that the tribal  
25 government be consulted and do historic archeological

1 surveys. That hasn't been done, either.

2 Also under your EIS process, it says cooperative  
3 agencies. You have Venetie and Arctic there. Were they  
4 at the table when your EIS was developed? And also I know  
5 each department has a government-to-government policy  
6 which Obama put in saying each department has to develop a  
7 policy on how they are going to do a  
8 government-to-government relationship. So that hasn't  
9 been followed through, I don't think.

10 But yeah, it's just the whole process, I think, has  
11 to be -- you guys are pushing through the process and you  
12 are not getting all the stakeholders involved.

13 But yeah, oil is a dirty business.

14 And also, like Robert was saying, there is  
15 Alternative D1 and D2. Where is Alternative E, no action?  
16 Each EIS should have a no action.

17 MR. PAUL SHEWFELT: My name is Paul  
18 Shewfelt. Born and raised here. I was born in Paul  
19 Solomon's house right there, Main Street; '59, the year of  
20 statehood. I just turned 60 years old yesterday. And I  
21 thought to myself that from 60 to 70 I'm going to give it  
22 my all.

23 So would anybody in their right mind drill for oil  
24 under the dome of a rock in Mecca? Would anybody drill  
25 for oil under the wailing wall in Jerusalem? Those are --

1 you know what will happen. There is Muslims and  
2 Christians. And, oh, man, there would be war. And you  
3 know what? I think there is going to be a war, and it's  
4 not going to be of -- in the human way.

5 I think it's going to be in the spiritual realm  
6 because I did testify before that if the calving grounds  
7 are going to be disturbed, the earth is going to react  
8 violently. I said that in June. Nancy, remember that  
9 email? But a couple months later there was a big  
10 earthquake up there in the North Slope. Coincidence? You  
11 can think of it that way, but you know what? Thank you,  
12 Richard -- where are you? Fake news? I love that because  
13 it leads right into this.

14 Fake history. The Russians that were coming up the  
15 Yukon only made it as far as maybe, what, Tanana or  
16 Nulato? 1867. Sold our birthright and our inheritance  
17 when the line wasn't even drawn in Canada? That line was  
18 drawn -- it was cut in 1903 because of the Gold Rush.  
19 When you had some grand idea to build a dam and flood this  
20 whole area out, the Rampart dam conceived in World War II.  
21 Actually, they wanted to go across the Yukon River to go  
22 to Nome to give the Russians planes so they could bomb us  
23 later.

24 But anyway, the Army Corps of Engineers brought up  
25 the idea in 1964. And people fought against it here,

1 Gwichyaa Gwich'in. Now the same group we are fighting  
2 against ANWR. So it comes back.

3 The closest thing that we have on this planet to the  
4 Garden of Eden is ANWR. And that's how we believe. I  
5 believe personally that it's -- it's -- you don't know  
6 what you are doing. You don't realize the implications of  
7 how devastating it's going to be to go up in that land and  
8 disturb that area. I mean, I'm telling you, I'm not  
9 joking.

10 You want to go ahead and test it? Man, I'd be  
11 scared. I'd be scared to be tampering with something that  
12 was created. And our people here were created for a  
13 reason, too. You know, it's for -- if you look at ANWR,  
14 it's a big stop sign. The whole human race will look at  
15 that place and go, let's leave it alone. We got to do  
16 something different on this planet.

17 I don't understand how come there is trillions of  
18 cubic yards of natural gas, and people aren't choosing to  
19 use that. It's clean burning. You want to go up and mess  
20 around with the caribou herd?

21 And the other thing I want to bring up real quickly  
22 is -- I don't want to be disrespectful to you, Joe, but  
23 when we talk government-to-government relations, we want  
24 to talk to grandpa, not the grandson. That's just like me  
25 talking to a little kid in the corner. I don't want to be

1    disrespectful, but in government-to-government  
2    relationships, that's exactly how it works.  When you have  
3    leaders of two different countries talking, they are not  
4    going to -- you send the guy, the boss.

5           I once talked about a challenge to humanity.  Let's  
6    have a no-fly zone.  Let's have a no-fly zone in the Yukon  
7    Flats.  I tell you what.  Nothing comes in, nothing goes  
8    out.  We will send somebody out to check on your  
9    civilization in 100 years.  You can send somebody.  We'll  
10   see who is alive.  See who is around, you know.

11           In theory, you know what's going to happen.  The last  
12   big oil boom when they started up at North Slope -- why is  
13   it that we end up paying \$8 a gallon for gas?  Saudi  
14   Arabia, they got a lot of oil.  What do they pay?  10  
15   cents?  Who is making money here?  Who is behind the push  
16   to open up that place?  It can't be -- it can't be people  
17   that are going to benefit directly from it.  It's -- we  
18   are not going to really benefit.  We are going to lose,  
19   all of us.  Every one of us is going to lose in the long  
20   run.  And people that don't even live in our state are  
21   going to be benefitting.

22           The -- just by doing this presentation in this manner  
23   for the government to send representatives here, you are  
24   just opening up the door for lawsuits.  I can just see it  
25   now.  And the process wasn't done correctly, it's not --

1 it's flawed. And sure enough. But you have got -- you  
2 have got the Supreme Court being stacked. You have got  
3 people -- the Chief Justice has already represented the  
4 State of Alaska against the Native people in Alaska  
5 through the Katie John case in the Venetie decision.

6 Chief Justice Roberts, I met him down here at the  
7 airport. I said, what are you fine gentlemen doing in  
8 town, business or pleasure? We are going to Venetie. I  
9 said, for what? He said, we are attorneys. What's your  
10 name? He said, John Roberts. I told him, geez, with a  
11 name like that you could probably live up there. But  
12 George Bush appointed him on the way out the door, and  
13 he's already familiar with cases in Alaska. So you know  
14 where that's heading.

15 It's sort of sad that the government would go so far  
16 as to play those kinds of games because they know that  
17 what eventually is going to happen to the resources of  
18 Alaska. It's been ongoing in the back burners for many,  
19 many years.

20 Fake history. Look at the -- look at the land  
21 claims. It wouldn't even have happened if they weren't  
22 rushing the pipeline through. Did that come from the  
23 government? No. It came from people who wanted oil and  
24 wanted money. Yeah. It all just follows just a pattern.

25 And the people that hold power are the -- you know,

1 the oil people, why don't they try to follow something  
2 different? Why don't -- solar, wind, something clean.  
3 Things that we believe in. You know, it's not that hard  
4 to understand.

5 Why don't you give the Gwich'in brothers a chance to  
6 sit at the table of brotherhood and re-evaluate the course  
7 of human events and try to do something, learn from us.  
8 Just to come and ask for some process to go open up a  
9 sacred place on the -- like I say, that's the closest  
10 thing we have got to the Garden of Eden sitting right up  
11 there, and I'd be a damn fool or scared to even think  
12 about going there.

13 This camera crew came into town. Remember there was  
14 Native guys from Utah? Where were they from?

15 MR. MICHAEL PETER: Navajo Nation.

16 MR. PAUL SHEWFELT: And they asked, you  
17 guys go to ANWR? I said, are you crazy? Nobody is  
18 supposed to go there. Nobody is supposed to set foot in  
19 that land. The animals breed there. Once they come out,  
20 that's when we get them.

21 So I guess there is no question that -- whether I'm  
22 for opening it or closing it. I don't know. Draw your  
23 own conclusions. But if you missed the message, the  
24 message is clear. You don't know what you are doing. The  
25 people who want to open that do not know what is going to

1 happen in the future because of their actions. Now, you  
2 could follow this process and believe in it, but there  
3 is -- there is fair warning that if you don't listen, live  
4 with the consequences.

5 MR. GERALD ALEXANDER: Good afternoon. My  
6 name is Gerald Alexander. I'm from Fort Yukon. I was  
7 born and raised here. I'm on the Gwichyaa Gwich'in tribal  
8 council.

