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

5 Taken February 6, 2019
6 Commencing at 5:35 p.m.

7 Pages 1 - 59, inclusive
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9 Taken at
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11 Utqiagvik, Alaska
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20 Reported by:
21 Mary A. Vavrik, RMR
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A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

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Assistant Secretary

Steve Wackowski
Senior Advisor of Alaska Affairs

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

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Arctic Refuge Manager

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

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7 For ABR:

8 Alex Prichard
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11 Paul Lawrence
12 Senior Research Associate

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14 Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

15

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

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

(Introduction by Joe Balash.) (Invocation offered by Mr. Roy Nageak, Sr.) (Presentation by Nicole Hayes.)

MS. NICOLE HAYES: So now is the public comment period, so if people want to come up and ask questions or even stand up and ask questions or provide comment on the draft EIS.

MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: State your name for the record to be recognized.

MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: My name is George Edwardson. I'm the president of Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, and our jurisdiction is the whole NPR-A, plus ANWR north of the Arctic Circle.

What I'm watching herein is a lease sale, the way I look at it being conducted illegally because the land has not been bought from the people. When Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 was created, the president of the United States said they needed help with the war, and there was potential oil and gas up here in the Arctic. And after the war was over, they were going to turn it back to us.

This town owned the property from the ocean up to the Colville River. The other regions have their jurisdictions, like Anaktuvuk, too, behind up in the mountains. And President Harding said, when I'm done with

1 the war, we will give it back to you. Instead of giving
2 it back to us, you created an act called NPR-A and then
3 claimed you owned it all.

4 We took this to the Supreme Court and we won there in
5 our lawsuit against the ARCO versus U.S.A. And the
6 tribunal asked how much do we owe you. But before we
7 could name an amount, our lawyer was killed. And nobody
8 could take over after that.

9 So you have not paid for a square inch of the Arctic
10 you are trying to sell. I'll get back to you again after.

11 MR. ROBERT SUVLU: (Speaking in Inupiat.)
12 My name is Robert Suvlu. I'm born and raised here in
13 Barrow. Thank you for coming here. Welcome to Barrow. I
14 have been working seasonally because of my own interest in
15 the impact on the ecosystem from global warming, so-called
16 global warming. So I have been working with the seismic
17 and documenting the melt impact on the animals during
18 the -- at the Prudhoe Bay site.

19 But what I have noticed thus far is the subsistence
20 impact does not necessarily take into consideration, like,
21 the studies on the ecosystem. So the impact of the plants
22 by the global warming. So we have less snow covering on
23 the tundra, but how much impact has that occurred?

24 Because we have warm and cold temperatures. So each
25 season we have less snow than last year, but this year we

1 have hardly any snow. It's primarily from blowing snow.

2 But what I don't see is a consideration of the impact
3 on the vegetation. And that needs to be done, some type
4 of research that needs to occur because it impacts the
5 food source of the animals, the caribou, all the way to
6 the lemming. So that will impact tremendously. And those
7 type of studies are not occurring.

8 What we are not seeing the -- the primary concerns of
9 the animals, but not the food source. And some type of
10 buffer need to be established in the river systems and the
11 lakes where the food source is for a lot of the -- so that
12 type of a buffer needs to occur, also. That's what I'm
13 seeing needing. But I do have the research, and I'll
14 forward it to you guys later. That's what I'm seeing that
15 needs to be done.

16 Quayana. Thank you.

17 MS. AMY LEWIS: Anyone else?

18 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: Good evening. My
19 name is Johnnie Brower. I live here in Utqiagvik. I was
20 brought up to be out in the country from a very early age.
21 By the time I had to go out to high school or government
22 boarding school seven miles north of Salem, my parents
23 sent me a letter stating I had to come home early to get
24 ready and prepare to go to school. And I was right on the
25 low tide area of just past Prudhoe Bay, what is now the

1 Endicott Road going out to the Endicott oilfield.

2 I was brought up and raised by my grandfather to do
3 reindeer herding. And I didn't expect to go to school,
4 but my parents asked me to come home. And I sheltered a
5 lot to what is now between Service Area 10 and the end of
6 the runway, which is now owned and operated by
7 ConocoPhillips. The general location of where I made my
8 dried meat is now a 40-foot gravel pad that is now part of
9 Sagvagniqtuuq River.

10 After I graduated from high school, I tried to get my
11 parents to help me to deal with on how to continue
12 reindeer herding, but I tried like crazy and very hard for
13 over 25 years, and I couldn't budge my father to teach me
14 on which way to go or what to do, even though I already
15 had some knowledge of what my grandfather, Al Hobson,
16 Senior instructed and taught me.

17 When I first -- when I first learned how to go
18 hunting and camping, I was not even ten years old when I
19 go get caribou on the south side of Teshekpuk Lake. I
20 would go out there and come back. My dogs would bring me
21 out there and bring me back safely.

22 From the information that was put together and
23 informed about the oil and gas activities when they first
24 discovered oil in Prudhoe Bay, I went home just before the
25 first week of August in '66. When I left, there was

1 absolutely nothing out there except wild animals that
2 lived there in the winter, and they come up and migrate in
3 the spring, and for the summer for nursing -- to nursing
4 their eggs, nurture them to life till they would learn to
5 be on their own. And caribous, wolves, wolverines,
6 grizzly and polar bears and brown bear would come in as
7 far as for their own food before they go out and hibernate
8 up into the upper hills.

9 And the promises that was made to my elderly people
10 when -- when Prudhoe Bay was first discovered as a struck
11 oil status, what condition is that promise in looking at
12 it from today's point of view? They promised that they
13 would restore the land back to the way it was when it's
14 all done and over with. And I want to know from my heart
15 if that promise is still the same as the way they stated
16 it to my elderly people.

17 My parents' parents, the grazing permits were under
18 my grandparents' names. My mother was daughter of Alfred
19 and Maggie Hobson, and they owned and operated the
20 farthest north reindeer herding company. And their
21 grazing range goes all the way to Demarcation Point from
22 the head of Baird Bay, all the way across the North Slope,
23 practically covering what is now the entire North Slope
24 Borough and the ASRC boundary.

25 And Charles C. Brower's first wife, Toctoc, had

1 grazing permits issued to her by her husband, Charles D.
2 Brower. And when she passed away and eventually got
3 remarried, it was under her name until she had a bunch of
4 boys. And they were called the Brower brothers. And they
5 pretty much had a grazing ground permit from the mouth of
6 Chipp River out to [indiscernible] Island and up into the
7 mountains without any boundaries to the southern edge. It
8 would go into the mountains.

9 And now I'm at an age where my elders has talked to
10 me and teach me about reindeer herding, but they couldn't
11 go back to reindeer herding because when they came back
12 from World War II, they had no interest or ability to do
13 reindeer herding whatsoever. Nobody even tried to see if
14 they would be reoriented back to reindeer herding.

15 In the bottom of my heart, I would like to have -- to
16 be able to continue what my father did when he came back
17 from the service from World War II. Even his couple of
18 brothers and a few other helpers, they did reindeer
19 herding right up to -- I was born in 1951 in Orlock
20 Island.

21 My parents were heading from reindeer -- reindeer
22 ranch, Alatak Reindeer Ranch, and they were heading to
23 Utqiagvik to help my mother get to the hospital and have a
24 baby. But her water bag broke, I guess, when they got to
25 Orlock Island district section, and they had to stop and

1 shelter and make camp there to make her comfortable. And
2 that's where I was born. And they continued to reindeer
3 herd right up to 1954, to the end of 1954.

4 When my parents didn't have any children, they were
5 out going back and forth out into the reindeer herding,
6 out doing reindeer herding. They had a skin boat, which I
7 believe right now is in the bottom of the -- might be the
8 southeastern section of the [indiscernible] Lake area.
9 And if I get it located and retrieve it, that is evidence
10 of my family's reindeer herding equipment during the
11 summer. They used it for transportation along the lakes
12 and ravines and rivers to go back and forth into the
13 country out there.