9 Boy, when you sit back there, you can really think of  
10 some things, but when you are up here, it's different.

11 Anyhow, I married a Gwich'in woman from Canada. I  
12 traveled the Porcupine River to hunt. And you know, the  
13 scenery is nice. You can make up there in ten hours max  
14 if you have a nice motor. The scenery is so beautiful  
15 that you've got to take your time. You are going to hunt.  
16 And nowadays with the climate change, you get to Canada,  
17 you are taking -- as an Alaskan, you cannot go across the  
18 border with a loaded gun.

19 Now times have changed. You have to take the shells  
20 out. If you go across the border with a duck in your boat  
21 that you got to eat, you get fined on the other side.  
22 They take money from you. They are scalping you.

23 In other words, I go to Canada to take my family  
24 home, visit. And my brother-in-laws take me out hunting.  
25 We have to travel extra, another 100 miles up the

1 Porcupine River to get our meat. In turn, we come back to  
2 Old Crow, we process it so it don't spoil. We got to  
3 travel all the way home. And we are talking 300 miles  
4 max. And we get it home, and we distribute it. People --  
5 it's hard.

6 It's hard for all us hunters here. To get in our  
7 boat, we got to have money up the bumholio. I'm serious,  
8 man. We got to have money. Money, oil -- I mean, gas and  
9 oil just to get in the boat and travel.

10 Once you have all that, you are good. You are on  
11 your way. But there is no telling where the caribou is  
12 because of climate change. We used to go to the border,  
13 sit there a couple days, once it starts snowing and here  
14 they come, thousands. Get your five -- fill your five  
15 kegs, you know, we are happy. We come home, process it.

16 And now it's changed. They move -- because of the  
17 big fire back in 1990, I believe it was, they don't travel  
18 that area, that way anymore. They go up further up into  
19 Canada. They travel way up. And my -- you know, I'm --  
20 my family, Peter Lawrence, when I was young he told me  
21 once that, I opened the door one morning and I was combing  
22 their hair, he said. Caribou running left and right. I  
23 was combing their hair. He said, I don't see that no  
24 more. I mean, it's rarely seen. Rarely.

25 So if you open up ANWR, I mean, my God, what are we

1 going to do? We can't live on Spam the rest of our life.  
2 I mean, most people can, but canned meat just ain't the  
3 thing anymore.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. MICHAEL PETER: Good afternoon. Thank  
6 you for coming and listening to our voices. I hope it's  
7 being heard, not on deaf ears. My name is Michael Peter.  
8 I'm the Gwichyaa Gwich'in tribal member, Second Chief.

9 I could follow up on what John said. You know, a lot  
10 of people, they are impacted. They can't even barely go  
11 out in their own country, their own land that was theirs  
12 because of all the oil development and all the  
13 infrastructure that is in place, especially with Homeland  
14 Security now. I'm sure security is a lot tighter up  
15 there. You probably can't even go out in your backyard  
16 with a gun to even look for a grouse.

17 But not only that, that area that they are talking  
18 about developing is going to be impacting one of the  
19 greatest number in the world of waterfowl, also, that, you  
20 know, hatch there, that are also -- the young ones are --  
21 the birds lay eggs there. And they are calving grounds,  
22 also.

23 So it's not only impacting us; it's going to impact  
24 everybody else, like our neighbors in Canada. The  
25 migratory treaty is in place. Are they getting a chance

1 to speak on their behalf, what's happening to their food  
2 security, also.

3 Not only that, it's a violation of our human rights  
4 as indigenous people, not only nationally, but  
5 internationally.

6 And I think with that, you know, I mean, like the  
7 earthquake that happened, that never happens up there.  
8 You know, that is that's the heart and soul of Mother  
9 Earth that's being messed with up there.

10 It's not only going to impact our people, but it's  
11 going to impact everybody else. It's going to be like a  
12 ripple effect. And once you develop that, is it going to  
13 stop anywhere? What's Alaska going to be? Alaska is not  
14 going to be the last frontier. What's going to be left?

15 You know, we have -- we have the younger generation  
16 behind us what are growing up. I got kids. I worry about  
17 them every day. What's going to be left for them.

18 And also with that, too, our water rights are being  
19 infringed upon, also.

20 You know, there is so much. I can go on and on, but  
21 I'd like to thank you for coming here, and I hope that you  
22 guys do make the right choice and right decision. I'm  
23 sure you got family and kids, also, and they are going to  
24 be impacted, also.

25 With the Trump Administration that's going on right

1 now, they've never stepped foot up in Alaska yet. There's  
2 not one delegate that I see, besides you guys up here that  
3 knows what our life is like. Our life is not easy, but  
4 it's the way we choose to live.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. SHIRLEY FIELDS: Good afternoon.  
7 Thank you for coming here. My name is Shirley Fields. I  
8 work as a realty director and natural resource director  
9 for the Gwichyaa Gwich'in tribal government. I like a lot  
10 of these comments. I also oppose any oil and gas leasing  
11 in ANWR, the coastal plain.

12 I thought that there was very good comments made by  
13 Richard and Gary, along with all the rest of the people  
14 that commented, but two points I wanted to point out was I  
15 think that you guys need to do your research. It does not  
16 include all the stakeholders involved.

17 And I just wanted to make -- my final comment is, I  
18 think you guys should include Alternative E, no action on  
19 any development.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. PATRICK ADAMS, JR.: Hello. I'm  
22 Patrick Adams, Jr., but everybody calls me Billy. Just  
23 like Mike and Gerald were saying that, yeah, I want our  
24 kids to see that land we seen all these years and to  
25 hopefully have them, their kids, seeing it, too, you know.

1 But yeah, that's all I want to say. But then -- yeah,  
2 just want our land to be protected, you know.

3 MS. CAROL SHEWFELT: Okay. Again, I'm  
4 Carol. I'm going to make my comment now. Listening to  
5 everybody here talking about the land and water and the  
6 animals, I want to talk about some people. I want to talk  
7 about the people of Arctic Village right now.

8 You know, I grew up in Arctic Village, and a few  
9 years ago I got sick, and I called my dad up in Arctic  
10 Village, Allen Tritt. I called him up and I told him, I'm  
11 sick. I got cancer. Two days later there was a caribou  
12 on the plane on Wright Air; every piece cut up, every  
13 piece separated, every single piece of that caribou was  
14 sent to me.

15 And during my treatments, I boiled up those caribou  
16 meat -- that caribou meat, and I drank the caribou broth.  
17 And I make soup, and I called people in Fairbanks and told  
18 them come get the soup and meat. And they sent me berries  
19 from the land.

20 And the doctors couldn't -- they kept telling me --  
21 they were really surprised. You are so healthy during  
22 this treatment. It's that caribou and those berries that  
23 saved me.

24 Right now in Arctic Village -- I just wanted to  
25 mention that, you know.

1           Right now in Arctic Village, there is men going out  
2 hunting for caribou, and they are taking it to the hall.  
3 And all those women, little kids up in Arctic Village  
4 today, right now today, cutting up caribou meat. They are  
5 happy. Those kids are giving out meat to every household  
6 in Arctic Village. They are happy for that caribou. They  
7 are not going to the store and buying meat. We are not  
8 going to the store and buying meat. That's not what we  
9 do.

10           But I see pictures of it. I see pictures of it. And  
11 there is elders, there is men, there is women, there is  
12 kids, there is grandkids sitting on the floor with the  
13 caribou right there in front of them, and they are all  
14 cutting it up. That's life.

15           And that's my comment. Thank you.

16                       CHIEF NANCY JAMES: This is an opportunity  
17 for everybody to really express their comment. It's  
18 really important. Thank you.

19                       MR. STANLEY JONAS: Good evening, Chief  
20 and council and tribal people and our Gwich'in people.  
21 And I'd like to say that (speaking in Gwich'in) from  
22 Canyon Village. I'm sorry that none of my members are  
23 here today because everything is rough. Life is rough.  
24 You guys go home, you guys have a rough life, too, also.

25           But the reason we're here today is that we want to

1 say -- I'd like to say that when you guys say 1002 lands,  
2 when you guys say all this stuff, I'd like to say that  
3 this is the calving grounds. I was born in Fairbanks, so  
4 I had to go to Fairbanks. And so that caribou have to  
5 travel from where their homeland -- when they go over  
6 there, that's their clan. Not just the caribou. It's  
7 also for every other animals, the lakes, you know, the  
8 birds, as they say.

9 But there is a lot in our lakes. There is lots in  
10 our streams. There is lots. There is -- that's another  
11 source of water for our source that combines to all of our  
12 water, all of our rivers.

13 And so I would just like to say that life is hard and  
14 hopefully you guys will go home and take that under  
15 consideration.

16 And just like they said, you guys got to go to the  
17 store and stuff like that. I see myself going to the  
18 store like that. I never -- that's my -- 200 miles up the  
19 Porcupine River is the Canyon Village, 200-plus by the  
20 border. So that's where my family was raised for a long  
21 time. And I never got to go up there for a couple years  
22 now because I got to work. I got to earn the money to get  
23 the gas, earn the money to get the oil, earn the money to  
24 get everything like that. Just like you guys got a job,  
25 I'm trying to do that.

1           And so I'd like to say that that is a very spiritual  
2 place, and I hope -- I hope you guys understand that it is  
3 going to affect you guys, also. And it's going to affect  
4 your kids, also. And there is a lot of resources out  
5 there, but there is not always going to be the same  
6 resource out there. Everything got to come to an end,  
7 just like my life is going to come to an end, just like  
8 your guys' life is going to come to an end. We're here to  
9 talk about the kids' life, our next generation.

10           I see that I'm the youngest person in this room, so I  
11 should have to talk for the younger people. And I say I  
12 want to talk for you guys, future generations, also, that  
13 this is going to affect your guys' families also, not just  
14 ours.

15           Thank you.

16                           MS. BELVA ANSAKNOK: My name is Belva  
17 Ansaknok, and I never made a speech in my life. So here I  
18 am. But it had to take something this important to bring  
19 me up here.

20           I was born here and I grew up here. When I was five  
21 years old I entered BIA school, a Native talker. No  
22 English. They put us in school and they translated us to  
23 English. English language. That's all we could talk.  
24 They stop us from talking it. But they taught us English,  
25 all right. But they didn't teach us anything else. Just

1 the language, nothing to go with it. Not that, hey, there  
2 is your Yukon River. Hey, they didn't teach us about  
3 that. They just taught us straight English language. And  
4 this day, I don't think it did us any good.

5 I mean, if I was five years old and I grew up  
6 Gwich'in, maybe I'd be convincing you guys in Gwich'in.  
7 But it's not going to happen now. But I grew up in those  
8 villages, too.

9 But I'll tell you something: One time I went up to  
10 Arctic Village and I went to -- I stayed up there the  
11 summertime, and then I went to this family, and they said,  
12 let's go up to Daa'chunla'. Oh, okay. Let's go. So we  
13 went up there. And my grandma, she said, do you know  
14 where you are going? I said no. I don't know where I'm  
15 going. You are going where no man ever made footprint.  
16 There is not a footprint up there that belongs to anybody.

17 But mine is there now, but it doesn't do any good.  
18 But they are talking about this -- they were talking about  
19 caribou calving grounds. At that time I didn't know it  
20 was ANWR. In fact, I didn't even know about ANWR till a  
21 couple of years ago because there was no information. All  
22 your data you got is in your office. Right? Does it get  
23 mailed to us? No. Nothing. We don't get nothing.

24 Yesterday at 4:00, I had a phone call. They told me  
25 there is going to be an ANWR meeting. I said, where at?

1 Tribal hall. That's how much information we are getting.  
2 Matter of hours with no paperwork, nothing.

3       Anyways, I really believe that -- that caribou  
4 calving grounds, I heard about it all my life, but it  
5 never really connected to me until now because if you guys  
6 open that, guess how much footprints are going to be up  
7 there. It's going to outnumber the caribou, right? You  
8 guys are going to outnumber them, right?

9       Anyway, man, this is -- I think it's pretty bad the  
10 way we are getting treated. I know they educated me, but  
11 that's all they did. But they should have educated me  
12 about the stuff that was going on here, not in a book that  
13 I have to learn to speak. And there are stories about  
14 Dick and Jane, and it doesn't do me any good now. But at  
15 that time if they taught me, I don't know. I wouldn't be  
16 standing here alone, I don't think. I wouldn't be talking  
17 English.

18       And I think you guys are wrong. I don't think you --  
19 you know, if -- if you are going to -- if you are going to  
20 build something, you go out to the land and you take a  
21 bucket of dirt off the ground. Okay. You put that bucket  
22 of dirt on that side. Now, what's -- which one is losing  
23 out? You know, this one that they are taking it away  
24 from. They are building the other side bigger than this  
25 side.

1           So I don't know if you guys understood an English  
2 word I said, but I said it anyway. Okay? Any questions?  
3 Any questions?

4                   MR. JOE BALASH: I think Mary needs to  
5 know how to spell your name.

6                   CHIEF NANCY JAMES: There was a request  
7 for a five-minute break, so we will take that and then we  
8 will continue.

9                   (A break was taken.)

10                  CHIEF NANCY JAMES: The mic is now open to  
11 continue for anybody. Please come up. We need your  
12 input.

13                  MR. JOHN STOFFA: I get so nervous  
14 standing in front of people, you forget what you want to  
15 say and half the things you want to say.

16                  I moved back here to Fort Yukon 25 years ago, and the  
17 first ten years I spent moving back here, the family that  
18 they talk about that lived in Canyon Village, I traveled  
19 every year for the first ten years I moved back here to  
20 Canyon Village and hunted caribou. And every year we  
21 hunted caribou successfully. We would have a boat full of  
22 caribou and, with God's blessing, we would have a moose,  
23 also, on the way home.

24                  The last 15 years, I have not been able to hunt the  
25 caribou at the border. That's 15 years we haven't been

1 able to hunt caribou at the border. And what's the answer  
2 we get from people that don't live here? You know, they  
3 want to degrade Natives, thinking we are all jobless,  
4 we're all on welfare and everything else, we live off  
5 federal funding.

6 Well, I have a job, and most of these people have  
7 jobs. Have you tried to go to the grocery store here and  
8 buy yourself a dinner? Go to the store and -- get a job  
9 and go to the store and buy yourself groceries. We pay  
10 \$18 for a gallon of fresh milk over here, you know, when  
11 you guys got the cows right there in Fairbanks and paying  
12 2-, \$3 a gallon. We pay 8- to \$10 a gallon of gas,  
13 depending on the price of gas going on out here. You guys  
14 got it easy compared to how we have it.

15 And you know, just hearing that from a lot of people,  
16 you know, they could have pork chops and steaks and  
17 everything. No. Even us people -- I'm an electrician by  
18 trade, and I have been an electrician for almost 20 years.  
19 And I can't afford to feed my family at this grocery  
20 store. My paychecks will be completely gone just feeding  
21 my family at the prices we pay here for groceries.

22 And then -- yeah, we could fly to Fairbanks and get  
23 it cheaper, but that's 2- to \$300 for a round-trip ticket.  
24 And then the price of freight has gone up. We're paying  
25 \$1.70 a pound for freight. For four boxes of groceries I

1 brought home, they wanted \$300. Who can afford those  
2 prices?

3 We choose to live here because this is where our  
4 ancestors, our family, and we were raised to live in this  
5 lifestyle. And we are being forced to change our  
6 lifestyle by just the prices of our groceries and the  
7 prices of our gas.

8 You know, it's so easy to say one thing on social  
9 media, but come out here and live here and live with a job  
10 and try living out here. It's not easy at all, as Stanley  
11 said.

12 Speaking of young, I might be the second youngest  
13 person here. Makes me feel -- I'll be 47 this year.  
14 Anyway, I just forgot to say a few things.

15 Like I said, ten years I spent hunting caribou at the  
16 border. The last 15 years, I haven't seen a caribou at  
17 the border. It might be climate change. But if you ask  
18 me, it's the hunting guides that get dropped off by the  
19 dozens along the Brooks Range. They are chasing the  
20 caribou further north. They take shots at the lead  
21 caribou and they go further north. Then these oil rigs  
22 and platforms and everything.

23 I worked on the Slope for ten years. I'm proud to  
24 say haven't worked on the Slope for 20-plus years because  
25 I don't agree with what's happening there. And I went to

1 school and got another trade so I wouldn't have to be  
2 forced to work on the Slope.