14 And to try reindeer herding all by yourself
15 individually is a very hard thing. But when you are
16 taught and trained at a very early age and follow the
17 instructions, it could reward -- there are rewards to it.

18 When I made it home in early August, I was scolded by
19 my grandfather, Al Hobson, Senior. What the hell you
20 doing around here? I thought I told you to stay in
21 Prudhoe Bay until first sign of freeze up. I didn't want
22 to talk back to him. I didn't want to answer him, but I
23 had to. My parents sent me a letter asking me to come
24 home so I could catch my flight to go to boarding school
25 in Oregon.

1 That was the last time I saw the exact nature and the
2 beauty of the reindeer herding country. And it's still
3 getting devastated and reduced, and it's continued to be
4 reduced by oil platforms, roads, construction facilities,
5 gathering centers, manifold buildings, oil pads and the
6 pump stations.

7 At first there was no interest or mention of anything
8 about doing additional oil exploration drilling outside of
9 the Prudhoe Bay unit because it was just -- it was said to
10 be a massive -- it was said to be a very large massive oil
11 deposit. But now when you are looking at it, the reindeer
12 and caribou, they still around Prudhoe Bay. They
13 relocated their grazing habitat sanctuaries. They go in
14 and out of the oilfield facilities and constructions and
15 roads here. And sometimes they block roads. But their
16 major feeding habitats, if it rains long enough during the
17 summer, it would be their grazing grounds for the winter.
18 They graze --

19 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: Talk about ANWR.

20 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: I know. I'm going to
21 get to that.

22 It's not only just in one location, but our Inupiat
23 friends and families, they occupy the North Slope region
24 in vast distance. The United States government makes
25 specifications to make boundary lines and call them all

1 sorts of things: NPR-A, ANWR. They didn't take a look at
2 how we were and how long we have already been here.

3 We were never part of Russia. We were never part of
4 any other country until state of Alaska was formalized and
5 established and politicians running around asking all the
6 community villages of the North Slope, would you rather be
7 a Russian or would you rather be an American.

8 But the bottom line is, the United States bought
9 Alaska from Russia, according to what the Russians sold.
10 But to our knowledge and history from our own observation
11 and understanding, they bought Gulf of Alaska coastal
12 areas where the sea otters could be. That's the only
13 thing that the United States purchased. And then they
14 turn around and investigated and surveyed beyond what they
15 purchased. The Russians didn't even know we lived in the
16 North Slope regions of Alaska.

17 Animals come and go during the winter and summer.
18 The migratory birds come and go. Those have been our
19 bread and butter for centuries, past centuries, past
20 centuries. Now some of the major nesting ground areas are
21 disrupted and destroyed or even practically reduced to a
22 certain size. According to the way we live, we are
23 harvesting people. We can smoke, sun dry and prepare food
24 and store them for the winter use. But our capacities in
25 terms of the kind of climate changes we are facing from

1 the '50s and '60s to today are drastically changing quite
2 a bit.

3 What other kind of wildlife are we going to be able
4 to utilize, obtain, harvest so we can survive for the
5 winter months? Do you have anything set aside or labeled,
6 signed, promised if there is too much destruction and
7 damages on the ability to compensate and refurbish the
8 land with what it had?

9 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: They don't want
10 comments on that, Johnnie.

11 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: I'm trying not to say
12 that word. I'm saying it from an aboriginal person living
13 on the land. I stated relatives in the villages that we
14 have throughout the North Slope region, but designated as
15 ANWR, even though I'm here from Igluqppauraq on the other
16 side of the lake from Utqiagvik.

17 What we say in commenting probably don't have very
18 much bearing because we don't live in ANWR. Our relatives
19 that live in Kaktovik region do. They face very hardship
20 statuses than compared to what we are -- what we are
21 facing. What kind of promise can you implement in an
22 event your oil and gas hunger and thirst goes too far and
23 devastates that they no longer cannot do hunting harvest
24 to prepare for the living through the winter months? And
25 that is my bottom line question. I love my relatives for

1 the way they are and who they are.

2 And I don't need to be pushed and time limited and be
3 put down by my own local citizens people. When they hand
4 me a microphone, I'll hand it back when I am done
5 speaking.

6 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: There's other people
7 that want to speak.

8 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: I know that. Don't
9 rush people. These people are running on fast time. They
10 are not here for a week to take comments. They are in a
11 hurry. Don't rush me like they are in a hurry.

12 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: You got to comment
13 on ANWR. That's what we are commenting on.

14 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: Yeah. I'm stating
15 some of it as the way I spoke it, trying not to mention
16 the word capitalized by the United States Congress as
17 ANWR. Our homeland, our people, live in the land.

18 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: There is other
19 people that want to talk.

20 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: Then don't treat your
21 local citizens and push them in a time-consuming status
22 and rush them in a hurry. You are distracting me from
23 some of the things I would like to say. Your promise,
24 based on your job getting paid, is in your hurriness with
25 these people.

1 Thank you very much. And I hope that you take
2 people's comments and statements very seriously instead of
3 just hearing them and writing them down and put them on a
4 piece of book called ESI [sic] and devastate how people
5 live in the Arctic region especially in the ANWR district.

6 Thank you very much for the time.

7 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: Anybody else?

8 MS. MARY BROWER: My name is Mary Brower.
9 30 years my other half gone off to paradise. And since
10 before that in 30 years, we used to check our cabins with
11 their airplanes or chopper or whatever. Not airplanes.
12 Excuse me. I wonder if you guys are authorized to do
13 that. We never checked on them for more than 30 years
14 since I'm a single -- I'm seeing the way they sitting on
15 without checking our lands. It was our right to do that,
16 for them to do -- give us a ride or whatever, or my other
17 family. They are old enough, my boys.

18 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: Are they allotments?

19 MS. MARY BROWER: Yes. I got about four
20 allotments waiting. Cheap area, too, on 13.

21 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: All in NPR-A.

22 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: I'd be happy to --
23 so you want, like, someone to go there or a map or aerial
24 image?

25 MS. MARY BROWER: We only get hunting time

1 for geese, we check.

2 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: If ICAS or the
3 Native Village of Barrow could get us, like, a location,
4 we could see what we can do. Pull a map or -- so if you
5 can work through this --

6 MS. MARY BROWER: We ought to let them
7 know, huh?

8 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: North Slope Borough
9 has GIS-based computer system that has maps out on all the
10 Native allotments on the North Slope.

11 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: We would be happy to
12 have BIA or BLM see if we can pull some images on it.

13 MS. MARY BROWER: That would be okay if
14 they going to get that. Some of them I never checked.

15 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: Sure. If George or
16 somebody can give me a map or a location, I can see what
17 we can do.

18 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSSEN: Through the North
19 Slope Borough they have all the Native allotments
20 applicants, the ones that have been certified, the ones
21 that have not been certified, all those that have been
22 applied for. Most of the allotments have not been
23 approved and worked out their -- their paper titles
24 haven't been cleared. And here you are selling land that
25 on -- that's on questionable deeds, people's Native

1 allotments. Most of them have not been processed. And
2 before you sell a single lease, at least that should have
3 been taken care of. I mean, that's the least you can do
4 as the government, give a person what's theirs when they
5 ask for it.

6 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: I don't disagree.
7 BIA has taken far too long to process allotments. That is
8 an issue we are well aware of that Assistant Secretary
9 Sweeney is looking at that we're working with the BIA
10 office. And I don't disagree it's taken far too long.