3 But it is detrimental that these people get their  
4 foot into ANWR, just like the Alpine oilfield, they are  
5 going to promise not to expand over this much area, but  
6 give them ten years, and the whole ANWR will be full of  
7 drilling rigs and platforms and roads and everything else,  
8 satellites, expansions here and there. They will break  
9 every promise they make about ANWR. And I promise you  
10 that.

11 Thank you.

12 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Mic is open. Anybody  
13 else? Duane.

14 MR. DUANE SOLOMON: Kind of nervous for a  
15 speech. Anyway, I'm opposed to drilling in ANWR. You  
16 know why? I used to work in the oilfield. I worked at  
17 Alpine from day one. Used to watch the caribou, thousands  
18 of caribou come by. There was one pad that we were  
19 drilling on. Thousands of caribou came by.

20 Year after year, less and less caribou. Now, like  
21 today, there would be, like, 20 or 30 of them out there.  
22 That's all you ever see now. You don't see them. Once  
23 they build those gravel roads, thousands of miles of  
24 gravel roads, trucks, vehicles, vehicles pollute the air  
25 up there. They don't monitor the air quality up there. I

1 see these diesel trucks just idling all winter long, 24/7.  
2 Pollutes the air.

3 Also -- I'm kind of going brain dead here. I thought  
4 about everything when I was sitting down, but it went  
5 away.

6 But why I'm opposed to that, because it changed the  
7 caribou. It chased them away from the oilfield. Oilfield  
8 is not good. I'm a witness to that. I saw it. I've seen  
9 it with my own eyes. I don't know why you guys want to  
10 drill in ANWR, anyway. I mean, Alpine, Kuparuk, Prudhoe  
11 Bay, you guys got new technology. The oil companies got  
12 new technology where they get more oil out of a well. I  
13 mean, how much money do they need?

14 Once you build a road and pad in ANWR, you never take  
15 back ANWR again. ANWR will never be the same. The  
16 animals will never be the same. All the pollution will  
17 scare them away.

18 And that's what I -- I'm seeing. I already saw it.  
19 I saw it in Kuparuk. I saw it Alpine. You got to think  
20 really hard. Once they build that road, that's it.  
21 You'll never going to get it back. ANWR will be  
22 destroyed.

23 So I wish you guys would think really hard on that.  
24 Oil companies are powerful. They are the ones causing all  
25 this. All the oil companies.

1           We want our caribou to migrate like they usually do.  
2           Once you put gravel roads and pads, they are going to  
3           change their migrations, and it will be for the worse.  
4           They go up -- the caribou go up there to lay -- not to  
5           lay -- to have their calves. You guys scare them away.  
6           They go somewhere else. Now all the predators they try to  
7           avoid, game on. They are just going to destroy them. So  
8           think about that.

9           That's all I've got to say. Thank you. Mahsi Cho.

10                        CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Charlene, I know you  
11           want to say something.

12           Don't forget the mic is for you.

13                        MS. CHARLENE FISHER: Mahsi Cho.

14           (Speaking in Gwich'in.) Good afternoon. My name is  
15           Dr. Charlene Fisher. I am the executive director of CATG.  
16           Thank you to the people of Gwichyaa Zhee for allowing me  
17           to speak. And thank you Khehkwaii James and Khehkwaii  
18           Peter for allowing me to speak on tribal lands.

19           As a Beaver tribal member, I don't have an  
20           opportunity to comment unless I travel to Fort Yukon or to  
21           Fairbanks. BLM is only doing public meetings in Arctic  
22           Village, Venetie, Fort Yukon, but none of the other  
23           communities that were granted tribal consultation have had  
24           the opportunity to comment on the EIS. And their  
25           communities will be impacted, as well.

1 I distributed to you the CATG resolution. That  
2 resolution affirms the CATG commitment to protect the  
3 birthplace of the Porcupine caribou herd. It is signed by  
4 all ten tribes and attested for their support, all the way  
5 from Rampart, Stevens Village, Beaver, all the way to  
6 Canyon Village, including all of our communities. And as  
7 one organization, we stand together united in this  
8 position.

9 We support option of no development. And there are  
10 many things in this EIS that are very concerning. First  
11 of all, as an indigenous researcher, you know, that's what  
12 education does. It teaches you these different  
13 methodologies.

14 There is a number of methodologies and different  
15 types of things that -- you know, shame on BLM for  
16 excluding so many of their stakeholders. To have findings  
17 that are crafted to -- to a particular end is not  
18 research. It's a position paper of some sort. You have  
19 to triangulate data, you know, be objective, all of those  
20 things that lead to a conclusion. If you already know the  
21 conclusion at the end, you are not -- you know, what kind  
22 of statement is that? It's not something that I feel any  
23 researcher should be proud to be part of.

24 I have a number of comments, and bear with me as I go  
25 through them.

1           So the most egregious part of the draft BLM EIS is  
2           that it doesn't acknowledge the input of tribal authority  
3           of these self-governing entities and all but ignores the  
4           comments of the tribal membership. There have been tribal  
5           member after tribal member come to you pleading for this  
6           development to be stopped, and these tribal -- these same  
7           tribal members, Gwich'in on both sides of the border in  
8           Canada and Alaska, have been land and resource management  
9           managers of these resources in this area for thousands of  
10          years.

11          To ignore their comments, to maliciously, callously,  
12          you know, dismiss ancestral knowledge, traditional  
13          ecological knowledge accepted in the areas of academia  
14          worldwide is unacceptable. The sacred nature of the  
15          calving grounds is something that is putting pressure and  
16          stress on already a stressed people that is undergoing  
17          extreme language loss, cultural change; all of these  
18          pressures that come to do with colonization.

19          Those, you know, pressures are only compounded with  
20          these sort of on-the-fly initiatives, you know, political  
21          agenda of one politician or another who, you know, threw  
22          in a little caveat into a tax bill, and then suddenly here  
23          we all are, you know, talking about this.

24          The divide-and-conquer strategies that have been used  
25          to put one agenda to one indigenous group of people and

1 then another to another group of indigenous people has,  
2 you know, been used for many years. And you know,  
3 indigenous people, we stick to the resolve that the  
4 birthing grounds are sacred. They are not to be  
5 developed.

6 You know, going against your own rules by not having  
7 ANILCA 810 be properly followed by, you know, having this  
8 refuge that suddenly is now developed, you know, that --  
9 you know, your intent or the intent of the law is well  
10 known and well justified. But for the people, the  
11 Gwich'in stand unified that this place should not be  
12 developed.

13 Ignoring the 1987 Porcupine herd conservation  
14 agreement, ignoring the International Porcupine Caribou  
15 Board and their management, ignoring the input of Canada,  
16 and ignoring the input of the Gwich'in First Nations, you  
17 know, and saying that they -- you know, the people will  
18 not be impacted, you have heard many experiences of our  
19 people having these interrelated clan systems, family  
20 systems where they help one another. They hunt with one  
21 another. They clearly will be impacted.

22 If the potential -- and the potential is great for  
23 the caribou herd's numbers to be diminished, for the  
24 calving ground to impact the health of the herd, for the  
25 health of the herd to be maintained in a, you know, an

1 oilfield, all of those things really have -- are going to  
2 have a great impact on the Porcupine caribou herd and, as  
3 such, will have impact on the people. To say so in  
4 your -- the BLM-developed draft EIS statement is just  
5 irresponsible and unacceptable.

6 You know, CATG strongly recommends that you  
7 reconsider your conclusions that the Gwich'in people will  
8 not be impacted by this irresponsible development. The  
9 people of Arctic Village, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Chalkyitsik  
10 will all be directly impacted from the potential harms  
11 from this development. And the regional ties that exist  
12 through these interwoven systems will be secondarily  
13 impacted in many communities in the region.

14 There is already impacts caused by this process. You  
15 are causing stress on these people. You are causing  
16 unnecessary worry. You are causing time and resources on  
17 behalf of tribal governments who are already stressed to  
18 the max, on even CATG's time and efforts.