11 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: When you look at
12 NPR-A, probably over 80 percent of the applicants have not
13 been processed yet. And that is totally uncalled for.
14 And you are going to make billions out of that land
15 selling it. And it actually belongs to somebody. If I
16 went down to your part of the world and sold it as the
17 government, you would make sure that you got your share of
18 it. That's -- that's a given. Right?

19 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: What about the ones
20 that are -- the Native people that have applied for in
21 Prudhoe Bay unit area? (Indiscernible) talking about my
22 part, but my uncle was born in Prudhoe Bay.

23 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: I'm not -- I'm not
24 aware. I'd be happy to meet with ICAS and Native Village
25 of Barrow and go through some of these. I'd need BIA to

1 come up with me to come, and I'd be happy to commit to --
2 Steve Wackowski, Secretary's office. I'd be happy to
3 commit to bring our BIA state director up here and conduct
4 a government-to-government with both ICAS and Native
5 Village of Barrow to talk through some of the allotment
6 issues.

7 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: As the regional
8 government, we were processing a Native allotment one
9 every five minutes. And they put a stop to that because
10 we were going too fast. And all we were doing was
11 verifying whose property it was, where they were born,
12 where their parents are buried. We can't even take care
13 of our ancestors', you know, graves. And that should be
14 on the priority list before you could make a dollar on it.
15 And under the Indian Tax Status Act passed in 1982, as
16 tribal governments, regional or village, we have the
17 ability and authority to collect taxes, but we can't under
18 NPR-A because you are saying that's yours. I mean, let's
19 do what's right. Let's be honest both ways. That's just
20 one way.

21 That's all we ask.

22 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: How many Native
23 allotments are still pending in Prudhoe Bay unit for
24 Native allotment applicants?

25 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: It's only 2,000 in

1 the whole NPR-A and the North Slope.

2 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: That have not been
3 even been recognition or just labeled pending. The
4 locations we living and talking about is all covered with
5 oilfields, airports, construction camps, POCs, manifold
6 buildings, gathering centers, hundreds and hundreds of
7 miles of pipeline this way and that way. And what are we
8 getting out of that? Just being (indiscernible).

9 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: We have never
10 collected a penny from NPR-A, ANWR, Gates of the Arctic,
11 anywhere there is federal lands over any resources,
12 whether it be hard minerals like gold, lead, zinc or oil
13 and gas. I mean, it's -- what's fair is fair. You got
14 Ten Commandments you are supposed to follow. At least
15 follow half them so we can at least get what is ours.
16 It's simple. No anger, just, you know, just -- let's work
17 on it because we are willing to show you what we know is
18 ours.

19 MS. MARY BROWER: I got this -- excuse me.
20 Are you done?

21 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: I'm done.

22 MS. MARY BROWER: I notice without
23 notifying us, too, they fly around up there. Somebody
24 notice -- tell me when you notice that without any
25 notify -- peoples who are -- build their cabins up there,

1 you know, without notify them, like me, my -- I'm a single
2 parent with my boys. I hear about that they fly up
3 without notifying. What are they doing?

4 Thank you.

5 MR. GORDON BROWER: Thank you. Gordon
6 Brower. I'm a director for planning and community
7 services for the North Slope Borough. Maybe I need to
8 understand better what the evening is about. I know you
9 are talking about the coastal plain oil and gas leasing
10 program and how to provide comments. Is that the theme is
11 how do we provide comments, or are you taking any
12 comments?

13 MR. JOE BALASH: So we are taking comments
14 orally. The court reporter is here to help capture that
15 for the record, and then we also have set up some
16 information stands. We have brought in some of the
17 experts and scientists who helped us put the document
18 together so people can ask questions of those individuals.

19 MR. GORDON BROWER: Thank you. It helps
20 to -- I'm sorry I'm a little bit late. I just got off the
21 plane. And it's good to see you, Joe. I think that's
22 Ted, right? And is that Jim?

23 MR. JOE BALASH: Mike.

24 MR. GORDON BROWER: Mike. Sorry. I'm
25 just putting the name to a face here.

1 MR. MIKE GIERYIC: I'm Mike, and this is
2 Steve.

3 MR. GORDON BROWER: Steve, I think I met
4 you a couple of times.

5 I just want to provide a couple comments. And I
6 think it's important, too -- there is elders here -- to be
7 able to talk in their language as well and convey that.
8 (Speaking in Inupiat.)

9 So that's what we are talking about is 1002, right on
10 the outskirts of Barter Island, the 1002. It's important
11 to make sure when people are wanting to understand
12 better -- I heard Mary Brower right there wanting to know
13 what it's about a little bit and notification. I don't
14 think information gets around good enough. Unless maybe
15 you have public outreach, a little bit more effort in
16 public outreach, which we try to make sure we try to do
17 that in the community so that it's more effective that way
18 and know what it's about.

19 And having said that, I think it's important to talk
20 about some of -- I mean, I represent the borough at the
21 planning level, and there are things in the 1002 that
22 should be important for others to know.

23 It's been a, I think, a good 40 years maybe, in this
24 area where Congress has elected to lock up areas and kind
25 of disenfranchising the local village corporation from

1 engaging in economic opportunity in areas of lands that
2 are selected by them. I mean, there is a long history of
3 these kinds of concerns.

4 When ANCSA was created, Native Lands Claims
5 Settlement Act was created, it was for self-determination
6 in fighting over land. There was already these things
7 that were out there. So I just want to say those kind of
8 things because it's been a long, arduous process of
9 different administrations, different congresses, and then
10 some day we have a window that say these Natives lands
11 that have been locked up are suddenly open to do more
12 things. And it's important to realize what the local
13 people in that area have to say.

14 And in the battle that has ensued over a long period
15 of time about -- can you imagine UIC or Kuukpik, if
16 Congress locked up their lands and say, hey, you are not
17 going to benefit from the lands you selected? That's what
18 it amounts to for 40 years in that region over there.
19 And I think there are important things to realize to hear
20 these things.

21 You probably got pages and pages of comments,
22 probably thousands, and maybe a million comments. 99
23 percent of them are going to be from the Lower 48, from
24 outside the region, and a very small handful of those are
25 going to be local written comments from the most affected

1 people in those areas. So take a look at that because
2 sheer quantity shouldn't be overridden by the most
3 impacted people and the people that have the land base
4 that have fought for this for a long time.

5 The other thing, the North Slope Borough is a
6 regional government here. The North Slope Borough
7 provides services, and it's important to note that we
8 provide infrastructure in Prudhoe Bay.

9 A couple of years ago, you know, there was a --
10 almost an ultimatum to DNR from the borough because our
11 landfill at Oxbow was maxed out. So we are going to shut
12 down waste management in Prudhoe Bay unless more land
13 conveyances are completed in order for us to provide the
14 utility services that we provide throughout the borough,
15 the residents, including the oil and gas industry.

16 Those are important things to note as EISS are going
17 on for the NPR-A going west and then going east into the
18 1002 area and in between. The services that need to be
19 provided, you just can't carve out these things that are
20 required to be done. Waste management is a -- it
21 shouldn't be an unfunded mandate type thing. I think the
22 local government is struggling to provide some of these.

23 A couple years ago, the borough put in about 100
24 million dollars of new infrastructure in the oil patch to
25 manage waste, and the needs to continue to provide

1 services like that are important to those that are going
2 to create additional opportunity, which also creates
3 additional waste and management.

4 So I think that's an area that is not stated enough,
5 unless we continue to provide waivers and fragment for the
6 public convenience the borough holds to provide waste
7 management, which I think we should all frown upon in
8 continuing to frame that thing.

9 So those are important. I thought they are well
10 worth to mention. And it's important to realize the local
11 folks that stand -- that have been, I think in my view,
12 disenfranchised from being able to benefit from their own
13 lands.

14 With that, I'm not going to take up any more of your
15 time. I just got off the plane, and somebody was graceful
16 enough to pick me up and bring me here.

17 Quyana.

18 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: I've got a
19 question. Is this hearing on NPR-A or ANWR? What do you
20 want, on both of them or on one of them?

21 MR. JOE BALASH: We are here on the ANWR
22 leasing program, the draft EIS.

23 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: Okay. Just wanted
24 to make that clear because the paper also said NPR-A, and
25 that's what I thought you were here, too, for. And that's

1 why we were commenting on NPR-A.

2 MS. SUSAN ETOS: Susan Etos, for the
3 record. I thought maybe this would be good time to
4 explain not only to Mary, our elder, in Inupiaq how your
5 BLM laws, they are regulated -- how they assist in
6 regulating the local laws regarding subsistence in
7 traditional land use areas. And with the past EIS, how --
8 with comments given by the villages, how you would enhance
9 them to better today with the upcoming EIS. How would you
10 assist in enhancing the subsistence land use areas and
11 traditional land use areas?

12 Maybe you could also explain this for Mary to go to
13 her campsites, how she would work with -- she wanted to
14 work with planning and Native Village of Barrow and ICAS,
15 I believe.

16 So with the past EIS programs and all the comments
17 that were given in the past, how would you enhance your
18 laws to better our local laws regarding subsistence and
19 traditional land use sites?

20 MR. JOE BALASH: Okay. So this is the
21 first EIS for leasing oil and gas in the coastal plain in
22 ANWR. There are documents and management plans that have
23 been put together for the refuge by the Fish & Wildlife
24 Service in a CCP, a Comprehensive Conservation Plan. That
25 document, I think, was last updated in 2013, or

1 thereabouts. Closer to this community and in the NPR-A,
2 there have been multiple planning documents.

3 The Integrated Activity Plan is the one that provides
4 most of the direction there. And that was undertaken in
5 2012. The final version was signed in 2013.

6 I know that there were some concerns from the borough
7 with how that document went together in the final version,
8 and that is one of the reasons why the BLM is undertaking
9 a revision to that.

10 Now, we are not here to talk about that tonight;
11 however, I will say that we are still conducting scoping
12 for that. There is still an opportunity to comment on
13 that. And we have reinitiated the NPR-A working group
14 with residents from each of the communities here in the
15 borough that participate on that. And that was something
16 we were able to do earlier this afternoon.

17 And so something that is very important to me as an
18 Alaskan, who happens to be serving in a senior position at
19 the Department of Interior now, is to make sure that these
20 planning documents are as close to what the local
21 community wants as possible. And that's something that I
22 know firsthand that there have been frustrations in the
23 past and the very recent past, even, with regard to some
24 of the rules and conditions that are embedded in those
25 plans.

1 Just going -- sticking with the ANWR topic, the
2 coastal plains topic, we were in Kaktovik yesterday and at
3 a government to government meeting with the Native Village
4 of Kaktovik and heard an awful lot about subsistence
5 access and frustration that their access in the summer
6 months and the fall is limited and they are not allowed to
7 use motorized vehicles. And that limits their ability to
8 get out and conduct their subsistence hunts and move
9 further inland for their game.

10 So these processes, these meetings that I'm coming to
11 and participating in is allowing me to hear from elders
12 and hunters and the community leaders to help ensure that
13 the decisions that are getting made in these revised
14 documents will reflect as much as possible what the people
15 who have lived here for thousands of years and want to
16 continue to live here and thrive for thousands more, that
17 we can help manage the land in a way that works for your
18 local needs.

19 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: On your NPR-A, are
20 you including Nuiqsut's private property, or are you just
21 talking about leaving around the outside of their private
22 property? Because they do have patented deeds.

23 MR. JOE BALASH: They do, indeed. And so
24 the IAP, the Integrated Activity Plan, sets up the ways in
25 which we conduct our management of the federal land. Now,

1 we have to take into account and be considerate of our
2 adjacent neighbors, as well as those who have in-holdings
3 inside the program area. And so you are absolutely right.
4 We can't say what will or will not happen on those private
5 holdings.

6 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: And also when they
7 created ANWR, they said they were going to make it a
8 reserve to save it, and here you will end up selling it.
9 Which law are you going to follow?

10 MR. JOE BALASH: We are following the most
11 recent laws that have been passed. And we have a lot of
12 lawyers helping us understand what we can and can't do and
13 that we follow the right procedures.

14 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: You heard there
15 is --

16 MR. JOE BALASH: I understand there is
17 a --

18 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: Okay. This hearing
19 is budgeted by money appropriated by the U.S. Congress.
20 And the money to be spent, to what year does that money
21 that it budgeted and approved to be well spent? When is
22 the next budget assessment to be approved after -- after
23 these -- this budget that is being spent for these kind of
24 activities on -- in the North Slope region now under the
25 ANWR district center?

1 Money appropriated -- there is usually money to be
2 appropriated to be well spent. Like if it was approved in
3 1955 and it would be money well spent to 1975 and another
4 one approved 1975 to 1990, and then another one approved
5 1990 to 2015. And how many years is this money well spent
6 listed as to what year does it end before it gets renewed
7 by another budget that would be tabled by the United
8 States Congress to the people that appropriates all these
9 funds into labeled to be well spent?

10 And also the way I was speaking earlier, when I
11 look -- when I first came in, I was looking for a map, a
12 specific map that says ANWR in the general vicinity of the
13 locations that would be subject for lease sales. And here
14 you got the community coming together to talk and discuss
15 that. And I don't see a well-organized map of the entire
16 ANWR in the general vicinity that would be labeled for
17 leasing.

18 How are we going to be able to pinpoint in our
19 comments and what we want to say without the aid of the --
20 the locations of the subject that is being provided for
21 this meeting to -- for comments to be -- we need some very
22 serious aids to be able to hone in and talk about the
23 subject. It's got the whole ANWR, but it's a certain
24 sector of ANWR district in the coastal plain, I believe.

25 MS. AMY LEWIS: You came in after the map

1 was up.

2 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: It would be nice if
3 they were handed to each person that signed to register
4 for the meeting.

5 MR. JOE BALASH: So Mr. Brower, I think we
6 have got a couple of the alternatives identified here on
7 the screen now. And we do have behind this large screen a
8 couple of large posters set up. And we will be happy to
9 maybe take a little bit of a break and let people come ask
10 questions of our experts and scientists, and we can come
11 back and start taking comments again. Whatever is most
12 convenient.

13 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: It would be very
14 nice, but on this paper you have Alternative B,
15 Alternative D1 and Alternative D2, Alternative C, but it
16 does not say appropriately designated exact location, but
17 you have multiple labels and titles of the general
18 vicinity area. But the final say-so on the amount of --
19 the amount of acreage of land that would be sold for
20 leasing is my bottom line question.

21 I'm not interested in these alternatives, this, that
22 and those alphabets and numbers. I'm interested in the
23 total amount of acreage that is appropriate for sale.

24 MR. JOE BALASH: So what occurred in the
25 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 was Congress told us at the

1 department to establish a leasing program in the 1002
2 area. That's a little more than 1.5 million acres. And
3 of the alternatives there, B and C, all of the acreage
4 would potentially be available in that area. What those
5 maps depict are certain conditions or restrictions that
6 would come along with the lease in the 1002 area.

7 Alternatives D1 and D2 withhold some of the land and
8 wouldn't offer them for sale if and when we get to a lease
9 sale.

10 The process we are going through right now is to put
11 these alternatives up for discussion with the public, with
12 the communities, and get feedback on what final version
13 should be taken forward and put up for sale. And so if
14 there are -- if there are specific areas that should not
15 be offered for leasing for particular reasons, we would
16 like to hear that.