19 You know, there is -- there are so many things that  
20 we can be working on in a positive manner. CATG is known  
21 nationally for their work in self-governance. We have  
22 some of these people here, Pat Stanley sitting over here,  
23 some of the elder people mentioned: Stanley Jonas, Chief  
24 Stanley Jonas, and all of those old ancestor -- you know,  
25 our people, our elders, they worked very hard to establish

1 this self-governance.

2 These are people who are independent. They want to  
3 be self-sufficient. They don't, you know, come begging  
4 for things. They are not asking for, you know, maybe I  
5 get a new gym out of this. Maybe BLM will build us a new  
6 community hall. We are not asking for anything. We are  
7 standing firm that the Porcupine caribou herd stays, you  
8 know, protected and the sacred place stays sacred.

9 So you know, the work that CATG did over all these  
10 years built out of this self-sustaining, self-governing  
11 independent sort of Alaskan spirit should be celebrated by  
12 people like yourself, scientists, managers, Alaskans, and  
13 supported.

14 My ask on behalf of CATG is to revise your  
15 Environmental Impact Statement, redo the ANILCA 810  
16 analysis to fully consider the impacts to the Gwich'in.  
17 These revisions would allow BLM the opportunity to  
18 properly conduct hearings and conduct proper tribal  
19 consultation with all of the impacted tribes and come to a  
20 conclusion that is not biased and is an honest  
21 straightforward piece of research.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 MS. KAREN DIXON: (Speaking in Native  
24 American language.) I'm from Lower 48, New Mexico. I'm  
25 Dene Navajo from the Navajo Nation tribe, and have come up

1 here to live and to work amongst the Gwich'in people. I  
2 also work with six different other villages, as well. I  
3 stand before you as a community member, as a Native  
4 American, and as part of the sovereign nation throughout  
5 our United States.

6 I come to you with great concern about what this  
7 public law holds. It is my understanding in talking in a  
8 brief discussion with these folks up here that this public  
9 law started way a number of years before it was passed in  
10 2017. And that this public law passed in December 22nd of  
11 2017 was sponsored by someone from Texas. And so it was  
12 also attached to a tax law.

13 So we have a number of variables that are impacting  
14 the things that you are commenting on today. And what I  
15 do know that the government is aware of and is fully ready  
16 to respond to our things like stand-ins, riots. I'm not  
17 proposing them. I'm just saying that those are kinds of  
18 things that they respond to. Lawsuits. Because sometimes  
19 the comments about our culture, the comments about our  
20 future of our people, our young people, the sustainability  
21 and the sovereignty of our Indian people, our Indian  
22 nations, is not what's at their best interest.

23 I asked about this law in terms of what it means to  
24 our tribal people. What it means is that right now you  
25 have a minimum -- they have a minimum of two leases that

1 they are required to do. It's not whether they want to or  
2 not. The law says you will have two leases. They could  
3 go up as far as ten, maybe more.

4 The other thing is that once the drilling starts,  
5 once the operations all start, none of the money goes to  
6 the tribes. 50 percent of the money comes to the state of  
7 Alaska and the other 50 percent of the dollars go into the  
8 general coffers of the treasury. And so those are  
9 important things for our people to understand, for you all  
10 to understand.

11 And what it may take is for you all going down and  
12 visiting your congressman and your state representatives.  
13 And it's a very difficult thing. I see somebody shaking  
14 their head. It's a very difficult thing to do, going to  
15 Washington. The only way that this thing will stop -- I  
16 heard many of you say no, don't do it. Don't drill.  
17 Don't do any of those kind of activities. Stop. The only  
18 way that it's going to stop is if the law changes. And  
19 that's it.

20 I'm deeply concerned about the livelihood of Native  
21 people. I'm deeply concerned that public law 93-638,  
22 Indian self-determination, is understood and implemented  
23 with tribal people. That's the law that levels the  
24 playing field. But it's much bigger sometimes in another  
25 public law.

1           And so I'd be interested in hearing from these folks  
2 how maybe they can support bringing some of that money  
3 back to here or even stopping it. And I'm here to help.  
4 I'm here to support.

5           So those are my comments today to you all is it's a  
6 big, big thing that they are asking, not just to hear  
7 about no, don't do it, it's going to hurt our caribou,  
8 it's going to hurt the future. They need to hear other  
9 things about what are -- what are going to -- how is it  
10 going to impact your tribe in terms of dollars because  
11 it's going to happen. What's going to happen to the land?  
12 How much of that poison is going to go into the land and  
13 filter down under the -- under the land, into the ocean?  
14 How is that going to be compensated for?

15           So I am deeply concerned about this public law and  
16 how it's going to impact these folks. Thank you.

17                   MS. NANCY SHEWFELT: Hello. My name is  
18 Nancy Shewfelt. I'm from Fort Yukon, raised here. I  
19 wanted to -- just want to make a comment that Bureau of  
20 Land Management conveys a message to me that you are  
21 responsible to be good stewards of our lands. So I would  
22 highly -- I guess I would want to be -- I want you to  
23 convince me that you are good stewards of our lands that  
24 we have here and have consideration for all the  
25 inhabitants of the land we are concerned with, the people,

1 the animals. And just be good stewards.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: I just want  
4 to make a couple comments. As Gwich'in people, we have a  
5 spiritual and cultural connection to the land and to the  
6 Porcupine caribou herd. And no amount of money is going  
7 to change that. We don't want any money. We want healthy  
8 land. We want healthy animals. We want a healthy  
9 environment. No amount of money is going to change our  
10 minds on that.

11 I'm a little bit, you know, upset that I heard that.  
12 We have never asked for money. We do not want money. We  
13 want our children to have a healthy environment to survive  
14 off of. Of course we understand. I go to D.C. almost  
15 every month, almost every week. So I do know how hard it  
16 is to go down there. But this is -- this fight is not  
17 over until the -- I will stand and I will fight unless --  
18 until the first rig goes in there. And I will keep  
19 fighting after because our children are going to be the  
20 ones who have to live with the aftermath. And we are not  
21 giving up. I won't give up.

22 Thank you.

23 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: I'd like to ask for  
24 those that have not addressed anyone here. Make sure. I  
25 want to make sure.

1           MR. DACHO ALEXANDER: My name is Dacho  
2 Alexander from Fort Yukon. There are just a couple  
3 things. I read in the paper that Mr. Balash -- is that --  
4 is that you?

5           MR. JOE BALASH: Yes, sir.

6           MR. DACHO ALEXANDER: I heard that you  
7 stated that the majority of Alaskans were for development,  
8 and that may be true.

9           But I also want to talk a little bit about another  
10 proposed project by the Department of the Interior that  
11 had widespread Alaskan support. And it's a project that  
12 Paul had alluded to earlier, and that's the Rampart  
13 Project. And that is in 1954.

14           The Army Corps of Engineers proposed building a dam  
15 across the Rampart, which is downriver from here. The  
16 effect of building the dam is that it would produce 50  
17 times the amount of electricity that Alaska needed at the  
18 time, in 1954.

19           Now, the downside is that it would create a lake the  
20 size of Lake Erie. It would be the largest manmade  
21 reservoir even today if they had -- if they had done it.

22           This idea had widespread support. In fact, in the  
23 run up to the 1960 presidential election, both John F.  
24 Kennedy and Richard Nixon came to Alaska saying we support  
25 the Rampart dam project. John F. Kennedy. Can you

1 imagine that? Our wise, wise iconic leader, John F.  
2 Kennedy, was in favor of flooding nine villages,  
3 displacing all the people in the Yukon Flats. Well, we  
4 were told that we would get houses on the lakefront. They  
5 actually said that, houses on the lakefront.

6 1962. At the election in 1962, the Alaska State  
7 Legislature, every single person elected to the  
8 legislature at that time had also supported the Rampart  
9 project. Every single person elected. So to say that the  
10 Rampart project had widespread support is kind of an  
11 understatement. It had universal support.

12 Well, universal support except for a rowdy bunch of  
13 Yukon Flats residents, Gwich'in people, Duane Solomon's  
14 father, and eventually a group of conservationists, the  
15 same people that are basically leading the fight against  
16 ANWR right now.