17 MR. JOHNNIE BROWER: I'm speaking like I
18 never went to school and I'm still out reindeer herding.
19 The general vicinity of the grazing grounds permitted
20 applied for by my great grandfather, Fred Hobson, he had
21 it under his wife, Miriam Driggs Hobson, my great
22 grandmother. And her grazing permit application
23 boundaries covers the entire North Slope Borough boundary
24 lines. It always -- goes all the way to the Demarcation
25 Point. My area of interest is -- I'm talking acting like

1 they are still alive. They are still reindeer herding.

2 And I want that -- I want that for myself. And I
3 have been out in the country doing that for a while in my
4 younger days.

5 And what I do, the way I do it, doesn't matter who
6 says what, whether they put me down or cut me down, it
7 doesn't affect me that way because my great grandmother's
8 paperwork is listed to a specific person only. And that
9 person wouldn't have to answer to anybody except to
10 himself and to whatever is affecting and disturbing and
11 damaging the grazing grounds that are and were under my
12 great grandmother Marian Driggs Hobson, my grandfather, Al
13 Hobson, Sr.'s mother.

14 And if people say I'm all whacked out and not in tune
15 to anything, her grazing permit goes all the way to the
16 mountains, all the way to Demarcation Point and covers the
17 entire North Slope. And we should have been busy
18 conducting and working and being reindeer herders
19 continuously if World War II hadn't started, but the fact
20 is it did and it changed a lot of lives that were reindeer
21 herders. And they were specialty people in the World War
22 II arenas.

23 And like I said, the coastal plains is a major
24 important grazing ground for the Porcupine, Prudhoe Bay
25 herds. At one point when one of my in-laws passed away, a

1 few weeks before he passed away, the reindeer/caribou
2 mixtures that usually heads into Baird Bay from Teshekpuk
3 Lake region, they migrated all the way to his birthplace
4 at Uluktuq [ph], way on the other side closer to the
5 Canadian border.

6 And they spent there a couple of months and headed
7 back. On their way back, they picked up some
8 caribou/reindeers from the Prudhoe Bay district, and they
9 migrated to Teshekpuk Lake. And when Teshekpuk Lake herd
10 migration, some of the reindeer/caribou mixtures just
11 stayed here in the vicinity of Barrow during the winter
12 months.

13 And he was born in Uluktuq, but his favorite place
14 was Cape Simpson. He was brought up and raised in Cape
15 Simpson. He was born in Uluktuq, the whole family unit
16 moving and traveling and pushing their reindeers sometimes
17 past Baird Bay, sometimes up towards Colville along the
18 river drainage, sometimes close to Nuiqsut before 1930s,
19 and then sometimes basing the summer in the general
20 vicinity of where the Endicott Road is and sometimes they
21 were pretty close to the Demarcation Bay unit area. And
22 the grazing permit covers the entire region of the North
23 Slope. And my interest covers that.

24 It don't matter who says what to me because what
25 matters to me is what was given to my great grandmother,

1 Miriam Driggs Hobson, and who she designated as to who is
2 going to be what.

3 And I thank my elders for supporting and helping me
4 and pushing me to be the way I am. I'm not in love with
5 the beginning and the existence of the state of Alaska
6 because that one alone, creating state of Alaska, has
7 devastated quite a bit of our hunting territories and
8 harvesting areas. It's still good hunting, but there is
9 something missing. And it's terrible when you don't go do
10 things the way you want to because it's covered up with
11 oilfields this way and that way.

12 And the -- like I said earlier, the activities of the
13 war damaged our reindeer herders (indiscernible) and
14 helpers to a point where it's not feasible to reindeer
15 herd anymore. It would be nice to have that. It would be
16 very nice if they designate a certain amount of land and
17 reintroduce a reindeer ranch that would help facilitate
18 the need for harvesting food where we have something to
19 eat instead of finding out that the areas where they are
20 hunting, go out hunting and harvesting is damaged and no
21 longer has feasible enough to sustain the food supply
22 source.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: Last question before
25 a break.

1 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: Last question. On
2 your 1002 area. Is it that same size right there, or has
3 the 1002 grown? Seems like it's a lot bigger than what it
4 was when you first came up with the 1002 area. Is it the
5 same?

6 MR. JOE BALASH: It's the same as it's
7 been since 1980.

8 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: So I think we -- I
9 have to use the restroom. Take a quick break. Some of
10 our scientists -- anyone with a white moniker is going to
11 be here. We have got some plaques behind us that have
12 some maps and touch different subjects.

13 If you are interested in giving more private
14 testimony, our stenographer is going to be available.
15 Just go grab her and she can take more comments. And if
16 people want to stick around, we can reconvene with more
17 public testimony. It would be a good time to talk about
18 NPR-A with us and grab us. We will be happy to talk with
19 you.

20 (A break was taken.)

21 MS. AMY LEWIS: Okay the microphone is
22 available. I know there are people that want to say
23 something.

24 MS. SARA THOMAS: (Speaking in Inupiat.)
25 My name is Sara Thomas. I am a community member of

1 Utqiagvik. I am raising my five kids here. They are
2 proud to be Inupiaq. They are -- we are trying to learn
3 the language. We are trying to get into the cultural
4 stuff, sewing and hunting.

5 I'm here to speak on behalf of myself and my family,
6 but I also want to point out, I think a lot of people in
7 our community are not here and we are not being
8 represented. I don't know how the process goes for -- I
9 heard there was five days -- I saw that this was happening
10 two days ago.

11 I know a lot of people don't think this is a bit --
12 this process -- we know it's rushed. Right? We know it's
13 coming down from a very small part of government that
14 wants this to happen. If we look at the surveys of the
15 will of the people, most of them -- for most of them, they
16 don't want the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to be
17 drilled in. It's been an ongoing, constant thing.
18 Correct?

19 What's it called when the government is acting not in
20 the -- the way of what the people want? We are supposed
21 to be living in a democracy. However, we are seeing that
22 corporations, groups of billionaires, a small bit of
23 people in our nation and same on the North Slope, we are
24 being -- we are not a true democracy. This is an
25 oligarchy. Let's not kid ourselves here. We are allowing

1 the corporations to control things. They come in and they
2 are pretending to represent the people, and I don't buy
3 it.

4 I'm concerned for my kids, for my grandkids. I'm
5 concerned that we do need oil development to sustain this
6 lifestyle that we are in.

7 I don't know if you gentlemen are aware that we now
8 have the highest rates of suicide, highest ever. I know a
9 14-year-old boy that just committed suicide in
10 St. Michaels. To me it's -- we are going down the wrong
11 path. I know I've seen you gentlemen in the past. I know
12 I recognize you.

13 I'm not confused. A lot of people are confused
14 because we get -- we get the money from them -- from the
15 oil development. Yeah. We are highly addicted to oil and
16 gas. It's confusing for a lot of people. They are not
17 even showing up. They were disillusioned or disenchanted.
18 Our government doesn't represent us. We know this. And
19 if you really look deep down into your heart, I think --
20 you know, we talk about the lifestyle that we want to see,
21 that we want to have. It's not going back to living in
22 sod huts. It's not. It's going forward knowing now that
23 our watersheds around the world are in peril.

24 A lot of our own community here, we don't even
25 know -- I learned in a class at UAF that our community is

1 in danger of -- we have been marked needing immediate
2 relocation. The Army Corps of Engineers have -- we are
3 highly vulnerable now more than ever because our -- one
4 more storm like we had in 1964, and the water -- our
5 drinking water will be contaminated.

6 The lifestyle that we are living now we are going
7 down the wrong path. I have no doubt in my mind, this is
8 not the right way to go about it.

9 And let me think if there is anything else that I
10 wanted to say because I have the mic. I think I'll let
11 someone else speak. That's all for me.

12 Thanks.

13 MR. CRAWFORD PATKOTAK: My name is
14 Crawford Patkotak. I'm a resident of Utqiagvik. I'm a
15 whaling captain. I also serve on the board of directors
16 of Arctic Slope Regional Corporation and serve as
17 chairman. We have 13,000-plus shareholders within ASRC.
18 I'm here to speak a little bit about the 1002 area. But
19 I'd like to also talk about the history of the land and
20 our people.

21 When we look at the life of the Inupiat and our land,
22 during the land claims fight, what was -- what was the
23 premise of the claim? Land use and occupancy, trade and
24 commerce, family and kinship. We all know that. It was
25 based on those three things that this claim was made by

1 the Inupiat people of the Arctic Slope, under the
2 leadership of Etok, Charles Edwardsen, Jr., Reverend
3 Samuel Simmonds and Guy Okakok.

4 Congress knew that claim was legitimate based on land
5 use and occupancy. We never sold it to anyone. We never
6 lost it in any war. We never turned over to anyone. We
7 occupied the whole Arctic Slope throughout. Family and
8 kinship. We had to prove all of this, both for the land
9 claims and for the incorporation of the North Slope
10 Borough. All documented.

11 I think several folks talked about the histories of
12 their grandfather and whatnot tonight where we talked
13 about all of our ties to the land. We never lost it in
14 any war. The natural barrier, the natural boundary was
15 the Brooks Range. We had to protect our land from those
16 that would try to come up north. It's all in the
17 historical record. So we have all of this history.

18 We got dealt a hand with the passage of public law
19 92-203, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. We were left
20 with five million acres to select out of all 56 million
21 acres of the Arctic Slope. It was already determined
22 which part of the Arctic Slope was already cut out for
23 NPR-A, National Petroleum Reserve. The first Alaska
24 Wildlife Range, right, as it started before it became
25 ANWR, you had state already claiming lands all the way

1 into the Prudhoe area.

2 We were dealt a hand. We made it work the best way
3 we could. We had wise leaders that not only fought for
4 the land claims, but fought for incorporation of the
5 borough. Why? Not only to exercise our rights, but also
6 to improve the lives of the people in the Arctic Slope.
7 That continues today.

8 When you look at what little land we were able to
9 select, Dick Adams, our land chief during that time,
10 worked very closely with the elders, industry, government
11 to try to get the right mix of land selections for ASRC,
12 looking at the cultural value, economic value, social
13 value; all of these things.

14 And yet it took 30 years, just about, for us to have
15 our first commercially developed asset, which was Alpine.
16 That was in 2000. Almost 30 years passed after ANCSA. We
17 were finally able to tap into our own resource. During
18 this whole time, the land exchange for what is now known
19 as the 1002 was legitimately made. It's been fought over.
20 It's been litigated from our very own fellow Natives
21 across Alaska.

22 We won every time, each step of the way. We have had
23 to go over many hurdles to try to come to this day when
24 ANWR is finally passed and we have an opportunity to
25 exercise our right and develop our own resource.

1 We, as Inupiat, have gone through struggles like no
2 other. When you look at our whaling, we are reminded by
3 beautiful pictures of whaling and paintings of them here.
4 We look at the responsibility of the whaling captain,
5 which is -- covers quite a bit. When you look at the
6 whaling captain's responsibility over time, to look out
7 for their people, to provide for, to encourage, to get
8 people involved, to go after something as huge as a whale,
9 we had to work together. That's a friendly reminder for
10 all of us, working together.

11 I always put it this way: Anybody can catch a seal
12 or a caribou and feed their family for a day or a week or
13 whatever that will bring. But if you are going to be
14 serious about feeding your community for a year and
15 beyond, you have to work together to harvest something
16 that big.

17 It also is a reminder of our rights that are at
18 stake. We just had -- after 40-plus years this past year,
19 we were fortunate to be blessed with going to the
20 International Whaling Commission to have our own
21 government being able to stand up for us, to back us up in
22 that international arena. I felt proud as an American
23 that our government was able to back us up, fight for our
24 rights. We didn't have that in the last administration.
25 I don't know who is trying to fool who, but those years

1 during the Obama Administration, our rights were trampled
2 on.

3 When you look back in just recent history, ANILCA,
4 under a Democratic president, Jimmy Carter, what did they
5 do? It was the biggest land grab in Alaska, locking up
6 enlarging ANWR, but within that deal, what did they say?
7 What did Congress say? The 1002 will be set aside to
8 explore. Thank God for that because we own interests in
9 that 1002 area. And we are going to exercise our right to
10 develop our own resource.

11 I really believe, whether it's the whales and the
12 right to hunt the whales, that same struggle, it's the
13 right to the resource, whether it's renewable or
14 nonrenewable. That's our right, God-given right as a
15 people. Before government came, we were strong, resilient
16 people, hard-working people. We didn't just survive here.
17 We thrived here.

18 So challenges that come before us, they are nothing
19 new. What we need to be really looking at -- and I'm
20 hoping and I know you guys are listening -- however many
21 million comments that you get from outside this region who
22 want to dictate what we can and cannot do within our own
23 region, our own land, that's not right.

24 So when you are going through your process, our
25 voices, our local voices need to have a lot more weight

1 than those voices from outside. Our very way of life,
2 both culturally and economically, is what's at stake here.
3 We have had many leaders over the years fight too hard for
4 us to let go of any of our rights.

5 Internationally, even in the United States, they
6 attack our whaling. And you are talking extreme animal
7 rights groups, extreme environmentalists that if they had
8 their way, we would be still living in a Third World
9 condition here today.

10 We are being asked, as a people, as a region, based
11 on some theory that global climate change is an
12 anthropogenic cause caused by man, and that -- based on
13 that interpretation or based on that theory, we are being
14 asked to help save the world. Save the planet. Keep the
15 oil in the ground. Right? You hear a lot of that.

16 So they want to shut us all down here to help save
17 the world at our economic expense and letting us pay.
18 That wouldn't be right when what we pollute doesn't even
19 compare to what China, the other countries around the
20 world are producing as far as pollution.

21 And I think industry has demonstrated, working
22 closely with government and local -- local people, our
23 fight for self-determination and local control continues.
24 That's something that our people have fought too hard for.
25 So we need to keep that in mind as far as what we are

1 going to do moving forward. This is a rights issue.

2 When I hear that our federal Native Alaskans south of
3 our region within the Venetie and Arctic Village area
4 start to claim that they have ancestral rights to our land
5 up north, next thing we hear they are claiming spiritual
6 occupancy. I don't think so. Our people have occupied
7 this land from time immemorial, and it was based on that
8 land use and occupancy, trade and commerce, family and
9 kinship, that the settlement was made. You need to keep
10 that in mind: The intent of the land fight, the intent of
11 ANCSA, and how we as a people cannot be left out of the
12 economic equation in all of this.

13 We fight -- we are fighting for our right to be
14 self-sufficient, not on government welfare. We are a
15 hard-working people.

16 Thank you for giving me the time to share a few
17 words. And I'd be happy to share a few more, if needed.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. ROY NAGEAK, SR.: Some of the people
20 that I work with, Patkotak, his last name, his grandfather
21 was a brother to my grandma, Susie Akootchook, and
22 Patkotak. And our family -- I grew up in Kaktovik. And I
23 just want to say a few words about the special area that
24 Kaktovik is.

25 My grandma and his grandpa were brother and sister,

1 and they lived in ANWR. It wasn't ANWR at that time. It
2 was the Kaktovik area. And my mom was born in 1913. And
3 then they always told us a story that when he was like
4 three or four years old, death was coming from the south.
5 It had started disseminating around the Nome region, and
6 it started going towards our region. And it was in the
7 Barrow area, and people were dying from disease.

8 Especially hard was at that time in 1900, the Yankee
9 whalers had come looking for a different kind of oil, and
10 that was the oil from the bowhead whale. And they almost
11 disseminated them. Almost killed them all off. A good
12 thing they found out what black oil could do because the
13 oil from the bowhead is so clean and so soft and burns so
14 sweetly that they use them for lanterns before black oil.