17 Now, fast forward to 2004, 2004 here in the Yukon  
18 Flats. Once again, Department of the Interior, this time  
19 Fish & Wildlife refuge, they wanted to do a land exchange  
20 with the Doyon Corporation, which would effectively build  
21 a road into the Yukon Flats, into the heart of the Yukon  
22 Flats where you are right now. And you are probably  
23 familiar with this project. And in exchange the Yukon  
24 Flats -- the refuge system as a whole would get 2 percent  
25 of the wellhead. And this would fund the Fish & Wildlife

1 Service all over the United States so they could conserve  
2 land.

3 Seems ridiculous, even, you know, only, what, ten  
4 years later -- not even ten years later it seems  
5 completely ridiculous. Again, another project that had  
6 widespread support by Alaskans.

7 So if you are looking for wisdom, I wouldn't go  
8 with -- with what the population says. Let's look at --  
9 actually, you know what? These -- when a project like  
10 this comes up, it brings out the worst in humanity. It  
11 does. I mean, who is going to benefit from the drilling  
12 of oil in the Arctic Wildlife National Refuge? It's going  
13 to be oil companies. We know this. Oil companies.

14 It's not going to be the BLM. It's not going to be  
15 the Department of Interior. It's going to be oil  
16 companies, foreign oil companies, most likely. It's not  
17 going to be the people on the North Slope. It's not going  
18 to be us. It's not even going to be the American people.

19 From what I understand, the amount of money that will  
20 come into the United States will -- the amount of revenue  
21 that the United States government and the state of Alaska,  
22 divided equally, would get would be 50 billion dollars  
23 apiece. So that's 100 billion dollars, okay, that we  
24 would be sharing with the U.S. government.

25 Well, you know what it also is worth? You know

1 what's worth 116 billion? Jeff Bezos of Amazon. How  
2 about you guys keep Jeff Bezos and we keep ANWR? And you  
3 guys would have an extra 116 billion. Actually, 16  
4 billion.

5 So my point is that, yeah, you know 100 billion  
6 dollars sounds like a lot of money to some people, but I  
7 think it was just last year the USS Gerald Ford -- it's an  
8 aircraft carrier. 13 billion dollars. You could build  
9 three aircraft carriers with the amount of money that you  
10 are going to be recovering. It's not worth it.

11 The one positive thing that I have to say about  
12 situations like this where we are, you know, forced to  
13 defend our values is it brings out the best in people, as  
14 well. You know, now, while it brings out the worst, you  
15 know, vanity and greed and hubris and, you know, pride, it  
16 also brings out the best in us, which is, you know,  
17 respect, responsibility, conservation. It brings out the  
18 best in humanity, too.

19 And I have faith that this is another battle that we  
20 are going to win because we are relying on the values of  
21 our forefathers; not just our forefathers, but your  
22 forefathers, as well. Your forefathers -- I know none of  
23 you took this job thinking I'm going to go up into the  
24 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and drill for some oil.  
25 And we know that in 2020 our best chance of defeating ANWR

1 is to probably get another president, if Congress doesn't  
2 do that for us.

3 So right now we have this draft EIS and, you know, we  
4 are going through the motions. And I know that nothing  
5 that I say here is going to affect the decision one way or  
6 another because that decision has about been made by the  
7 Trump Administration. But the one thing that I can say  
8 here that will make a difference is that we all need to  
9 vote. 2020, get out the vote. Get out the Alaska Native  
10 vote because we need a change in administration if we are  
11 going to stop this.

12 It's the same way that the -- it's the same way that  
13 the Rampart dam was stopped. It's the same way that the  
14 land exchange was stopped. It was the same way that this  
15 is going to be stopped is a change in administration.

16 So you know, I'm not saying don't fight. I say, you  
17 know, continue keeping up the fight. These folks here,  
18 they are not the decisionmakers. So they get to travel  
19 around and get beat up a little bit by all of us and, you  
20 know, it's -- you know. I'm sorry. I hope I'm not  
21 beating up on you guys but, you know, I just -- I just  
22 wanted to say that -- that it doesn't -- drilling in ANWR  
23 doesn't make any sense ecologically, financially or -- or  
24 human-wise.

25 And I'm opposed to drilling. Thank you.

1 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else? Thank  
2 you. For those that haven't spoken, anybody else that  
3 wants to make a comment?

4 MS. JULIE MAHLER: Hi. My name is Julie  
5 Mahler, M-A-H-L-E-R. I'm not much of a talker, but I do  
6 work with Fish & Wildlife Service and the council,  
7 Athabascan Tribal Government, kind of dual. So I agree  
8 with everybody that said what they said. I agree with  
9 them. And they kind of took all the words I wanted to  
10 say.

11 But I'll add something to it, but it's nothing that  
12 you probably never heard. Now, Fish & Wildlife, they  
13 preserve wildlife, right? So this land -- I thought this  
14 land, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, was put aside  
15 to preserve for wildlife for the future. And that's a  
16 small portion of land. So if you open this up, that's  
17 going to open up -- that's just like opening another door  
18 up for another piece of land for stuff -- just going to  
19 continue and so --

20 And I'm no scientist, but what are the possible  
21 impact, you know, for -- for the Porcupine caribou herd  
22 and others? Because there is a lot of scientists out  
23 there that know what it can do to our land, our air, our  
24 water, so -- you know, to nature and the importance of  
25 healthy lands, like a lot of them said.

1 I lived out there for 30 years, and that's right in  
2 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I raised five  
3 children. Six. You know, we had no stores. We didn't go  
4 to the store. We got the basics. We grew wheat. It  
5 grew, so we made flour with it. We had horses. We had  
6 goats, chickens. And the caribou was in our back door.  
7 So yeah, we survived out there.

8 And I just want to continue this for no drilling.

9 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else?

10 MS. ANNIE JAMES: Hello. My name is Annie  
11 James, and I'm 21. I'm from Fort Yukon. It took me a  
12 while to come up here because I get really nervous. And I  
13 was thinking, who am I to speak in front of you guys or  
14 half of Fort Yukon?

15 I'm 21 years old, and I still haven't seen the  
16 caribou herd yet. And that's, like, one of my biggest  
17 goals. And once they start, if they do start drilling,  
18 like, I'm 21, and only, like, the young ones in Arctic  
19 Village and Old Crow, like, have seen the caribou herd,  
20 and they know their traditions up there.

21 But I lived in Fairbanks for half my life and I don't  
22 know -- I just started learning my traditions, like, two  
23 years ago. I stayed up in Arctic for a while, and that's  
24 when I first learned how to cut a caribou, had my first  
25 caribou dry meat. It has a natural seasoning. And went

1 out on the land in Arctic. I met my family in Arctic. I  
2 finally got really close to them. And then they say if I  
3 ever go back up there, they will take me out again if they  
4 never drill in the ANWR.

5 And that's all I want to say. I'm 21. And there is  
6 younger kids younger than me that still do want to go out  
7 there, that it will be a downfall. It would be a really  
8 big downfall because I'm just learning right now. And I  
9 hope every word counts here.

10 Thank you.

11 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else that  
12 hasn't spoken?

13 MS. PAT STANLEY: Hi. Well, I have been  
14 welcomed to Fort Yukon. I have been here for about 36  
15 years now. My name is Pat Stanley. I grew up in L.A.  
16 And I can remember in high school when I was thinking,  
17 what if they shut off our water? What if they close the  
18 stores? There are so many people. It was just -- and the  
19 air quality was terrible. I went to school down there. I  
20 went to art school down there. Used to sit in that class  
21 downtown and breathe, and it used to hurt our lungs.

22 When I came to Alaska, I said, this is home. I was  
23 in Anchorage, and I -- for a number of years. I worked  
24 there for a little while. And when I turned 40, my car  
25 quit. I had been meeting people in Fort Yukon at AFN and

1 other events. And people said, why don't you come up  
2 here? Don't worry about working. Just come up.

3 And you see that man in the upper left? That's Titus  
4 Peter. Titus -- Reverend Titus Peter drove me up here.  
5 And then he told me, you white people talk too much. So  
6 ever since then I have been a little bit nervous about  
7 speaking publicly. I don't. So I'm grateful for people  
8 like Charlene who get up and speak to you.