15 And then when they heard that death had stopped, my
16 grandpa was chief, Andrew Akootchook. Took the tribe
17 back, and then they started moving west to go check on
18 family. And they went all the way to NANA region, and
19 they started repopulating a lot of areas that were
20 disseminating.

21 I know one family that's real close to us is the
22 Chris [ph] family around NANA region who are brothers and
23 sisters: Ahsogeaks, and there is Okomailaks, Nukapigaks.
24 All those big family names were from that one region
25 that -- this is a different perspective on looking on that

1 region.

2 And then from there the repopulation. And it took a
3 while for the whale to repopulate. When I was like ten
4 years old and really got active in whaling, there were
5 fewer whales. There were many years when I was younger
6 then when they didn't catch any whales in Barrow. It was
7 tough.

8 And along those lines, but now -- and one of the
9 reasons why having agreements made, especially with
10 industry, was avoidance of conflict. It started about
11 that time, about 1970, 1980 that we started working with
12 industry so that they don't have any ships going back and
13 forth when the whaling season started: Kaktovik, Nuiqsut,
14 Utqiagvik. And that worked. When good agreements are
15 made within each other, it works.

16 And during that time all those years, like I say, we
17 have never lost the right of whaling. And it's our
18 persistence and our belief that if we work together with
19 whomever is coming up and not fight each other with --
20 avoidance of conflict is one of our Inupiat values. We
21 have 12 values that we utilize. And that's what's kept us
22 alive for many hundreds of years.

23 And if we use avoidance of conflict like we did with
24 industry, the population of oil has increased, and we have
25 got a perpetual right to hunt whales, and it's all working

1 with people that have always in a way tried to fight us
2 for what have always been, what have always been since God
3 created all the animals and our right to them.

4 But at the same time, we are -- we found out we are
5 being blessed because they are finding black oil. In some
6 ways from the other regions within the state of Alaska, we
7 are fortunate that we are blessed that we could afford our
8 own schools, health clinics, water and sewer. And I think
9 the way that our people work together, we are going to
10 keep going that way, that direction, for betterment of our
11 people.

12 And like he stated, the land, we only received a
13 little bit of it. And it took us 40 years. We got that
14 on a different perspective. We lost it, but we are still
15 being blessed. We are going to keep going forward. And I
16 see myself as working with people that come up, and we
17 could work together for the benefit, for the energy needs
18 of a great nation. And like we always say, for the
19 benefit of our people and our children, my grandchildren
20 and our great grandchildren. And that's how it's always
21 been.

22 MR. GORDON BROWER: Gordon Brower. And
23 I'm just going to talk on my own behalf. And I would just
24 like to -- I love what Crawford has stated over the
25 historical aspect of 1002 and the struggle over a long

1 time. I think those are important things to grasp the
2 gravity of land claims and the creation of the borough and
3 those kind of things.

4 Earlier I mentioned about waste management, which is
5 a key topic for the North Slope Borough. It's an
6 important thing. But in listening and other things that
7 have importance for the last 30 to 40 years, the North
8 Slope Borough has had a comprehensive plan and accompanied
9 by village profile that was written by somebody other than
10 residents of the communities.

11 Today over the last seven years, we have worked with
12 communities to develop comprehensive plans for every
13 community, and now culminating with an update to the North
14 Slope Borough comprehensive plan, which takes in the
15 commonalities of all the other plans.

16 But I would just like to emphasize, use these plans.
17 These are tools. They are communities talking. There can
18 be others that say we are speaking for not the majority,
19 but these plans that are developed by communities with
20 public meetings and inputs from all of their communities,
21 from the young to the old to the leadership of their
22 communities. Look at these plans. They are important
23 dialogue in there. There is information in there that's
24 useful.

25 One of the things that is a really big issue in every

1 one of the communities, if you look at these plans, is the
2 extreme high cost of doing anything in communities. There
3 is testimonies out of Anaktuvuk Pass where an individual
4 has purchased a door at Home Depot in Fairbanks and ship
5 it up COD, only the freight was \$1,300 to have it landed
6 for a \$120 door.

7 The other thing I would like to emphasize is the
8 services that are provided -- Kaktovik, Point Hope,
9 Wainwright, Atqasuk, Anaktuvuk Pass -- the local
10 government subsidizes the energy needs, actually provides
11 the energy needs, up to 20 million dollars -- in excess of
12 20 million dollars annually.

13 When we got these resources of natural gas, which
14 have been locked up by Congress and inaccessible for, in
15 particular, Kaktovik, and while we have this small window
16 of opportunity, to me after 40 years of fighting to have
17 the local people use these resources, that window being
18 open, we should already be having a pipeline in Kaktovik
19 with natural gas before they close that door.

20 These are some of the more important things because
21 we get our fuel from refined areas. Right? Gets shipped
22 out, goes to Louisiana or Seattle or some other place,
23 gets refined, and then we ship it all the way around
24 another 20,000 miles, probably, through ocean voyage, only
25 to bring it back up here and then try to distribute it to

1 our communities; in some cases, if you just look at some
2 of the villages, \$12 a gallon in some cases.

3 Energy -- this -- we are all talking about energy up
4 here. That energy -- because we live in the most extreme
5 climate in the United States, maybe on the face of the
6 planet, other than Antarctica, we should have extreme
7 energy security up here. Energy security. And that means
8 natural gas for our communities.

9 These are some of the things. That is a very
10 important thing.

11 The comprehensive plans for Atqasuk and Wainwright,
12 the needs that are expressed, the communities are saying
13 connect us to the outside world, connect us to the hub.
14 We are hamstrung with transportation needs throughout the
15 North Slope. Think about that. Our barges come once a
16 year. And these resources, in order to do community needs
17 and stuff, only served by air service and by very extreme
18 high cost of airfreight. I just want to make sure we
19 express these things that are surfacing.

20 The comprehensive plans for the villages are new.
21 It's a change. They are communities that are actually
22 speaking for themselves. They are speaking for themselves
23 and their needs. These should not be just another oil and
24 gas planning charrette anymore. You need to look at the
25 sustainability of communities, synergize where we can.

1 The borough is working with DNR on transportation
2 planning. The North Slope Borough's own comprehensive
3 plan, a component of that is area-wide transportation
4 planning.

5 You can't really address a lot of these many issues
6 unless you change some of the dynamics. With
7 transportation corridors and planning, suddenly you have a
8 new way of providing utility corridors. Another thing is
9 the 1984 Gas Transfer Act, a vehicle created by Congress,
10 again, that we need to use. It says that we should be
11 able to commandeer oil and gas exploration and development
12 wells that are underserved and commandeer them if they are
13 viable for providing these energy needs in our
14 communities.

15 That's an act created by Congress about why the
16 Arctic needs energy security up here. It shouldn't just
17 be pumped like a giant vacuum sucking sound on the
18 pipeline. There needs to be a level of comprehension of
19 the energy needs of the Arctic and think about how we do
20 that.

21 I just thought it was important to expound a little
22 bit on those. There are other things like the -- 2014 I
23 happened to help finish an old grant, an old NPR-A grant
24 that was from the 1990s era and finished -- actually
25 finished working on a document that crossed at least three

1 or four administrations in that grant called the --
2 supposed to be a comprehensive oil and gas plan, which it
3 was too large. We whittled it down to the NPR-A technical
4 report, the North Slope Borough's technical report. Take
5 a look at that document on the current state of uses.

6 We have lots of new technologies today proven. We
7 have been pumping subsea pipeline oil to market for 20
8 years now. New technologies that could alleviate some of
9 the mitigation issues. They use thaw-stable areas
10 nearshore and some of the rivers, like the Sagavanirktok
11 River.