9 I come to these events because I listen to people and  
10 their wisdom, and they are so -- so wise. I worked with  
11 CATG when it first started, and the chiefs -- I was so  
12 impressed with the chiefs and what they wanted to do.  
13 They were the people who took responsibility for what they  
14 wanted. And we were only the workers who helped to bring  
15 some of those things to fruition.

16 We worked on creating jobs. We worked on taking  
17 over, taking over our own management of our health system,  
18 part of, anyway. Taking over education, taking  
19 responsibility for our education. We have been working to  
20 educate our young people for about 14 years now, huh,  
21 Charlene? And we have early childhood. We have natural  
22 resources.

23 On the Canadian side of the villages are the same  
24 people as the people you see in this room. I wish they  
25 were here today. Maybe if we had longer events warning of

1 this meeting, maybe some of them would be here. They came  
2 to our first meeting for the CATG. We had lots of people  
3 from Canada come down by boat and speak about developing  
4 this organization and planning for what we were going to  
5 do. It was a very exciting time.

6 Since then we have taken responsibility, as I said.  
7 But in Canada on the Canadian side, the Gwich'in are  
8 managing their land. Their government is a little  
9 different than this government. We should be managing --  
10 the Gwich'in people should be managing this territory, the  
11 Yukon Flats. We shouldn't be having so much federal and  
12 state oversight. This is the land people have managed for  
13 thousands of years. They don't need these rules and  
14 regulations.

15 In terms of the Arctic Refuge, I remember in 1988 we  
16 had a big meeting in Fort Yukon, first of all, in summer.  
17 Indigenous Survival International. Indigenous Survival  
18 International, we taught -- you know, it was the Canadians  
19 and the U.S. Gwich'in. People from all over came and  
20 talked about the future. Then there was an elders  
21 conference here. From all over Alaska, elders came and  
22 talked about their future. Then the first Gwich'in  
23 gathering happened in Arctic Village.

24 And you are going to be going back to Arctic Village.  
25 Well, in 1988, this -- this fight has been going on since

1 1988 with the Gwich'in people. They said their  
2 resources -- they worked hard to educate you, to explain  
3 to you, to get your attention and to help you to  
4 understand why it's so important to keep this ecosystem  
5 clean.

6 You see what's happening to our world. I think the  
7 elders -- I think the elders of the Gwich'in predicted a  
8 lot of what's happening now. I don't know if you agree  
9 with that, but that's things that I've heard.

10 So it's not only the Porcupine caribou herd. I know  
11 that things were put into these plans to give some  
12 opportunity for protection of the Porcupine caribou herd,  
13 but it's not just the herd. It's the whole ecosystem. I  
14 mean, it's the one place we have in the United States  
15 where we have this environment. And now -- now this law  
16 has been passed.

17 And I agree. I agree with Bernadette. The only --  
18 and with Dacho. The only opportunity we have is our vote  
19 and what's going to happen in 2020 and what we can do  
20 about this law. This is a wrong law.

21 And I agree with everything that's been said here,  
22 and I deeply appreciate hearing everybody's story. It's  
23 so much better than what I can say and so much deeper.

24 But I've stayed here for these many years because  
25 this is a community. This is a community all over the

1 Yukon Flats and Canada. And the Gwich'in in Canada, I  
2 hope the Canadian government -- there is a treaty with the  
3 U.S. I hope the Canadian government sues the U.S.  
4 government. That's what I'm hoping for. I don't know if  
5 it will happen but, you know, there is, what, 10,000  
6 Gwich'in. I think --

7       You know, I agree. I have faith that this is not  
8 going to happen. This is not going to happen. People are  
9 going to keep fighting for it. And I support. And I'm  
10 non-Native person living here, and I fully support what  
11 the Gwich'in are doing.

12       And keep fighting. Keep fighting.

13               CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else? Now I'd  
14 like to ask -- Lance. Dr. Lance.

15               DR. LANCE BOWIE: Good afternoon. My name  
16 is Lance Bowie. As you see, I'm not Gwich'in. But I have  
17 lived here for a number of years; eight years, to be  
18 exact. I don't even know that I have the right to come  
19 before you and to speak with this celestial gathering  
20 that's here. I'm usually somewhat shy about my words.

21       And you know, as I sat, I thought I should say this.  
22 I've heard it said today that years ago they would not  
23 allow us to speak our own language in the schools. I  
24 represent that "they." What I heard today spoken that you  
25 are not allowing us to take care of our own land. I

1 represent that "you," as you represent that as well.

2 The thing that's hurtful for me is that I hear that  
3 part of the impact statement is that it's not going to  
4 impact the region and it's not going to impact the  
5 children. I don't believe that.

6 I can say this about myself: I was born in Seattle,  
7 Washington. I have been in Alaska since 1955. I'm a  
8 product of the Alaska educational system. So I'm not new  
9 to that.

10 I have a master's degree from University of Alaska  
11 Anchorage. And I have a doctorate from the University of  
12 Southern California, so I'm not, again, foreign to the  
13 acquisition of knowledge.

14 I would say to you that it is going to have an impact  
15 on the young people here. It will have an impact on the  
16 young people. My job is to educate folks that I represent  
17 in this region, six different schools. And I'm watching  
18 the culture slip away. And when you say that it's not  
19 going to impact their culture and it's not going to impact  
20 the educational knowledge and the learning of the young  
21 people and to -- that's not true.

22 I stand before you as a black man. And I can tell  
23 you this: I've gone through lots of things, you know, as  
24 I migrated, you know, and acquired the degrees and things  
25 that I have. And every time I look at some of the cases,

1 the landmark cases, Plessy versus Ferguson, Brown versus  
2 the Board of Education, it had an impact on my life.

3 What you are doing is going to have an impact on the  
4 culture and on the people of this region. I say to you  
5 that whatever decision that you make, you should walk  
6 through that quagmire very carefully. But more  
7 importantly, you should listen to the needs of these  
8 people.

9 I've lived out here. I've learned to eat muskrat.  
10 I've learned to eat beaver. Where is Paul that just  
11 turned 60 years old? He taught me how to eat whitefish.

12 And I spent, as I said, 33 years in the Anchorage  
13 School District. I am not an uneducated person. But when  
14 I came out here, the education that I had there means  
15 nothing to what's out here.

16 So I say to you, you must listen to what these folks  
17 say. They have a perspective that you probably don't  
18 have. And I'm sorry to say -- and I don't want to be  
19 mean, but when I look at you, you all are white people.  
20 You know, and what they have is perspective that is  
21 different than yours.

22 And you can say the people of Alaska want this, but  
23 the people who are affected from Alaska may not want it.  
24 So you have got to listen to what it is they say. And I  
25 know you have got hard decisions to make, but any decision

1 that you make should be based upon the needs of the people  
2 that are going to be most affected, and that's the people  
3 before you.

4 Thank you for your time.

5 MS. CHARLOTTE KELLY-SPENCER: My name is  
6 Charlotte Kelly-Spencer. I'm on the tribal council. And  
7 you have heard a lot of people speak today and voice their  
8 opinions. And I do oppose the drilling, also.

9 I have a quote here I want to mention: If you see  
10 something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have  
11 a moral obligation to do something about it. That was  
12 John Lewis.

13 And that's what we are doing. We are speaking about  
14 something that we really believe in. And we are asking  
15 you today, when you leave, think on what was said by some  
16 of the younger people, some of the older people. I would  
17 like my grandson -- my grandson Kaimana, he's Athabaskan.  
18 He's also an American. He's just a little fellow. I  
19 would love for him to go hunt and do some of the stuff on  
20 the land. My other grandson, Jericho Amos Ray, he's  
21 Athabaskan Korean. So I would like him to learn some of  
22 his own culture.

23 So I'm asking you to please consider tonight what you  
24 are doing.

25 And I wanted to thank this young lady right here that

1 has been supporting. Thank you for your service. 30  
2 years with the company. Thank you so much for helping the  
3 Gwich'in people. Thank you, Bernadette.

4 Thank you for hearing our voice.

5 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Anybody else? I don't  
6 want to miss anyone.