12 If you go down the Haul Road, about 40 miles of the
13 Trans-Alaska Pipeline is in thaw-stable areas of these
14 thaw holes, naturally forming, identified. And it helps
15 with caribou movements and other things like that. And we
16 have proven that for the last 40 years of the Trans-Alaska
17 Pipeline, pumping in these innovative ways. So it's
18 important to look at that technical report and the other
19 things in there.

20 I just thought it's important to expound a little bit
21 on some of the informations that are around. And yet we
22 still have -- after the demise of the coastal management,
23 right? Murkowski put that to rest in 2012, somewhere
24 around there, 2011.

25 The old coastal management program, which was kind of

1 like a big stick for the North Slope Borough when the
2 state had the coastal management program. We were able to
3 influence federal action because it was a federal act, the
4 Coastal Management Act.

5 But with the demise of that, we still use those
6 policies even though the voluntary program is not being
7 used by the state, but all of those policies are ingrained
8 in our Title 19, including the coastal resource atlas,
9 which has a lot of information that you could garner from.
10 And it's good information that we use to help guide and
11 steward large project reviews internal to the North Slope
12 Borough. And it's -- it's comprised of traditional land
13 use and interviews from the 1970s era traditional land use
14 gathering by the first mayor.

15 So very important tools to be used and not -- it
16 gives you a -- almost a crystal ball view of the resources
17 and how they move into traditional knowledge.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. GEORGE EDWARDSON: Thank you. My name
20 is George Edwardson. I'm the president of Inupiat
21 Community of the Arctic Slope. Education-wise, I'm a
22 geologist, mining and petroleum technician, and the only
23 certified gas field operator in the state of Alaska.

24 And I'll start off with when ANCSA was passed. And
25 when the vote came throughout the whole North Slope, every

1 person 19 years and older voted a unanimous no against the
2 land claims when it came. Before that when the vote to
3 start the state of Alaska came, the same people voted a
4 unanimous no against statehood. This is what all our
5 elders 19 years and older did.

6 1977 I was hired by ASRC to put their engineering
7 firm together, and after I did that, the first job they
8 gave me was are we going to succeed in the land claims in
9 ANCSA. And that was the first job I was given by ASRC.

10 When I looked at it, the only thing I could tell the
11 board of directors was, as long as you have 7(i), you
12 cannot succeed because you can't succeed into a business
13 when you have to give 70 percent of your income to the
14 other 12 regions. Even Communism did better than that and
15 failed. That's what was said, you know, when the homework
16 I was given by ASRC was back in 1977.

17 When the elders first got together, the main thing we
18 were worried about was when the freshwater touches the
19 saltwater, this is where the food chain in the Arctic
20 begins. You cannot destroy that because if you do, you
21 have broken the food chain of the Arctic Ocean. And when
22 you look at from Point Barrow going out 200 miles to 168
23 miles west of Wrangell Island going out 200 miles, this
24 turned out to be the last third of the world's nursery.
25 This is the last third of the world's fish nursery.

1 That's got to be protected.

2 Remember when the Yukon River had no fish that one
3 year? That occurred because the seismic was being done
4 off of work -- off of Wainwright all across. The fish
5 that used to go down to the rivers in the southern part of
6 Alaska, eastern part of Asia and northern part of Japan,
7 those fish were chased into the Arctic Ocean.

8 Remember the elders when they all got together, they
9 said, do not break that food chain where the freshwater
10 touches the saltwater. You cannot break that. And then
11 when you look at the Statehood Act, the so-called purchase
12 of Alaska, when you look at that, Alaska came up with the
13 Statehood Act that said Section 9(a) and (b), Section
14 10(a) and (b), the northerly and the westerly boundaries
15 of the state of Alaska is five miles north of the
16 Porcupine, Yukon and Kuskokwim River. This is in the
17 Statehood Act.

18 Remember when Nixon came through? Nixon warned the
19 legislature, you have got five years to change your
20 constitution. If you don't change it, you are going to be
21 stuck with it. And with Section 9(a) and (b), 10(a) and
22 (b), Nixon was trying to warn Alaska about. They never
23 changed it, so the northerly and the westerly boundaries
24 of the state of Alaska is five miles north of the
25 Porcupine, Yukon, Kuskokwim. 182, the Arctic policy was

1 passed by Congress. Over 84 percent said the PYK,
2 Porcupine, Yukon and Kuskokwim is still intact in 1982.
3 This is what, you know, Congress said. 84 percent of
4 Congress voted, yep, the PYK is still intact.

5 That means when you read that, this town is 440 miles
6 north of the northernmost part of Alaska. Those words
7 have never been changed in the land claims, in the
8 Statehood Act. Those are still like that. Unless they
9 have changed the English language, we are north of the
10 state of Alaska.

11 And I was -- when I was hired by ASRC, they wanted me
12 to find a safe way to develop offshore. I looked and
13 looked. I got three college degrees. Never found the
14 safe way because the way the industry explores has never
15 changed from the day it first struck oil.

16 That we have to be very careful about because our
17 food chain begins where the freshwater touches the
18 saltwater. With global warming occurring, this town is
19 going to be 254 feet under the water. That means this
20 town has to move up to Umiat again. That means all the
21 oil that's been discovered and being exploited is going to
22 be almost 300 feet under the ocean.

23 And they struck oil offshore. True. That's true.
24 Except the oil they struck is in the formation that's too
25 tight and it can't flow. Out of the 16 wells discovered

1 offshore, they had to frac 13 wells out of the 16. And
2 those 13 wells only flowed for three weeks, according to
3 the manager of those wells for the industry, which I met
4 about two weeks ago.

5 The elders, when we put them all together, 60 years
6 and older from Canada, Alaska, northwestern part, western
7 part, and the Yup'iks, we put them all in one room. The
8 borough paid for it here. And when we put them all
9 together, the first thing they were worried about was we
10 have to protect where we feed ourselves from.

11 The authority that came from the tribe created our
12 whaling commission, which makes it something to be very
13 proud of, as you heard from the previous speakers.

14 That oil you are going after is not the only oil.
15 The offshore. On the eastern part of the Rocky Mountains,
16 the largest oilfield had been struck, and that's all sweet
17 oil. They say no sulphur. It flows easy, middle of the
18 land, and it's more than enough to take care of America,
19 Canada and Mexico for over 1,000 years. We are not even
20 talking about the tar sands in Alberta, Montana or
21 Colorado, which is another couple thousand years of oil.
22 We got more than enough oil on land to destroy our planet.
23 We don't have to go and destroy an ocean just to make a
24 handful of companies get rich.

25 And you can understand what I said. I use the

1 satellite, infrared satellite by Land Stat 3. Took NASA
2 over three years to figure out, you know, how much to
3 charge me for those pictures. And with that, I was
4 looking a quarter mile below the surface and found
5 minerals, oil and gas, all that, you know, that we have in
6 our hand. We have all the minerals of the northern part
7 of the state owned by our corporation. That's ours. We
8 are not poor, and we are not without resources. And the
9 world is not running out of oil.

10 MS. NICOLE HAYES: So I think that's going
11 to conclude the public comment part of our meeting
12 tonight, the public testimony part. We do still have some
13 forms for people to fill out if people want to fill out
14 forms. And something I had talked to a few folks about
15 was coming back in a few weeks. People wanted to get
16 together and just go through the EIS and the structure of
17 the EIS and what the alternatives are about.

18 So I'm going to be coordinating with ICAS and the
19 Native Village of Barrow and the North Slope Borough. So
20 if there is an interest in that, people have my contact
21 information. You can definitely reach out to me.

22 We thank everybody for coming out tonight, and we
23 definitely appreciate all the comments that we have heard.
24 Thank you.

25 (Proceedings adjourned at 8:46 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

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