7 In closing, then, I'd like to ask my council and  
8 Bernadette to come up, and also Charlene representing  
9 CATG. This is our land. We are the ones that's going to  
10 be affected for a long time in everything, any decision  
11 that's been made. But I think the main thing is that,  
12 please listen. You have heard. You asked us to have a  
13 public hearing. We invite you into our land. Please  
14 consider --

15 And right now I'm going to ask publicly, for those  
16 that support no development, stand up with the council.

17 (Audience stands.)

18 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Every one of them.  
19 Thank you. And I think it's only fair that I ask Joe to  
20 make a statement. Unless, Mike -- Mike in closing. Any  
21 closing comments? But I think we need to hear from Joe.

22 MR. MICHAEL PETER: Stanley, I think the  
23 youngest person just left the building. There is one to  
24 your left.

25 I thank Joe and his staff for coming in and hearing

1 our voices. Also, too, I'd like to thank Bernadette, too,  
2 for all she's done. She does travel quite a bit. And  
3 also, too, we don't stand alone. We got other Indian  
4 nations that are standing with us in this fight.

5 And I asked her if she could give me some of the  
6 names, and there is hundreds of them. Right now there is  
7 National Congress of American Indians, American Indian  
8 Movement, Society of Native Americans, Navajo Nation,  
9 Standing Sioux Tribe -- there are seven tribes -- and  
10 Veterans of -- Veterans of Natives, Tanana Chiefs  
11 Conference, Yukon Watershed Council, Athabascan Tribal  
12 Governments. And the list goes on.

13 And also we support them, too, because they are also  
14 facing the same issues we are facing up here, like in  
15 Three Bears, Utah; Navajo Nation; Standing Rock. Also in  
16 Sioux in -- North Dakota Sioux with the pipeline that's  
17 going through their sacred lands.

18 But also, too, you got to remember, they need to  
19 understand that there is also two major oil strikes that  
20 Duane mentioned. And how are you going to develop 900  
21 leases? It will be after my time and into our kids'  
22 times. So it seems like a rush, rush to do that.

23 Just because who is in there, I mean, you got -- you  
24 can't listen to what everybody says and do what they say.  
25 They tell you to jump off a cliff, you going to go jump

1 off a cliff?

2 This is what makes our country great. America has  
3 always been great.

4 And with that, I'd like to thank Bernadette, too, for  
5 what she does. She spends a lot of time away from her  
6 family. I'd like to give her a round of applause.

7 I'd also like to thank you, the tribal members, for  
8 coming out. I'd like to thank Robert, Mary Beth and  
9 Duane. They had a good teacher, Jonathan Solomon. And we  
10 have all had other people that we looked up to that guided  
11 us.

12 And I'd also like to thank our elders that have  
13 passed. And we did lose a lot of people this past year.  
14 And let's not forget them. Thank you.

15 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Bernadette, closing,  
16 before I ask Joe.

17 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: I'm getting  
18 ready to get on the plane, but I just want to say thanks  
19 to everybody that showed up yesterday and thanks today.  
20 Thank you guys for coming to hear our input.

21 I learned a lot since I have been working at the  
22 Gwich'in Steering Committee, a lot that -- you know, I  
23 feel like I lost my identity after high school, and I'm  
24 slowly finding who I am again.

25 And the Porcupine caribou herd, they are our

1 identity. If they go, we go. And that is what Jonathan  
2 Solomon said. What befalls the caribou befalls the  
3 Gwich'in. And just because he's not here anymore, that  
4 doesn't mean that we don't follow what he said.

5 The direction that our elders gave in 1988 is to  
6 protect the Porcupine caribou herd, not to see what we can  
7 get out of it. They told us to protect it for all time,  
8 not just for all our people, but for all people. And we  
9 just got to remember to follow that.

10 Mahsi Cho.

11 CHIEF NANCY JAMES: Joe.

12 MR. JOE BALASH: Just one more time, Chief  
13 James, I'd like to thank you for allowing us to come and  
14 hold this meeting. This was just the formal public  
15 meeting for the BLM as part of this process. I  
16 acknowledge this was not a government-to-government  
17 meeting. I look forward to coming back to Fort Yukon in a  
18 few weeks to have that formal government-to-government  
19 meeting with you and your council.

20 I know that this is a difficult issue. This is  
21 something that the people here, the Gwich'in, feel very,  
22 very strongly about. And as I said earlier, we are not  
23 here to try and change anybody's mind. We are here to get  
24 your feedback, your input. We will be happy to stay a  
25 little longer if people want to talk individually.

1           And then I know that getting up in front of everybody  
2 and speaking, even for me, is something that causes me to  
3 lose track of my thoughts. So we are going to keep Mary  
4 here a little bit longer if somebody wants to come and say  
5 something further that you maybe remember.

6           And so we are going to have this comment period open  
7 until March 13th. So if there are additional things that  
8 you would like to say to us to put down in writing, we  
9 would be happy to receive that, of course. And we have  
10 got lots of ways for you to do that. We will make sure  
11 that the tribal offices here have the information to be  
12 able to contact us further, as well.

13           And again, I want to thank all of you. I know that  
14 the days are getting a little bit longer. It's almost  
15 spring. It's a strange thing to say in February, but  
16 thank you all.

17           And we are just in the draft stage. These are not  
18 representative of any final decisions. These alternatives  
19 are to help get feedback from the individuals all across  
20 the country who care to comment on this. We have to  
21 listen to the comments from everybody. But there is a  
22 reason that we are holding public meetings in Fort Yukon,  
23 Arctic Village, Venetie, Kaktovik, Utqiagvik. And that's  
24 because we want to hear and pay very close attention to  
25 the people most affected by these decisions.

1           So thank you for coming and sharing your stories with  
2 us and your perspective. Mahsi Cho.

3                   CHIEF NANCY JAMES: I also know that you  
4 have a video that you would like to show that people would  
5 like to have more information or whatever, but I do thank  
6 you for acknowledging the tribal-to-tribal consultation  
7 that will take place that the council requested. Thank  
8 you for acknowledging. And that's the main thing.

9           And I'd like to thank everyone that came. But there  
10 is going to be more information here that's going to be  
11 provided. They are going to stay a little while.

12           So thank you.

13                   MR. ANDREW ANSAKNOK: Okay. I have a  
14 little problem with public speaking, but all this is  
15 affecting me, and I know about the -- I didn't know about  
16 this Environmental Impact Statement they are talking about  
17 because are they there studying what -- if a car drives  
18 over the same piece of road 20 times, it's going to make  
19 an indent, right, in the land? And all of the human stuff  
20 that goes along with this, because they spill fuel --  
21 people -- it's not a perfect world. People go out and  
22 fill up their chain saw, they spill a little bit of fuel,  
23 you know. And it all affects the land, the caribou and  
24 everything.

25           And I just know, I've worked in many places up on the

1 North Slope down to Georgia, and I seen equipment bigger  
2 than any house and any building in this whole village of  
3 Fort Yukon, equipment for mining and drilling and stuff  
4 like that that's bigger than any building that's going to  
5 be in this whole town.

6 I've seen -- and they say that this little study,  
7 this Environmental Impact Statement, they don't know  
8 what's going to go on after this start to drill and  
9 everything because that's just what they think is going to  
10 go on.

11 So I kind of oppose all this because I know once they  
12 start, it's just going to leave barren land and no more  
13 animals live there.

14 I seen a mine down in Wyoming, I used to work at it.  
15 On the way there, I see all kind of animals, but once we  
16 get closer to the mine, then there is no animals and where  
17 is all the animals? The first time I rode there, where is  
18 all the animals? And there ain't no animals.

19 That's all I'd like to say. But I really oppose  
20 this. And thank you for listening and taking my  
21 statement.

22 Thank you.

23 (Proceedings adjourned at 3:45 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR, Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed under my direction by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have I any interest in the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my seal this \_\_\_\_\_ day of February 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MARY A. VAVRIK,  
Registered Merit Reporter  
Notary Public for Alaska

My Commission Expires: November 5, 2020

	<b>12:21;28:21;60:5; 61:9;62:3</b>	<b>agreement (4)</b> 5:25;6:1,3;52:14	<b>20:13;41:5;76:3</b>	<b>76:6</b>
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